

19th PCSF 2019
Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGY ANALYSIS OF YOUTH CAREER
ORIENTATION OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY**

Svetlana Panina (a), Svetlana Zalutskaya (b), Nadezhda Tulasynova (c)*

*Corresponding author

(a) North – Eastern Federal University named after M.K. Ammosov, 58 Belinskiy Street, Yakutsk, 677000, Russia,
psv1148@mail.ru

(b) North – Eastern Federal University named after M.K. Ammosov, 58 Belinskiy Street, Yakutsk, 677000, Russia,
zs-saha@mail.ru

(c) North – Eastern Federal University named after M.K. Ammosov, 58 Belinskiy Street, Yakutsk, 677000, Russia,
whityt@mail.ru

Abstract

University success is defined by its position in a current information environment, quality and quantity of content, creating the attitude of general public to its activity and achievements. The research of information environment of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) pointed out to the absence of high-quality career orientation and professional information ignorance of regional media. Communication strategy of Federal universities is one of the ranking criteria in International and Russian ratings which have a considerable impact on applicants' choice. We demonstrate the results of communication activity of North-Eastern Federal University (henceforth referred as NEFU). According to "RankPro Worldwide Professional University Ranking" NEFU official website on the information content ranks No.11 in the country and No. 417 in the world. Such positive popularity among partners, professional community, students, graduates, pupils, parents and teachers is the main factor in applicant's race. "Journalist's holidays" is an example of a successful communication project for pupils. The annual spring media forum includes fascinating experts' workshops, interactive lectures, visiting editorials, press centers and agencies, television studios, practical courses and distribution of vocational awards. The career orientation festival is a platform for acquaintance pupils with journalism and conducting professional test. Pupils create own original news stories about NEFU and promote them in social networks. Modern media, advanced digital communication technologies allow NEFU to hold effective communication strategy, conduct rewarding constructive dialogue between University and a young person for whom complete, creative, interesting and useful information as a career guide to the job world is necessary.

© 2019 Published by Future Academy www.FutureAcademy.org.UK

Keywords: Career orientation, future experts, Federal University, communication strategy, communication technologies.



1. Introduction

In today's civilized world, education is one of the most actively growing and promising economy field. According to experts (Addad, 2014; Beath, Poyago-Theotoky, & Ulph, 2012; Goglio, 2016; Hazelkorn, 2015; Kawito, Gounko, & Nungy, 2014; Maria & Bleotu, 2014), every year the level of demand and supply of educational services are growing worldwide. It is especially noticeable in higher professional and postgraduate education: the rate of their annual growth reaches 10-15% in the most dynamically developing countries. The education field attracts growing attention of investors due to its potential and logic of development. In this regard, special attention in the activities of educational organizations is given to public relations - the art of communication support for organization promotion at the market.

Away back in the nineties, in the Russian educational field, market relations were strengthened, with regard to them, such concepts as "educational services", "market of educational services", "pricing", "discounts", "consumer", etc. are used in research studies. Derived processes also gave rise to such a previously unknown situation for educational organizations as competition. It was in that historical period when there was a critical need for formation of communication strategy, information support of professional education, not only in the form of special guidebooks, newsletters, but also in the form of advertisements, trendy articles, educational materials in printed and electronic mass media.

Communication activity in education field seems to be a very promising and unique phenomenon. It is useful not only for producers of educational services and products, but what is critically important, to their consumers when choosing and implementing an educational path, concluding and implementing contracts for educational services, and also in education process.

The real communication participants in education are educational establishments, their social partners, investors, public authorities and local governments, different parts of community, the most important of them are consumers (individuals, establishments and organizations), a wide range of intermediaries (including employment services, labor exchanges, registration, licensing and accreditation bodies of educational establishments, mass media, etc.), as well as public institutions and structures involved in the educational market (Alexankov, Trostinskaya, & Pokrovskaya, 2018; Baranovskii & Leinveber, 2013; Gillespie, Boczkowski, & Foot, 2014; Guglina, Samsonova, & Samsonova, 2015; Voronova, Larinenko, & Peshkova, 2016).

2. Problem Statement

The reasons that motivate people in a modern society in an effort to raise their own educational level are diverse. However the main reason is the desire of an individual to improve their social status and self-development. The need for education is manifested in the conscious or unconscious desire for learning. The need for this particular type of product is a lack of knowledge, abilities and skills in any field. The demonstration of the education need is the desire of an individual to obtain a qualitatively new level of education or any additional qualifications.

The main consumers of educational services in Russia are young people aged 16 to 35 years old. The youth motivation at acquisition of these particular services often differs greatly from the motivation of older people, so young people play a special role among the subjects of communication strategy of

educational establishments, or to be more precise the personality of a pupil, a student or a listener. He is not just a fund for transferring knowledge, not only a user of competences in the labor process, a physical media of educational services, but also their sole ultimate customer. It is primarily for him, educational and information-intermediary services are carried out in higher education.

For Federal higher educational institutions the youth from teenage to middle thirties is the major segment of information users. Young people, who are actively engaged in orientation, planning and realization of a career search, choose an educational institution to meet their requirements. However, young people who carry out the orientation of professional environment for various reasons remain the least informed newcomers at the regional educational market. To sort out historically developed discrepancy higher educational institutions have to make an applicant the thick of communication strategy, maintain their information activity so that an applicant could create and extend useful content about future profession, university and its educational services, interesting and important events from the life of higher educational institution.

3. Research Questions

In the conditions of fierce competition at the Russian educational services market, complicated struggle for a quality range of students, budget financing and other forms of state support, the reputation capital and educational establishment image are growing more urgent, including Federal universities whose prestige and fame contribute to the development of cities and regions, "create a subtle and dynamic connection between the past, the present and the future" (Addad, 2014), influence prospects and trends. The viability and effectiveness of Federal University brand depend not only on the results of its educational activities, scientific mobility, publication activity and the role in the socio-economic field of the territory, but moreover, to what extent it is professionally represented in mass media.

Let's consider the key problems of communication strategy of Russian Federal universities located in the regions remoted from the administrative center of the Russian Federation, and the ways of problem solving on the example of North-Eastern Federal University. The higher education institution is located in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the largest along the territory northern region with sparsely populated area. The region has a complex transportation logistics complicating population's free movement from a periphery to the center and out of the region borders mainstreaming the media content, the qualities of electronic information environment capable to influence positively the development of social interaction.

The distinctive features of living abilities in Yakutia are that huge territorial expanses of the Republic, restricted communication infrastructure, high cost of network resources of trunk communication providers deprive the applicants of current information. As Yakut pupils still have no specialized interesting, creative, useful and cognitive regional websites on career orientation.

How can Federal higher education institution, a scientific, educational and cultural center of the region increase the awareness of target groups in this context? A new phase of the university's evolution started in 2010 when it joined a network of Russian Federal Universities established in every federal district of Russia (Gounko, Panina, & Zalutskaya, 2016; Kawito, Gounko, & Nungy, 2014).

4. Purpose of the Study

The study purpose is to provide insight into NEFU information activity, reveal its features and demonstrate the best experience in the organization of professional informing of possible applicants.

5. Research Methods

As a part of research, content analysis of University website and other corporate editions of Federal University, analysis of ranking results of universities in the annual international professional rating "Rank Pro Worldwide Professional University Rankings" (RankPro) were used. Among the criteria used for Universities ranking, we highlight the informative value of Internet resources and the reputation of educational establishments among the expert community. Methods of observation and test evaluation of professional informing were also applied.

6. Findings

The result analysis of ranking universities in the annual international professional rating "Rank Pro Worldwide Professional University Rankings" for 2017-2019 demonstrated the following: in 2017 "only seven out of ten Federal Universities were able to be included into this rating. Uralsky Federal University ranked 1st place, Kazan Federal University ranked 2nd place, Siberian Federal University ranked 3rd place. North-Eastern Federal University ranked 4th place, NEFU improved its performance in the most prestigious section - the reputation rating, rose by 24 positions among Russian universities and ranked 22nd in the country. Such positive dynamics shows University growing recognition in the international academic space and authority among experts community. It should be noted that only 22 Russian universities were able to enter the TOP-600 reputational rating. Besides, according to the information content NEFU official website ranks 11th place in the country and 417th place in the world" (Kurchatova, 2017).

In 2018, North-Eastern Federal University rose by 61 points in the overall world ranking compared to last year, ranked 16th among Russian universities and 1st among five Federal Universities (Kazan, Siberian, Southern and Far-Eastern Federal Universities). According to the information content of Internet resources, NEFU ranked 16th place among 32 Russian universities; on the reputation of higher education institution among experts ranked 25th place among 27 Russian higher education institutions. In RankPro the top three leading Universities are California Institute of Technology, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology and Yale University. There is Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, Moscow State University and St. Petersburg National Research University of Information Technologies, Mechanics and Optics among the group of top Russian universities.

Data analysis of 2019 revealed that in the last three years in RankPro North-Eastern Federal University rose almost by hundred points among world leading universities. However NEFU keeps 16th place among Russian universities for the second straight year. According to the information content NEFU improved its performance and ranks 11th place among 22 Russian higher education institutions and 2nd place among Federal Universities.

Such rankings allow Federal Universities not only control their research tops, but also measure and compare University brand with the data of potential competitors, website popularity, popularity in social

networks, and effectiveness of the presence in the global information environment. High-quality information and communication support of Federal University branding promote the growth of its competitiveness and attractiveness among partners, including employers, consumers and applicants, allow to increase the demand for certain specialties (for example technical), demonstrate career prospects for students at the international labor market, improve the quality of applicants training in accordance with university requirements, involving them into the Olympiad movement and in the work of career-oriented short-term schools or academies affiliated university (Hazelkorn, 2015).

According to the sociological studies conducted periodically among students of Russian universities (Andrianova, Pecherkina, & Tarasova, 2018; Apokin & Judkevich, 2008; Cherednichenko, 2018a, 2018b; Maguire et al., 2013; Razinkina et al., 2018; Zubok, & Chuprov, 2015), over a period of several years the employment issue stands among the first which young people mention. This fact, apart from purely economic reasons related to the labor market situation, is also due to increased competition of experts whose excess in some regions is obviously considerable (lawyers, economists, teachers ...) and a natural desire of young people to return investments made in their education as soon as possible. Young people at the stage of choosing a career are unaware of forthcoming difficulties in finding a job, as they are not often familiar with the information on significant changes at the national and regional labor markets related to socioeconomic transformations and state policy that places an order for training certain specialists.

One of the main reasons for applicant's issue in career orientation is the lack of qualitative career enlightenment and information ignorance. To eliminate these issues Federal University should call for federal, regional and corporate mass media aimed at forming and promoting the brand of educational institution. There are a lot of opportunities for this task: special periodicals in the printed and electronic forms, all necessary information for the applicant is placed on educational websites, and periodicals (newspapers, magazines, television channels), special headings are opened and refer to topical issues of youth professional development.

However, not all of the mentioned above in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), in particular, has conceptual nature and works in the system accessible to a consumer.

As a result, vocational and informational materials of republican mass media do not meet the actual demand: the work in the field of career orientation, education and promotion should be "planned, systematic, regulated" (Voronova et al., 2016) by public relations experts of educational institutions with the help of high performance technologies for informing consumers, which include:

- oral reports (conferences, press conferences, public speaking before potential consumers, etc.);
- specially organized media reports (contacts with the press, publishers, advertising, information and PR agencies);
- publishing (issuing and distributing brochures, advertising booklets, leaflets, creating corporate media);
- news event planning (presentations, seminars, exhibitions, graduates events, meetings with outstanding pupils, Doors Open Day, round tables of school board, etc.);
- SMM promotion technologies.

In addition to a direct advertising of jobs, specialties and training programs Federal University should post analytical articles in the republican electronic and printed media: first of all, assessment of the

labor market in the region and in the Russian Federation; secondly, individual psychological characteristics of market participants (job seekers, young professionals, employers); finally, analysis of the labor market and employers requirements for applicants and employers to the competence of specialists. The articles can also be devoted to the partnership issues "educational institution - recruitment agency, Labor exchange - employer"; represent a portrait of leaders of the employment market enterprises working with University, using a professional employment agency as an intermediary.

The articles can also describe in detail how the prevailing majority of employers imagine an ideal employee and how to achieve the desired image. It will be also appropriate to address the issues of increasing University prestige, its favorable image, built on competitive advantages which Federal Universities create to strengthen their positions in the international market of educational services. It is necessary to broadcast such publications regularly, not only in the midst of enrollment campaigns. Their authors should be leading practitioners, famous scientists and the best University graduates who inspire trust among applicants and, most importantly, their parents, who in many respects determine not only a job choice for their children, but a training facility and the amount of financial investments in their professional future.

Social networks have gained special importance in the modern information environment, they allow to solve quickly and efficiently the tasks of career promotion, youth career orientation, counseling and profiling, taking into account the needs and peculiarities of perceptual psychology of target audience. Social networks as an effective tool for career guidance gain increasing popularity (Antonenko, 2013) and continuously increase the number of users generating their own and promoting outsider content. Russian Federal Universities use social networks potential for image-making and branding positioning to achieve particular goals of communication strategy.

"Journalist's holidays in NEFU" can be an example of a successful communication project of Federal University for pupils. The frames of this project allow to take into account the specific conditions where University works with its potential applicant: region territorial expanse due to economic reasons limits the possibility of inviting schoolchildren from different parts of Yakutia to participate directly in career orientation events; slow and expensive Internet connection in the northern parts of the Republic, preventing quick communication; multilingualism of region educational space; intensification of migration flows that has an effect on the increasing number of foreign citizens entering the university and requiring their involvement in career orientation work, etc.

The annual spring media forum held on the basis of Federal University includes fascinating experts' workshops, interactive lectures of University professors on specialized subjects, visiting editorials, press centers and agencies, television studios, distribution of vocational awards, practical courses of experts of NEFU Applied Psychology Centre, teaching aids presentation and excursion program. A special media educational program with a career orientation component is implemented for teachers who not only accompany mixed-age pupils during the events, but also actively participate in them.

Career orientation festival is a platform for introducing pupils to journalism and conducting professional test. One of the activities performed by pupils (there are more than 200 pupils from different parts of the Republic of Sakha including Artic regions) is the creation of own original news stories about NEFU and their advance in social networks (SMM). So, possible applicants make the contribution to the

process of professional informing students and professional promotion using technical, communication and language means adequate to specific features of information perception of new generations of applicants. The task is an effective form of brand image promotion of Federal University in the most popular messengers and the first professional achievement for many participants of "Journalist's holidays". In autumn the most talented participants of this forum become University students.

7. Conclusion

The analysis of North-Eastern Federal University experience in the field of youth career orientation convinces that modern media, advanced communication technologies including digital technologies allow University to hold effective communication strategy, conduct rewarding constructive dialogue between University and a consumer, a young person for whom complete, creative, interesting and useful information as a career guide to a job world is necessary. This concluding is confirmed by data of the world rankings in which all Russian Federal Universities surely participate.

Possible applicants included in the work on management of university communications are capable, ready to make the contribution to the process of professional promotion and professional informing of region population using technical, communication and language means, adequate to specific features of information perception by new generation of applicants – Z generation.

References

- Addad, Z. (2014). *Rol' universitetov v reputatsii territorial'nykh brendov [The role of University in the reputation of territorial brands]*. Paris. L'Harmattan-IEERP, [in Rus.].
- Alexankov, A. M., Trostinskaya, I. R., & Pokrovskaia, N. N. (2018). Industry 4.0 Requirements for Quality of Human Capital and Competencies Formed Within Educational Institutions. *The European Proceedings of Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 34, 26-34. <https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2018.02.4>
- Andrianova, E. V., Pecherkina, I. F., & Tarasova, A. N. (2018). Motivy i trudovye tsennosti molodezhi: paradoksy razvitiya [Youth motives and labor values]. Russian public opinion research center. *Public opinion monitoring: economic and social changes*, 3, 324-323. [in Rus.]. <https://doi.org/10.14515/monitoring.2018.3.17>
- Antonenko, S. V. (2013). Sotsial'nye seti kak instrument proforientatsii. [Social nets as a mean of career orientation]. Bulletin of Tula State University. *Technical Sciences*, 11, 41-44. [in Rus.].
- Apokin, A. J., & Judkevich, M. M. (2008). Analiz studencheskoi zanyatosti v kontekste rossiyskogo rynka truda [Analysis of students' employment in the context of Russian job market]. NPVoprosy Ekonomiki, *Economics Issues*, 6, 98-110. [in Rus.]. <https://doi.org/10.32609/0042-8736-2008-6-98-110>
- Baranovskii, A. I., & Leinveber, O. J. (2013). Integrirovannye marketingovye kommunikatsii vuza kak osnova konkurentnosposobnosti obrazovatel'nykh uslug [Integrated marketing communications of higher educational institute as a basis of competitiveness of educational services]. *Journal of E&E. Economics and Entrepreneurship*, 3(3), 3-8. [in Rus.].
- Beath, J. A., Poyago-Theotoky, J., & Ulph, D. (2012). University Funding Systems: Impact on Research and Teaching. *Economics: The Open-Access, Open Assessment E-Journal*, 6, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.5018/economics-ejournal.ja.2012-2>
- Cherednichenko, G. A. (2018a). Pervoe trudoustroistvo posle vuza (po materialam oprosa Rosstata RF) [First employment after graduation (RF Rosstat case study)]. Russia Academy of Sciences, *Social studies*, 8, 91-101. [in Rus.]. <https://doi.org/10.31857/S013216250000764-3>

- Cherednichenko, G. A. (2018b). Polozhenie na rynke truda vypusnikov vuzov (po materialam oprosa Rosstata) [Employment situation of graduates (Rosstat case study)]. Russia Academy of Sciences, *Social studies*, 11, 95-105. [in Rus.]. <https://doi.org/10.31857/S013216250002789-0>
- Goglio, V. (2016). One Size Fits All? A Different Perspective on University Rankings. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 38(2), 212–226. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12064>
- Gillespie, T., Boczkowski, P. J., & Foot, K. A. (Eds.). (2014). *Media Technologies: Essays on Communication, Materiality, and Society*. Cambridge: MIT Press
- Gounko, T., Panina, S., & Zalutskaya, S. (2016) Establishing World-Class Universities in Russia: Case Study of a Federal University. In L. Shultz, & M. Viczko (Eds.), *Assembling and Governing the Higher Education Institution. Democracy, Social Justice and Leadership in Global Higher Education* (pp. 331–349). London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-52261-0_18
- Gugnina, E. V., Samsonova, E. V., & Samsonova, M. V. (2015). Tekhnologiya prodvizheniya obrazovatel'nykh uslug na rynek [Technology of educational services promoting on the market]. Academy of Natural Science. *Modern Issues of Science and Education*, 2, 305. [in Rus.].
- Hazelkorn, E. (2015). *Rankings and the Reshaping of Higher Education: The Battle for World-Class Excellence*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kawito, M., Gounko, T., & Nungy, M. (2014). *A Comparative Analysis of Higher Education systems. Issues, Challenges and Dilemmas*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Kurchatova, A. (2017, March 8). *SVFU voshel v TOP-600 lutchikh vuzov mira po dannym GlobalWorldCommunicator [NEFU was included in the TOP-600 World Best Universities]*. Retrieved from NEFU website https://www.s-vfu.ru/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=66871 [in Rus.].
- Maguire, S., Cockx, B., Dolado, J. J., Felgueroso, F., Jansen, M., Styczynska, I., ... Rinne, U. (2013). Unemployment. Springer Berlin Heidelberg Youth. *Intereconomics*, 48(4), 196-235. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10272-013-0464-9>
- Maria, T. D., & Bleotu, V. (2014). Modern Trends in Higher Education Funding. Elsevier, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 116, 2226–2230. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.548>
- Razinkina, E., Pankova, L., Trostinskaya, I., Pozdeeva, E., Evseeva, L., & Tanova, A. (2018). Student satisfaction as an element of education quality monitoring in innovative higher education institution. *E3S Web of Conferences*, 33. <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/20183303043>
- Voronova, A. A., Larinenko, N. A., & Peshkova, I. G. (2016). Razrabotka i effektivnoe ispol'zovanie kompleksa marketingovykh kommunikatsii v deyatelnosti sovremennykh obrazovatel'nykh organizatsii na osnove traditsionnykh i innovatsionnykh kommunikatsionnykh formatov i instrumentov [Development and effective use of marketing communication mix in the work of modern education institutions on the basis of traditional and innovative communication forms and devices]. *Economics and Entrepreneurship, Vol. 3, 2(68)*, 608-619. [in Rus.].
- Zubok, J. L., & Chuprov, V. I. (2015). Molodye spetsialisty: problema podgotovki i polozhenie na rynke truda [Recent graduates: training issues and employment situation]. Russia Academy of Sciences, *Social studies*, 5, 114-122. [in Rus.].