My Right to an Opinion!

CREATING CONTENT FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

CONTENT

Introduction 4

How to Create Media Content 5

Freedom of Speech and Hate Speech 9

Reaction in the Event of Accidents or Emergencies 12

What Do we Need to Know about Copyright? 14

How to Make a Podcast Successful 16

Creating Video Content for Social Media 20

Social Media: How Can we Make Use of Them? 24

Facebook 25

Twitter 27

Instagram 29

Youtube 31

Useful insight into social media 33

Safety on Social Media 35

Useful resources 40

INTRODUCTION

No matter whether you aim to convince others to follow you in your cause to save forests, to reveal urban beauty through photography or telling about the films that pique your interest, social media can serve as a wonderful platform for just this purpose. Before you step onto this platform, however, it is important that you create an attractive, high-quality product to showcase and that you are aware of the ways in which you can do so safely and successfully. This is where the My Right to an Opinion! guide comes in. It will teach you the basic principles behind creating attractive and ethically sound multimedia content, it will offer guidance on setting up a successful video or audio podcast and on playing to social media's strengths while steering clear from their weaknesses.
We would like to wish you all the best in your endeavours and we remain hopeful that this guide will help more people learn of these and allow you to be better prepared to safely navigate social media and tap their full potential.

My Right to an Opinion! Creating Content for Social Media is a theoretical guide developed under a UNICEF project entitled My Right to an Opinion! Teenager Academy. UNICEF's project partner has been the Bulgarian chapter of the Association of European Journalists. The project involves the active participation of both teenagers and their mentors from the Teenstation.net school media network. This guide was co-developed with the help of experts from the Bulgarian Centre for Safe Internet (SafeNet) and the Media Literacy Coalition. The guide is meant to be used by high schoolers and constitutes a key text for the purposes of all training events under the project. It is available online at www.unicef.org/Bulgaria and www.aej-bulgaria.org to all teenagers wishing to enhance their knowledge in the sphere of creating media content meant for social media.

The main objective of the project entitled My Right to an Opinion! Teenager Academy is to step up the digital and media literacy of high schoolers. According to the definition in UNICEF's latest report on this issue: 'Digital literacy refers to the knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow children to flourish and thrive in an increasingly global digital world, being both safe and empowered, in ways that are appropriate to their age and local cultures and contexts.' (Digital Literacy for Children, August 2019)

Project partner contributors:
Denitza Delville and Ivaylo Spasov, UNICEF Bulgaria
Ivan Radev, Bulgarian chapter of the Association of European Journalists
Kristina Hristova, Media Literacy Coalition

HOW TO CREATE MEDIA CONTENT

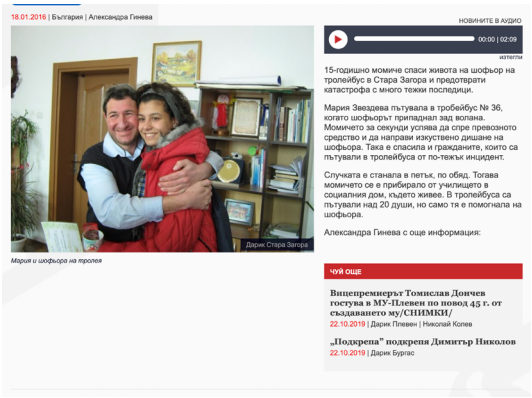
Contributor: Ralitza Kovacheva,
journalist and lecturer in journalism at the University of Sofia St. Kliment Ohridski

This chapter considers the main principles behind creating media content irrespective of whether said content is a text, a video or a podcast. Here, you will learn how to ensure that your content is understandable and attractive, how to make use of reliable sources of information and how to distinguish facts from opinions and deliberate misinformation.

Social media offer everyone the chance to have an outlet of their own. In fact, they allow us to be outlets ourselves, to decide what we wish to say, to whom it is addressed and when, how and why it is made public. Regardless of whether we use social media to boost the popularity of content on our website or blog or, alternatively, create content meant specifically for social media, we should be acquainted with several key terms and principles.

What do we aim to do: report information or express an opinion?

How do we know? Information generally contains facts and reports on events and statements that have indeed taken place. Information on a real event:


18.01.2016 | България | Александра Гинева

НОВИНИТЕ В АУДИО

00:00 | 02:09

15-годишно момиче спаси живота на шофьор на тролейбус в Стара Загора и предотврати катастрофа с много тежки последици.

Мария Звездева пътувала в тробейбус № 36, когато шофьорът припаднал зад волана. Момичето за секунди успява да спре превозното средство и да направи изкуствено дишане на шофьора. Така е спасила и гражданите, които са пътували в тролейбуса от по-тежък инцидент.

Случката е станала в петък, по обяд. Тогава момичето се е прибирало от училището в социалния дом, където живее. В тролейбуса са пътували над 20 души, но само тя е помогнала на шофьора.

Александра Гинева с още информация:

Дарик Стара Загора

Мария и шофьора на тролея

ЧУЙ ОЩЕ

Вицепремиерът Томислав Дончев гостува в МУ-Плевен по повод 45 г. от създаването му/СНИМКИ/
22.10.2019 | Дарик Плевен | Николай Колев

„Подкрепа" подкрепя Димитър Николов
22.10.2019 | Дарик Бургас

Information about opinions constitutes information, not an opinion:

ДНЕВНИК ≡

Местни избори 2019 Д Експ

Най-малко българи в ЕС смятат климатичните промени за най-сериозния проблем на света

16:42, 11 сеп 19, & 6106 205

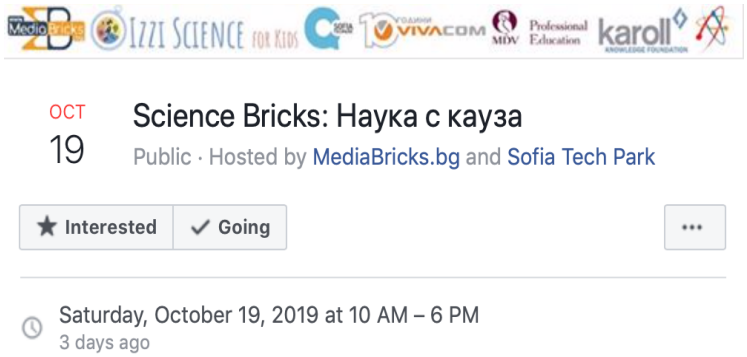
Едва 10% от българите (на последно място в Европейския съюз) смятат, че климатичните промени са най-сериозният проблем пред света като цяло. Малко повече (11%) от гражданите на Латвия, Гърция, Хърватия и Румъния са на това мнение. В ЕС най-голям процент хора (50 на сто) смятат, че климатичните промени са най-сериозният проблем пред света, в Швеция. Тя е следвана от Дания (47%), Малта и Финландия (и двете по 33%), показват резултатите от проучване на Евробарометър.

Евробарометър

Двадесет и три процента от гражданите на ЕС и 10% от българите смятат измененията на климата за **най-голямо предизвикателство пред света**. На първо място всички поставят

Information (a piece of news) should answer five basic questions:

Who? What? When? Where? Why/How?
In journalism, these are known as the Five Ws. When creating an Event page on Facebook, we answer the Five Ws without even realising that :)



The 'Why/How?' question is answered in the Details pane, which provides clarification on what is going to happen during the event and in what way. Indeed, a Facebook Event page is actually a piece of news concerning an upcoming event.
Answering the Five Ws guarantees that we will not omit to mention something important. To be extra certain that our audience will not skim through what we believe is the most newsworthy, we should always place the newsworthy bit at the beginning of our text. This is the so-called inverted pyramid principle: the most newsworthy bit should always come at the beginning to ensure that it has been received even if the reader stops reading at some point (or if the viewer stops watching, etc.).
The two items following this bit are called context and background (additional information). These are also important because they allow us to gain a better understanding of why an event is slated to take place. They also provide information on why it is to take place now and in this exact way among others.

Fact-checking

Regardless of whether we have decided to announce information or express an opinion, the next step always entails fact-checking. The first and most important task of any communicator is to make sure that they do not deceive or mislead their audience unintentionally. As for the deliberate dissemination of incorrect information, that is best termed misinformation or propaganda.
Satirical content, such as that published by the Bulgarian Не!Новините outlet, is not considered misinformation or propaganda but the public should be made aware that said content is indeed a piece of satire rather than bona fide news.

The umbrella term 'fact' covers events that have indeed taken place and any information that is verifiable and can be proven. It also extends to names (of people, settlements, streets and institutions among others), date and time, figures and data in general. Facts should be checked in all cases, even when (or, rather, especially when) they seem irrefutable. Claims constitute a type of opinion and are not considered factual!

'The Earth is round' is a fact (scientifically proven).
'NASA have been lying that the Earth is round' is a claim (opinion) which does not rest on facts and cannot be proven.
We should aim to make only fact-based claims.

Fact-checking requires the use of sources that meet the criteria below:

- they are at least two and are independent of one another;
- they are reliable and authentic;
- they are renowned and well-established.

If we use media outlets, we should pay attention to the following:

- Is this an instance of mainstream journalism or of sensationalist (tabloid) journalism? In the latter case, we are far more likely to stumble on misinformation.
- Are we familiar with this outlet and have we used it as a source before, or is this the first time we have come across it? In the latter case, we are far more likely to stumble on misinformation.
- What else has this outlet published on our topic of interest? This allows us to ascertain whether the outlet follows the development of the topic and whether its journalists have the experience and knowledge relevant to said topic that are necessary for their work to be reliable.
- Who is the contributor of the information of interest? Is it a global news agency or a big outlet, or is it a website of which we have not heard? Has the source been left unspecified? In the latter two cases, we are far more likely to stumble on misinformation.

We should distinguish between misinformation and bias. A piece of information may be true to fact but presented in a manner revealing bias, i.e. highlighting certain elements at the expense of others, withholding a portion of the relevant facts while laying undue emphasis on others, citing certain positions but not others, etc.

Target audience

Addressing one's classmates, fellow citizens, fans of a particular type of music or members of Parliament, for instance, requires divergent approaches. We should keep in mind that our message will be competing with thousands of others, all making up the newsfeed of our target audience, which can be found scrolling down distractedly while on the bus. In light of this, we must use all legal and ethical tools available to attract our audience's attention.

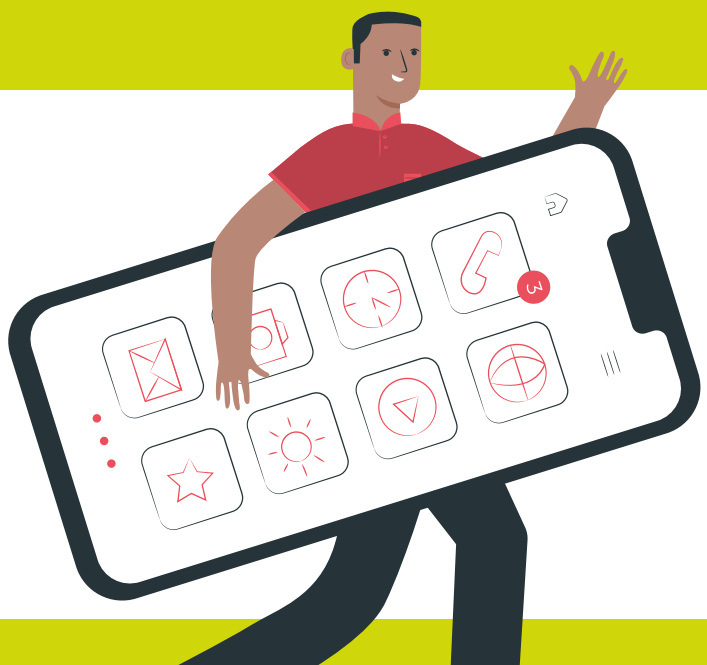
Basic rules to ensure that a text is successful

- Engaging title: impactful, meaningful, brief, if the text presents information. If the text presents an opinion, you can approach it more creatively but not overly so. The sooner you tackle the topic at hand, the greater the chance that more people will understand your position.
- Use facts that are accurate and verified. Avoid using facts that you feel uncertain about or have not checked. Avoid presenting opinions as facts!
- When using thoughts, texts, images or any other type of intellectual property belonging to others, cite your source(s). To do otherwise would constitute plagiarism.
- The style and parlance you use should correspond to the audience to which your message is addressed. In any case, it is best to avoid extremes, i.e. language that is excessively complex or burdened with terminology or, alternatively, too colloquial or even ridden with slang. Adhering to proper grammar and spelling is a must even on social media :)
- Avoid using titles that are too long to read in full when shared on social media or do not redirect properly as well as titles that do not specify the topic of a text.
- Do not 'bait' your audience by using the likes of 'Shocking!', 'Sensational!' and 'Unheard of!'. These do more to drive off your audience than they do to attract its attention.
- Hate speech, plagiarism and lying are unacceptable.

?

Control questions:

- How would you feel if you were made the subject of someone's text? How would you feel if you were in your protagonists' shoes? Is there a chance that you might embarrass, hurt or offend them?
- Does my content reveal personal data belonging to me or others?
- Have I verified the sources of information I have used for facts mentioned in my text, or video/audio material?
- Is my content understandable for people who are not as familiar with the topic at hand as I am?



FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND HATE SPEECH

Contributor: Mariya Milkova
video reporting journalist and photographer

This chapter will help you understand the difference between hate speech and the so-called 'hating' on social media.

Freedom of expression is a fundamental right!

'Everyone has the right to freedom of expression.' This is enshrined in Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. This fundamental right constitutes a pillar of democratic society and serves as a benchmark for level of democracy in a country.

Ours is a time in which nothing could be easier than expressing one's opinion and position. Indeed, it is the time of the digital age. All it takes is a smartphone and an Internet connection and your position, opinion or message has the potential to reach hundreds or thousands, if not millions of users. Practically speaking, everyone has a channel enabling them to reach a wide audience. This is an opportunity which only traditional media used to enjoy until 15 years ago. Yet, is freedom of expression limited?

Freedom of expression extends to the point where one infringes on others' freedoms, i.e. by offending them, injuring their honour and dignity or humiliating them. Hence, the right to freedom of expression is not absolute. In accordance with Article 10(2) of the European Convention on Human Rights, freedom of expression may be subject to such restrictions as prescribed by national law and necessary for the protection of 'the reputation or rights of others' and in the interest of 'national security, territorial integrity or public safety'. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, freedom of expression 'shall not be used to the detriment of the rights and reputation of others, or for the incitement of a forcible change of the constitutionally established order, the perpetration of a crime, or the incitement of enmity or violence against anyone.' The Bulgarian Criminal Code also provides for penalties in cases of hate speech and discrimination on the basis of race, nationality or ethnicity. Under their Code of Conduct, journalists undertake not to publish material inciting hate, violence or discrimination.

What is hate speech?

Hate speech includes words, gestures, attitudes and actions used to publicly express disapproval, offence or hatred, provoke aggression and incite violence against certain people on the basis of their belonging to a given race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation or age.

Indeed, hate speech is a display of intolerance and non-recognition of the dignity of others. When a person offends another under the influence of strong emotions, this cannot be considered hate speech. Rather, hate speech is a case of hatred or discrimination targeted at someone merely because they form part of a given community. In this sense, 'hating', a notion which has gained

currency among young people, cannot be said to constitute hate speech. The so-called 'hating' phenomenon will be considered again in the following chapters: Social Media: How Can we Make Use of Them? and Safety on Social Media.

At whom is hate speech directed?

Generally, hate speech is directed at minorities by the majority. According to a 2018 survey of the Open Society Institute, the following proportion of the groups cited below have heard hate speech directed at them in Bulgaria:

What guises does hate speech take on?

Hate speech may have various guises: written or spoken language, or even an image (a speech, words, music, a video, a picture or a collage).

Examples: The Village of Rozovo Refuses to Take In Refugees

In 2014, three Syrian families were granted refugee status and resided on the territory of Bulgaria, choosing to settle in the village of Rozovo in Kazanlak Municipality. 17 people, 6 of whom children, settled in a rented house. Once the local community learnt of this, a spontaneous protest aiming to drive the families away broke out. Words such as 'scum' could be heard [during the protest] and the families were accused of intending to attack the locals with weapons.

Minute 02:04. 'Bulgaria should belong to Bulgarians, not to this scum.'

These were the words of one of the villagers protesting against refugees settling in his home village. Footage reporting on the situation in the village of Rozovo spread via social and then conventional media, resulting in a vast array of comments, both negative (as regards refugees) and contemptuous (of protesters in the village).

The case in Rozovo is not an isolated one. At the height of the refugee crisis in Bulgaria (2013 – 2014), communities in other settlements also refused to take in foreigners fleeing armed conflict. The period cited saw a surge in hate speech directed at migrants.

Examples of good practices against hate speech

See Refugees Differently – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Bulgaria

A series of videos disseminated via social media and aimed against xenophobia were used to encourage Bulgarians to see refugees 'differently'. The idea behind this was to encourage Bulgarians to recognise refugees for who they are: regular people fleeing horrendous violence and persecution rather than a threat.

Did you know?

You can report hate speech on any social media platform. How can you do this? Learn more by using this Council of Europe tool

A campaign against hate speech led by young people is also active in Bulgaria:

?

Control questions:

Can my content injure the dignity of others on the basis of ethnicity, sexuality, religion or nationality?

REACTION IN THE EVENT OF ACCIDENTS OR EMERGENCIES

Contributor: Mariya Milkova
video reporting journalist and photographer

In this chapter, you will learn how you should react in the event of an accident or emergency and when and how you are to share information concerning these on social media.

What is an accident or emergency?

An accident or emergency is a surprising and unsettling event that has resulted in the injury or death of people.

Types of accidents or emergencies: traffic and domestic accidents, terrorist attacks, fights (brawls), industrial accidents, natural disasters and serious crime among others.

Think first and only then publish or share!

In our digital age, more and more often information of accidents or emergencies first lands on social media and only then reaches the competent authorities or conventional media. Hence, each of us becomes a vehicle for information by merely using the Internet. Some publish information because they have good intentions (to inform others of a situation) while others do so to attract attention, often posting shocking images. In such moments, many users are inclined to post unconfirmed information or information coming from unreliable sources. When published, information coming from accident or emergency sites or a crime scene, can cause psychological trauma, injure human dignity and even endanger the witness themselves.

If you happen to be at an accident or emergency site, make sure to follow these steps before sharing the news. Make sure that you yourself are safe and that there is no direct danger to your life. For instance, a fire may be followed by an explosion, or a traffic accident – by further vehicles crashing into those already involved in the accident. It is important to secure the site. A sign should be placed or a warning should be issued to prevent others being exposed to danger. When you have made sure that you are somewhere safe, use the emergency number 112 to alert the authorities. Try to remain calm and inform them as accurately as possible of what has happened and of the location. If you are able to, help those who have been injured without putting yourself at undue risk. Only after you have followed these steps may you consider shooting a video or pictures, or sharing information about the accident or emergency online. The decision to do so must be taken following due consideration since friends and family of those injured may learn of the event precisely through what you publish.

When can we share information about an accident or emergency?

- When we have witnessed it first-hand.
- When we have verified our piece of news by relying on several sources.
- When the information will be helpful to other users or useful in establishing the reasons for the accident or emergency and responding to it.
- When the information is of importance to the public.
- When we share facts without using emotive vocabulary.

What information can we share?

- We cannot publish personal data and intimate information without the consent of those involved in an accident or emergency.
- We cannot publish footage showing victims of an accident or emergency or those involved in it in a humiliating or helpless state.
- We cannot publish pictures of underage persons.
- We cannot use the likes of 'shock' and 'horror' as these may traumatise other users of a given social media and contribute to their anxiety.

?

Control questions:

- Have I verified the source of information about the accident before sharing my publication?
- Is there footage that may upset my audience or humiliate (one/some of) those involved in the accident or emergency?
- Does my picture show underage persons?
- Does the video/picture of the accident or emergency that I am going to take/share endanger me or any of those involved in the accident or emergency?

WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COPYRIGHT?

Contributor: Simona Veleva
legal professional, copyright expert

Now that you have become acquainted with the principles of creating media content without injuring the dignity or hurting the feelings of others, in this chapter you will learn how to avoid breaching their copyright and protecting yours.

Often we use other people's pictures or images or share articles when posting on social media or our personal blogs. It is important to know when we are free to do this without asking permission and when we risk breaching authors' copyright.

What can be protected by copyright?

'Any literary, artistic and scientific work resulting from a creative endeavour and expressed by any mode and in any objective form shall be the object of copyright (...).'

Practically speaking, this includes a vast array of works: works of fiction and pieces of journalism but also computer software, music, film, pictures, designs. The layout of print publications, translations and interpretations, musical arrangements and similar items are also protected by copyright.

Copyright over certain items cannot be claimed. These are the exception rather than the rule though. Such items include legal acts and secondary legislation, ideas, concepts and folk pieces, news, facts, information and data. Hence, the text of a story teller (a journalist working for a conventional media outlet or a teenager posting on a social media outlet) is protected by copyright but the news, facts or data included in it are not.

Example: You witnessed an event and decided to write a news item about it for your blog. The article that you have written is protected by copyright but you cannot forbid other people from reporting on the same event merely because you were the first to cover it.

What rights in their work does an author enjoy?

An author enjoys several other rights apart from the right to remuneration for each time their work is used or distributed. These include an author's right to decide whether their work may be promoted; whether to use their own name or an alias; whether to allow their work to be altered (for instance, to allow another user to manipulate their picture or edit an article or work of fiction that they have penned).

When and how can a work protected by copyright be used?

When a work is used for profit, permission from its copyright holder must be sought. This includes cases in which said work is reproduced, distributed, broadcast and presented, including when it is published on a website or blog. Nevertheless, a work may be used without its author's permission when the author's interests are not harmed, especially when the objective is not generating a profit. To be safe, even if we intend to use a work without aiming to generate a profit and even if we believe that we are not threatening the interests of the author, it is best to see if this is indeed the case by asking said author's permission.

Is it obligatory to mention the name of the author?

It is obligatory to state the name of the author of a given work just as it is obligatory not to introduce changes to this work without the author's permission. Notwithstanding, it is also important to consider whether the picture or quote that we intend to share is indeed protected by copyright and whether its author is known.

How can we use a work free of charge?

The Internet is full of pictures and other works which form part of the public domain. There are ways to check whether a picture may be used free of charge, including by using Google. When using Google to find a picture, use the Tools menu and select Usage Rights to filter your results. Some works may be licensed for use under the so-called Creative Commons license. Each of the Creative Commons logos indicates that the author or another copyright holder has allowed for a work to be used more freely than it would be under copyright.

Remember: Regardless of whether a work can be used free of charge, the source of said work and its author (where the author is known) must be stated.

Did you know?

A work may be copied but not distributed without due permission. Thus, when downloaded off a torrent site (leech), a film or a piece of music may be played since an electronic copy is created on the user's personal computer. This is lawful. However, if the same file is distributed further (seed), this will constitute unlawful distribution of the work in question and therefore a breach of copyright.

?

Control questions:

Have I checked the license under which the picture I intend to use is placed?
Have I cited the name of the author of the text/picture I intend to use correctly?

HOW TO MAKE A PODCAST SUCCESSFUL

Authors: Berkant Isaev, contributor to the BACK podcast, TeenStation; Balin Balinov, journalist and mentor, TeenStation; Evelina Blagoeva, journalist and mentor, TeenStation; Zheni Yaneva, deputy editor-in-chief, TeenStation; Simeon Kozhuharov, editor-in-chief, TeenStation

It is now time to put words into action! In this chapter, you will learn about the main requirements relevant to creating a podcast.

Podcast, the new outlet

The podcast is the most recently established type of media outlet, which makes it the most dynamically developing one, too. One of the main reasons behind this is the 'Internet revolution' at the dawn of the 21st century, which made video sharing platforms (such as YouTube), free-of-charge music download applications and others popular. The podcast was a response to the dynamic of our day-to-day lives and our need for information that we can take in without having to focus exclusively on it.

The podcast is a successor of the traditional radio and one of the many advantages of a podcast is that one can listen to it while travelling, doing chores and all sorts of other activities mainly involving physical work, as well as in one's free time.

Since podcasts are incredibly accessible and easy to understand, their effectiveness is not to be underestimated. When a podcast concerns a more profound subject, it may be viewed as a contemporary iteration of the dialogues of Plato, the only difference being that a podcast is not paper-based but available to listen to for greater convenience. All this is possible thanks to websites (such as YouTube) and dedicated platforms or applications (SoundCloud, MixCloud and Spotify).

A podcast may be in the form of a video or audio only but the format is not too significant since it is only in specific cases that a podcast would need to be watched. In general, it takes the form of informal discussions on a given topic. The podcast is a relatively recent phenomenon in Bulgaria but has spread incredibly quickly, especially among younger audiences.

The podcast format

The structure of a podcast may differ depending on the number of participants and the topic under discussion. A fairly typical set-up is that of the interview: hosts will invite guests, who they will try to get to know better while presenting them to their listeners. In many cases, guest hosts are featured. These will propose an alternative perspective on the topics discussed. Of course, it is not mandatory to have other participants in order to launch a podcast. A monologue presented by a single contributor is just as good an option.

How to create a professional-level podcast in several steps

1. Think about the topic you wish to discuss. Content is the most important element of a podcast. The difference between an interview on your blog and a discussion in a podcast is that the discussion can be longer, more in-depth and more emotional. Figuratively speaking, it may bear similarities to a conversation between friends in the living room but its sound quality should correspond to professional studio standards. A podcast could even have the sound quality of a 'Hollywood production' complete with special effects. Either way, sound must be good and balanced and words should roll out smoothly.

2. Equipment matters! Would you listen to someone if you did not understand what they were saying? How about a low-volume recording? It is good to have a microphone but sometimes a phone with a good sound recorder function can do the trick just as well. It is also important to browse through some sound manipulation software. There are some pieces of software that are both free and of sufficiently high quality. A good podcast may sound authentic but, to be on the safe side, listen through it carefully, remove any material that may appear superfluous and work on sound quality.

   Buy headphones, too, since this is the only way for you to know what your voice sounds like. Headphones will shut off the background noise in the room you use for recording. Find a relatively quiet place. Noise from the outside will be captured in your recording and will also distract you while you are working.

3. Preparation! It is very important that you prepare for the recording session. If you are going to be the sole speaker, consider the dramatic set-up of your material, i.e. how you can tell the story in a literate and engaging way. Think about what you want your listeners to learn or experience. They will only dedicate an hour or more of their time to your podcast if you have something to tell them. If you have invited a guest, carefully structure your interview with them.

How do we reach our audience, or which are the most popular podcast platforms?

Hosting platforms

After a podcast has been created, it needs to be distributed. Generally, distribution takes place in one of two ways.
The first one involves using a personal domain. The creators of a podcast would create a website, which would then be used to generate an RSS feed. This RSS feed is linked to distribution platforms, which basically allows for a podcast to be listened to anywhere. This distribution method protects copyright over the podcast and is in fact the method of choice of most popular content creators.

A second way involves using content hosting platforms. These include the likes of SoundCloud and Anchor. Using such platforms, content creators may upload and distribute their content against a monthly fee or free of charge. This is where the matter of copyright comes in though. By way of example, let us consider Anchor. Its Terms of Service stipulate that rights in podcasts created and

distributed via the platform belong to the platform itself and not the creators of the content in question (as of August 2019).

Distribution platforms

- iTunes/Apple Music/Apple Podcasts. Along with its successor (Apple Music), iTunes has been among the platforms of choice due to the option it offers for audio broadcasts to be reviewed and ranked. Using these functionalities allows each user to write and then publish a review of a podcast. This option, coupled with the five-star score given, now underpins some of the most accurate local and global broadcast charts. For its part, Apple Podcasts is directly connected to iTunes, which largely does away with the former's status as a service in its own right.

- **Google Podcasts.** The American giant launched its podcast application in 2018, which means that it is still in its infancy and its functionalities are limited. It does not offer the option of listening to podcasts in 'episodes' and does not support a scoring system, unlike its rival Apple applications.

- **Spotify.** Over the past few years, the world's largest online music platform has also made headway when it comes to podcasts. It announced that it was adding new functionalities to its application, making listening to podcasts possible.

- **Anchor.** Anchor is a relatively new platform. It is an easy instrument that allows for the creation and distribution of podcasts using nothing more than a user's personal smartphone. The platform offers a wonderful solution for beginners in the sphere. In the case of this platform, the issue of copyright over content is problematic (we referred to this in the section on hosting platforms).

- **YouTube.** While YouTube, the video sharing platform, may not be the most traditional choice when it comes to the distribution and hosting of podcasts, there are quite a few cases in which creators have made use of it. It is mainly used where the so-called video podcasts are concerned. In a video podcast, one can see the participants in a discussion. Additional visual material may be provided. An example would be Joe Rogan's podcast, which is among the most popular worldwide.

Popular podcasts

Worldwide

The most popular and most widely listened to podcasts the world over come from the USA and other English-speaking countries due to certain historical and cultural reasons. These include The Joe Rogan Experience hosted by Joe Rogan (one of the most popular podcast hosts), The Daily (a news podcast) and Dr Death (mostly recounting true crime). RadioLab is among the most popular programmes of the National Public Radio (NPR). The programme 'dresses' stories of interest and scientific facts in sound. Simon Adler, RadioLab's producer, recently visited Bulgaria

on the invitation of the Association of European Journalists, which asked him to deliver a training to Bulgarian journalists entitled How to Create a Podcast. Some of the most popular radio show hosts in the world are currently working on podcast projects of their own.

In Bulgaria

Говори интернет [The Voice of the Internet] – various topics:
Triple E.Y.E. – various topics:
The Superhuman – motivational, inspirational
Comedy Club Podcast – entertainment
Парите говорят [Money Talks] – business, economics

Control questions:

- What is the target audience of my podcast?
- Why is my topic of choice important to people my age?
- Have I carefully checked the facts I plan to address?
- Am I certain that I am not going to embarrass my interlocutor with my questions?
- How would I feel if I were in my interlocutor's shoes?
- Am I certain that my content meets the requisite ethical and professional standards?
- Am I certain that my content will not incite hate speech?
- Have I obtained permission to use a picture and publish the discussion on social media?

CREATING VIDEO CONTENT FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Contributor: Mariya Milkova
video reporting journalist and photographer

If you prefer to create video content for social media, this chapter will teach you how to work professionally and achieve maximum impact using only your phone.

Video is the future!

We cannot but agree with Mark Zuckerberg that video is indeed the future. It only takes opening one's feed and scrolling down to realise that. Videos will probably pop up all the time. They will start playing without any need for you to click the play button and they will grab your attention... for a few seconds at least. Then you will be free to scroll down. Should you go on to watch a video, one thing is for certain: **you will experience more emotions, your engagement will be greater, and you will remember more** than if you read through a text or see a picture. Even with the sound off! This is so because video content has experienced a massive transformation.

Video on TV

Only 20 years ago, we had to turn on the TV set to enjoy a short video. Such videos would be shot by professional camera people using an exceedingly expensive (and heavy) camera that used tapes. A tape recorder was necessary to read a tape and towards the end of the process content underwent editing using a piece of complex machinery (which was not even a computer). Short videos were the domain of those working in TV stations.

To make a video, we had to use an amateur camera and a video tape recorder (which were also expensive), or pay professionals. All this meant that making a video was the privilege of a chosen few.

Nowadays, the digital revolution has gifted us the opportunity to take our phone out of our pocket, press the record button and create a video product by applying a sprinkle of knowledge about the rules of filming and editing a video. What is more, we do not need any other piece of equipment. After we are ready, our video may be viewed by hundreds, if not millions, of people.

How can we create an online video?

A video entails emotion. This is precisely what makes it so compelling and popular on social media. A video is capable of making a viewer smile, of shocking, surprising or angering them, of making them ponder an issue or pacifying them, of saddening them or even making them cry. We have heard of numerous examples of videos telling the stories of people in need, which are then followed by hundreds of replies offering help. This is precisely why a video is so impactful: along with facts, it offers viewers emotion and makes it impossible for them to remain indifferent.

Idea

A video can be inspired by all sorts of ideas we consider. These may strike you while you are

talking to friends, having a walk or watching a video. You may decide to tell someone's story, shed light on a problem or delve into how something is done. You may film yourself discussing a certain topic or cover an event among many others. The best videos generally centre on a topic of your choice that is of profound interest to you or that has touched you. Even if you are only just becoming familiar with this topic, your interest will make the video itself interesting to the viewer.

Preparation

- You should hold a preliminary discussion if you plan on filming people.
- You should have settled on the idea and purpose of the video before filming it.
  - What is your message?
  - What do you wish to show?
  - Who will be speaking?
  - You should arrange for a date and time.
  - You should check to see if your phone's battery is full.

Filming process

A picture captures a moment while a video captures an action.

- Equipment: phone, camera, action camera, stand, tripod
- Format: HD, 16:9

! If you are using a phone to film, always keep it HORIZONTAL (unless you are filming a live video). This ensures that a shot takes up the screen (a 16:9 ratio is typical of modern digital devices) without leaving empty space on either side. This makes for a more aesthetically pleasing and professional result than that in amateur videos.

- Basic field sizes - full (the full height of a person), medium (down to a person's waist), close-up (the head), detail (an eye or a hand)
- Framing - the Golden Ratio rule This is a term in the visual arts dating back to the Renaissance and adopted in photography. A shot or picture is divided into 6 boxes of equal area using 4 lines running along the horizontal and the vertical axes. The points at which the lines cross are opportune for placing the object being filmed. This allows for a more aesthetically pleasing result and for visualising the object's context.
- Field sizes should alternate during the filming process (for instance, if you are filming a person who is themselves filming using their phone, you need at least 4 shots: a full and a medium one of the person holding the phone; a detail shot showing just the phone; and a full shot of the object the person is filming).
- Each shot should last for no less than 10 seconds.
- Side shots may alternate with dynamic shots.
- Panorama (general view, landscape) - move your device from left to right very slowly.
- You should film the location where action takes place following the shot sequence described.

Interview

If you plan to film yourself

- Put the phone on a stand.
- Framing: stand in the middle of the shot.
- Stand in front of the camera and look at it as if you are talking to someone directly in front of you.
- Eye contact with the audience is important. Do not let your gaze wander.
- If necessary, write down what you wish to say.

If you are filming an interlocutor

- Frame your interlocutor slightly to the left or to the right but never in the centre of your shot (Golden Ratio rule).
- Medium field size
- Your interlocutor should NOT look into the camera but at you while you are taking their interview.
- If the person recorded addresses the audience directly or makes an appeal, they may look into the camera.
- Your questions should not overlap with your interlocutor's answers.
- You should film the interview first and only then work on to the coverage (shots and footage relevant to actions and necessary to tell the story).

Preparing text for an online video: story

- Length: between 1 minute and 2 minutes and 30 seconds
- An online video does not contain voiceover (no one reads behind the camera like on television).
- A story is told using subtitles.
- You should always start with the most gripping moment, the best shot or the most impactful words.
- You should answer the following questions: who, where, what, when and why?
- Text should be as brief as possible: no more than 42 characters per line and no more than 2 lines per shot.
- Music: you should use music in the public domain.

An example of a video with subtitles advocating a cause

Editing

There is a myriad of smartphone video editing applications. Some of these are free and others are not. A free and very widely used application is KineMaster.

Did you know?

- If you did a sum of the time all YouTube users spend watching videos, that would add up to 1 billion hours!
- 59 % of Internet users state that they would watch a short video rather than read a text.

- 92 % prefer to watch videos using their phones.
- Videos generate 300 % more traffic than any other type of publication.
- Not too long ago, Facebook predicted that by 2021 the greater portion of its content would be made up of videos.
- YouTube is second only to Google in terms of popularity.

Control questions

?

- Do the people I plan to film agree to my filming them?
- Can the way I plan to film somebody injure their dignity?
- If I plan to film a person under the age of 18, have I obtained permission to do so from their parents?
- Is it possible for my video to result in people experiencing stress or trauma.
- Have I presented information and facts accurately in my video?
- Have I presented the various positions adopted?
- Is there a danger that my video might incite hatred or violence targeting members of a given community, perpetuate stereotypes, offend, vilify, etc.?

Social Media: How Can we Make Use of Them?

FACEBOOK

Contributor: Ivana Popova
social media expert

The time has come for your video or podcast to reach the greatest number of people. In this chapter, you will learn how this can be achieved using social media and discover the advantages and disadvantages of certain social media.

We will present four of the most popular ones: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

Facebook dates back to 2004, when it was launched as a student project with the following mission: 'to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected'.
15 years on, the platform allows us to project a self by sharing our content or that of others (including livestreams and blog entries), becoming part of big groups based on our various interests which are, in turn, part of internal networks and learning about all sorts of events being held among many other functionalities...

Facebook boasts one of the biggest toolboxes available to those looking for a way in which their content can serve as a platform for themselves. If content stands out, it stands a chance at being noticed and shared by accounts or pages with many followers, which helps the message/content reach an even wider audience.

Of the four platforms discussed in this chapter, Facebook enables the widest range of multimedia interactions, offering a variety of content types and functionalities. This makes it less sensitive to factors such as character count, publication lifespan and the type of media content we wish to share.

To stand out, you have to ensure that your content meets certain criteria:

- The maximum character count of a post is 63 206 characters.
- The maximum video length is 45 minutes.
- A Facebook Story remains visible for only 24 hours, upon which it may be archived.

Since Facebook posts have a long lifespan (until they are deleted), communication is easy to store and trace. This makes the platform the perfect place to ask for an opinion, put a question to a wide audience (of potential respondents) or conduct online discussions, etc.

Below you can find some hints on how to achieve your desired effect

- As on most platforms, visual content is more popular than other types of content. The audience will generally pay more attention to a video than to a text. Video is the most effective, followed by pictures, with text trailing after both.

- If the post you are considering is text-heavy, make sure you have put an attractive title or call to action at its very start. Use vocabulary suitable for the types of audience with which you interact and adhere to the ethical and legal frameworks regulating content.

Rules

Apart from a series of factors on which a publication's success on Facebook is contingent, there are also rules to ensure that only safe and positive publications stay on the platform. These include:

Safety

Facebook removes publications that may lead to physical, emotional or financial harm or incite violence.

Hate speech

This term does not refer to criticism or personal insults online. Indeed, these are better termed cyberbullying (cyberbullying will be discussed in the next chapter). Hate speech is defined as 'a direct attack on people based on what we call protected characteristics – race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, caste, sex, gender, gender identity and serious disease or disability. We define 'attack' as violent or dehumanising speech, statements of inferiority, or calls for exclusion or segregation' (excerpt from the Facebook Community Standards). Posts of the kind outlined above are reported and removed.

Settings

When sharing content on Facebook, keep in mind the following:

- While Facebook claims that you 'own' your posts, a major part of your legal ownership is actually contingent on the privacy settings you set. Thus, if you publish an opinion or a picture of an event using the Public setting, this content will be available to all other users. Of course, the rule about citing the author's name and the license restrictions we discussed in the chapter on copyright applies in such cases.

- Facebook is licensed to use your pictures and videos as it sees fit without paying you. It is also free to transfer said license to third parties. Even if you own your content on Facebook, the rules preventing others from using it are still severely restricted. The effect of the license is only terminated if the user account is deleted. Yet, even in this case, if content was shared with other users, it would remain on Facebook.

TWITTER

Contributor: Zheni Yaneva
deputy editor-in-chief, TeenStation

There are currently 376 million accounts worldwide actively using Twitter and some of them use it to disseminate false information. The platform is designed to allow anyone to share anything, which means that you may come across all sorts of information based on who you are following. Yet, few people would stop and think before they became part of the vicious circle by sharing fake information.

Since content sharing is so effortless on Twitter, news there travels really fast. Globally, this social media platform is suitable for, and used by, mainly teenagers and adults under the age of 30 years whose day-to-day lives are dynamic and who wish to have an effective means of keeping up to speed with global developments and sharing their opinions on these.

Your Twitter content should meet the following requirements:

- limited character count (up to 280 characters)
- limited picture number per post (4)
- maximum video length of 2 minutes and 20 seconds.

Pictures and videos cannot be uploaded as part of the same tweet. If one wishes to post more content than that allowed in a single tweet, they can use the so-called threads. These constitute a set of interconnected tweets posted from a single account. Since it is possible for other users to break a thread while another item of it is being written, users can create threads as drafts and then post them in one go.

Another way of sharing content on Twitter are the so-called moments. Unlike threads, moments do not require that the entire content comes from a single account. Moments are designed to offer an overview of what has happened during a given day in terms of various aspects of life (news, sports, fashion, etc.) but many people use these as data points in which they store all their content on a given topic.

Interacting with other users takes place in one of several ways. You may reply to another user's tweet. If you do this, your reply will be visible only in the feed of the user and their followers. Alternatively, if you wish to reply to a certain question and share the answer with your own followers, you may quote the tweet. Recently, Twitter launched the option of including pictures/videos in quotes.

Twitter also allows direct messages, which enable two or more users to hold private conversations.

Rules

Twitter has strict rules concerning the use of obscene language and violence online. Like all other social media, Twitter allows users to report accounts that have violated its terms of use and its rules on online safety. Such reports are reviewed and the accounts in question are suspended either for a certain number of days or permanently, depending on the violation.

It is not only accounts that have been reported that may end up being suspended. Twitter runs algorithms that allow it to detect and automatically lock certain accounts on the basis of the content uploaded and the audience with which it is shared. Thus, users should mind their language even if they are merely joking.

Settings

One of the most useful settings on Twitter is locking your account. This means that any user who wishes to follow you will first have to be approved by you and, even if they do have access to your tweets, they will not be able to share them to their own account. This function is especially suitable for young people who wish to have control over the content that they see and the people with whom they communicate.

Apart from locking their account, users can mute words that make them feel uncomfortable with the aim of regulating the content of their feed. They can block accounts with which they do not wish to interact, too.

Another option is muting accounts. This allows a user to stop seeing tweets by these accounts in their feed while still following them. The user is still able to visit these accounts and communicate with them.

INSTAGRAM

Contributor: Bozhidara Simeonova
social media manager, TeenStation

Instagram, one of the most popular content sharing platforms over the past few years, has over 1 billion active users visiting it every month. It is generally used for sharing visual content, i.e. pictures and videos. The main tools to create and share content using the platform are posts, a facet traditionally shared by all social media. Instagram is owned by Facebook and the two platforms exchange information.

Instagram's distinguishing characteristic is that the wall of an account arranges pictures in a grid with three pictures per line. A cropped, square version of the picture uploaded is seen in this grid. Another Instagram functionality is the so-called Story. This enables a user to upload pictures or videos, which become invisible to the user's followers 24 hours after they have been uploaded. After that, they are transferred to the Archived section (from which they may be moved and turned into posts) and remain invisible to everyone but the user. If a user wishes to change a story's status and pin it, they can use the Highlights option, which enables them to make stories uploaded long ago and (so to speak) no longer current appear in their feed. InstaTV offers users the opportunity to share vertically shot videos.

Instagram's team has not shied away from offering the standard functionalities offered by social media either. The platform can be used for messaging, video and voice calls, tagging friends in pictures and commenting.

Instagram employs the principle of following as a way to establish contact. A powerful tool used to categorise content are hashtags, which may be included under a post. These allow the platform's algorithm to select the audience for a given post. Yet, hashtags are not the only tool an algorithm uses. It takes into account the time a target user has spent browsing through similar content and how they have interacted with it.

One of the most significant ethical issues Instagram faces is striking a balance between keeping everything aesthetically pleasing and requiring radical corrections to a picture or video. Such corrections lead to a distortion of users' general view of the world. When these are introduced so very frequently, they invariably skew users' way of thinking. They could even result in psychological repercussions in some people: melancholia, depression, lower self-esteem and even the so-called 'social media disorder' FOMO (fear of missing out). Over the past few years, the problem of the unbearable exaggeration and lack of realism of posts has become prominent. A concomitant issue has been the unrealistic self-image that Instagram accounts help to create.

Rules

Instagram's rules are similar to those relevant to other social media. Hate speech, cyberbullying, supporting terrorism and self-harm are all prohibited. Copyright infringement is not allowed and neither is the use of others user' accounts or data. Similarly, pictures displaying nudity are not tolerated, the only exception being pictures of mothers breastfeeding and works of art such as sculptures and paintings. Just like Facebook, Instagram is granted a great many rights in your pictures, including sublicensing and modification rights and the right to use these pictures in advertising material without paying you any royalties or compensation.

Instagram's Terms of Use state the following: '(...) you hereby grant to us a non-exclusive, royalty-free, transferable, sub-licensable, worldwide license to host, use, distribute, modify, run, copy, publicly perform or display, translate, and create derivative works of your content (consistent with your privacy and application settings).

Settings

If you make your profile public, anyone will have access to your pictures. If you make your profile private, only users approved by you will be able to see it. You can change these settings directly in the Instagram application. To make your profile private, make sure that the Private Account option is enabled. Be careful when using Instagram's photo map function as it will geotag your photos and put them on a map, revealing locations where you like to spend your time.

YOUTUBE

Contributor: Zheni Yaneva
deputy editor-in-chief, TeenStation

YouTube is a video sharing platform established in 2005 by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim. It allows each user to upload videos with a total size of 128 GB and even profit from these if their channel meets the platform's requirements. YouTube supports most video formats (AVI, MP4, MPEG-PS, QuickTime Format, FLV). Content may be shared both via a computer and via a phone.

Video quality may range between 144p and the staggering 8K. Recently, a new option was launched enabling viewers to enjoy 360-degree videos and 24-hour stories posted by their favourite youtubers (vloggers using YouTube). Users can also add the so-called widgets to their content. Widgets redirect viewers to a user's channel (or that of another contributor) or to other videos. To make their videos more easily searchable by their target audience, a contributor may place hashtags relevant to the topic of the video in its title or description.

YouTube also allows content creators to control access to their content. If content is hidden, it will only be accessible to those who have a link to it. If it is private, only the contributor can view it. Another option allows users to livestream. This enables them to communicate with their audience in real time by responding to questions asked in a dedicated chat window.

A YouTube account is not necessary to watch videos on the platform but having no account will prevent a viewer from interacting with other users and uploading content. The reason why YouTube is the second most frequently used website globally is that it is easy to navigate. If you like a contributor's videos, you can subscribe to their channel in order to be notified when they upload a new one. Communication with other users takes place in one of several ways: via comments directly under a video, via comments in the Community tab of each YouTube channel or by means of the dedicated chat window that accompanies livestreams. It is also possible to block users. Until recently, the platform allowed for messaging other users but since this function was not popular among users it was discontinued.

If you wish to profit from being part of YouTube, you have to be ready to meet the countless requirements that the platform has as regards you content, the views it receives and the number of your subscribers. Many complain about YouTube's algorithm, which favours certain types of content at the expense of others. Quite often, videos displayed in the suggestions pane come from contributors who are already well liked and very popular. This is why it is extremely difficult to grow a YouTube channel from scratch nowadays.
YouTube's disadvantages include the fact that it is easy to stumble on negative content even though means to prevent such situations exist (for instance, enabling YouTube Kids). Algorithms are not always good at recognising videos that violate the basic rules of the platform.

Rules

As the platform itself states, anyone should be able to guess for themselves what the rules concerning the content of the videos uploaded are. If a user's video violates these, this does not result in the video's automatic removal from YouTube. Instead, the video is made unavailable to users under the age of 18 and users who have enabled YouTube Kids.

To be specific, YouTube's content guidelines include the following:

- Sexual content is not allowed. Nudity is not tolerated. Nevertheless, contributors are free to discuss topics related to sex. In 99 % of the cases, this results in no advertising appearing on their videos.
- Hateful content, be it directed at an individual or a minority, is not allowed. If a contributor wishes to express criticism, they must do so in a way that precludes the interpretation of their words as hate speech.
- Content that may incite a viewer to dangerous actions is not allowed.
- SPAM and misleading information are not allowed. Where a user disseminates false claims and uploads videos already uploaded to the platform, the videos in question are generally removed.
- Content containing violence is not allowed.

Settings

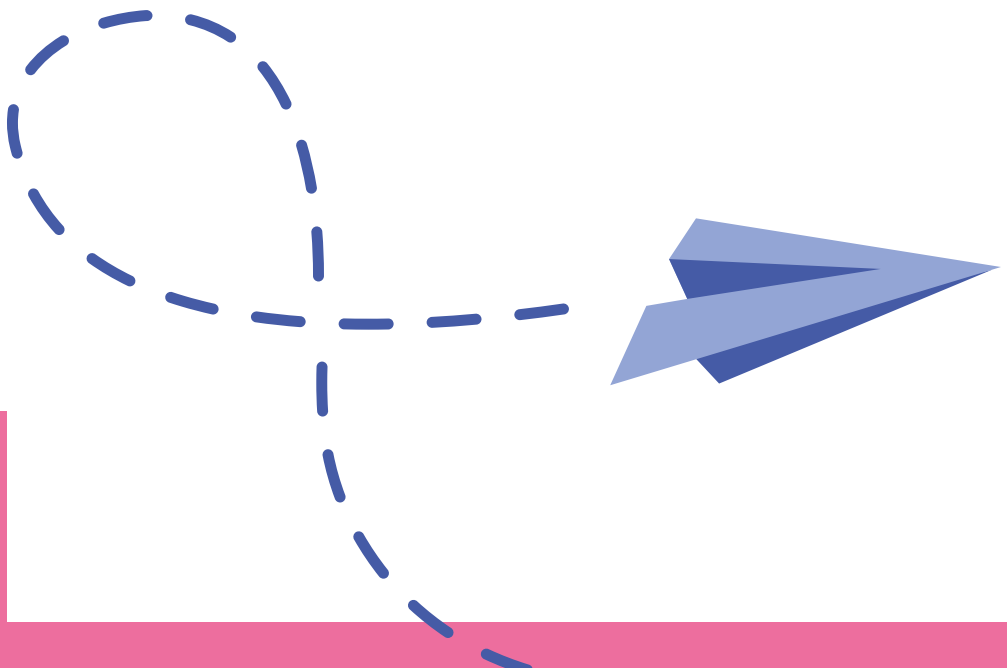
Like all other social media, YouTube allows its users to control the content to which they are granted access. Any user is free to indicate that they are not interested in a certain video and do not wish to be recommended videos similar to it. If you do not approve of the content uploaded by a contributor, you have two options: block this contributor or report them and their videos (especially if you believe that they do not meet ethical norms and legal provisions).
If a user does not wish to bother with these steps and instead prefers to let YouTube's algorithms manage what they see, they may enable YouTube Kids. YouTube Kids is enabled automatically for users under the age of 18.

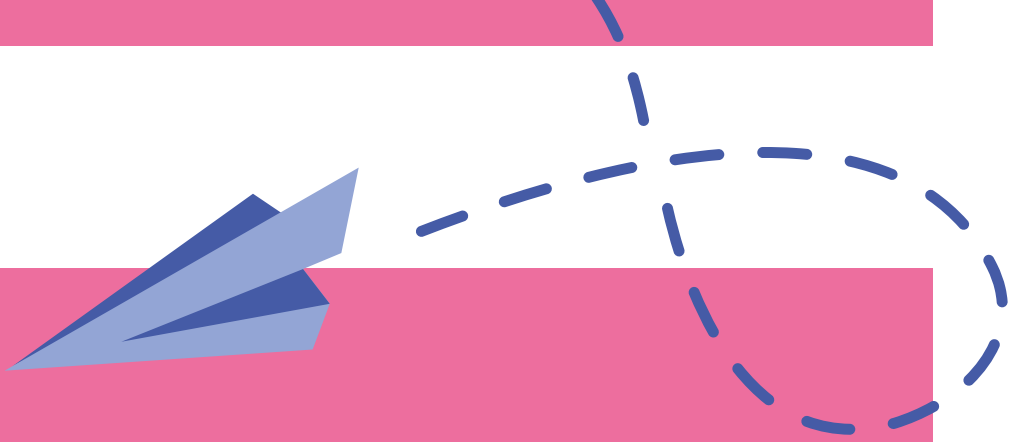
Advice

- Show your passion, the real you, your identity, be unique: this is the greatest edge you can have over others.
- Follow users that contribute positively to your day and users that you like for some reason.
- Upload your own content on topics that interest you without injuring others' dignity.
- Create an account that is authentic and memorable so that the right people, i.e. those with whom you share similar interests, may follow you.
- If you have concerns about one of your followers on social media, do not hesitate to block them. They will not be notified of what you have done and will merely be unable to interact with your account.
- Ensure that you have disabled the location sharing option.

Control questions

- What do I want to achieve with my publication?
- Does my publication meet the multimedia, ethical and legal requirements set?
- Who do I want to attract and how?
- Am I publishing this merely to impress somebody even if it could present me in the wrong light?
- Is the content I am going to publish verified through checks in other sources, or am I about to publish false information?
- Does my content hurt anyone?





Did you know?

- Facebook is the world's largest social media platform, having the record 2.41 billion active users as of 2019 (according to Statista data). It is also the most popular platform in Bulgaria, having 3.47 million users, which accounts for almost 50 % of the country's entire population! Women on Facebook outnumber men, with the most active age group being that of those between 25 and 34 (Napoleon Cat, 2019).

- The tweets shared in a single day could span a book with a length of 10 million pages (6 000 tweets a second, or 518.4 million a day).

- By 2025, 50 % of people under the age of 32 will no longer subscribe to cable TV because they will be using YouTube.

SAFETY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Contributor: Petar Kanchev
expert with the Bulgarian Centre for Safe Internet

This chapter will consider two of the most frequently encountered dangers that you may face online (cyberbullying and sexting) in detail and will present best practices for tackling these.

Developing your digital media literacy systematically both at school and out of it, coupled with communicating openly with parents and other responsible adults, is the most effective way in which you can tackle the various situations you may end up in when communicating online and developing your artistic potential in cyberspace.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying constitutes the systematic use of the Internet to inflict emotional harm on others. It is used by children and teenagers to target their own peers. Unlike bullying at school, cyberbullying has the potential to continue around the clock and to be much more visible, with observers sometimes numbering tens of thousands. The one targeted will know some of these people but not others.

Cyberbullying can take on many guises. Some of the most common forms of cyberbullying include:

- Messages featuring threats and offensive language sent via chat applications such as WhatsApp, Viber, Snapchat and Facebook Messenger.
- Pictures designed to mock that have been doctored or used in a collage in many cases, or published on platforms allowing image sharing such as Facebook and Instagram.
- Live footage of harassment or bullying, or video designed to mock, published on video sharing platforms such as YouTube and Vbox7 or on Facebook.
- Fake social media accounts designed to disrupt the victim's social relations.
- A website or a Facebook page specifically designed to injure the dignity of the victim.

The person suffering from cyberbullying may know the participants in the situation or they may be perfect strangers to them. Participants are most often categorised with reference to the following **roles**:

- Person suffering (victim) - a person targeted by systematic cyberbullying.
- Perpetrators - all participants actively inflicting harm on the person(s) suffering, irrespective of the extent to which their actions are deliberate.
- Observers - all participants passively observing a cyberbullying situation and not responding in any way. While observers do not directly inflict harm, they add to the sense of shame that plagues those suffering from cyberbullying.

- Advocates - all participants actively taking measures to counter cyberbullying and firmly stating their support for those suffering from it. It is extremely important that advocates, especially if they are part of the victim's family or friends, should be proactive if they notice sings typically associated with cyberbullying.

Sexting

Sexting constitutes sending sexually explicit pictures or videos using social media, chat applications and MMS among others. The term is a blend of the words 'sex' and 'texting' (exchanging text messages using digital devices). Sexting most often takes place between people who already share an intimate relationship (which need not be sexual). Sadly, underage people often become the target of sexting. It is precisely because we trust our intimate partners (for instance, the people we date at school) that we may be misled into not considering the repercussions of sending sexually explicit images. The most frequent and most dangerous repercussions of sexting include:

- Ridicule by peers. This ridicule often paves the way for cyberbullying, which is particularly vicious when targeted at girls. Sometimes, a victim's parents have to resort to transferring their child to another school or even relocating.
- Spread of the picture(s)/video(s) on social media, which is almost impossible to stop due to the nature of cyberspace.
- Depression, triggering of mental illness, self-harm and, in the most severe cases, an attempt on one's own life.
- Possible contact with paedophiles in cases of victims who have not reached puberty or are in early puberty.
- Possible contact with sex traffickers in cases of victims who are high schoolers.

Signs displayed by victims

Regardless of whether they have suffered cyberbullying or sexting, victims will go into severe emotional states that need to be recognised as swiftly as possible by their families and friends to avoid a fatal outcome. The most frequent signs in cases of cyberbullying or sexting include:

- Social isolation, less communication at home and with friends, refusal to attend school
- Lower self-esteem, insecurity, changes in timbre and tone of voice
- Insomnia
- Sudden dislike for the Internet and technology
- Anxiety, fear, nightmares
- Bodily symptoms such as paleness, weakness, headache, stomach-ache
- If the initial symptoms are ignored and measures to tackle the problem are not taken, this may lead to self-harm and even attempts on one's own life.

What should I do to avoid Internet-related problems?

You do not need to wait for a problem to come about and only then look for ways to solve it. Here is what you can do to prevent situations of cyberbullying and any spread of images resulting from sexting:

- Frequent, constructive and peaceful conversation in the family. That is right! If you regularly confide in your parents, it is more likely that they will support you in a difficult situation and offer you sound advice. This includes confiding about your intimate relationships. Believe it or not, your parents were once your age, too, and they lived through the same experiences as you.
- Developing self-esteem. Challenge yourself, try new things, get to know new people and do not give up when something seems difficult.
- Many friends, who will enable you to learn how to offer and receive support.
- Hobbies and activities of your choosing: these may include sports, dancing, school clubs and others. They should allow you to discover and develop the qualities and talents you have while meeting likeminded people and role models.
- Making effective use of the privacy settings on social media. Indeed, you can spare yourself a whole lot of trouble merely by pressing a few buttons!

What should I do to solve problems in cyberspace?

No matter how careful we are, sometimes life presents us with unpleasant surprises. Yet, there is a solution to any problem. Here is what you can do to stop situations of cyberbullying and any spread of images resulting from sexting:

- Calmly request the perpetrator to stop what they are doing and remove the unwanted content immediately. In some cases, the perpetrator merely means to joke because they have not considered the emotional impact of their actions on you. If you calmly explain how they made you feel and ask them to stop, it is quite probable that the unpleasant situation will come to an end without others being involved.
- Report the website and have it blocked. It is important to report the website first since it is not possible to report it after it has been blocked.
- Report your case to the Centre for Safe Internet at www.safenet.bg. Links to the perpetrator's profile and the unwanted content should be sent along with a screenshot of the instance of cyberbullying. If the perpetrator has spread sexually explicit material featuring underage persons, they are criminally liable. Consultation with professionals can be sought using the chat module at www.safenet.bg and by calling 124 123. Consultation will remain fully anonymous if the victim wishes so. The Centre for Safe Internet will partner with the most popular social media and video sharing platforms to remove unwanted content as swiftly as possible.
- Confide in your parents, teachers, other adults you trust and your friends.
- Call the Bulgarian National Hotline for Children at 116 111. The line's staff have received special training. They will help you by offering advice, consultation and refer you to an establishment offering longer-term psychological support if necessary.

- It is also important to know that anyone who becomes aware of a child at risk or a child that has become a victim of violence has a legal obligation to report this to the Child Protection Unit, the State Agency for Child Protection or directly to the police.

Did you know?

- By the time they reach 7 years of age, 50 % of Bulgarian children have already used the Internet.
- Over 90 % of Bulgarian children aged between 9 and 17 use the Internet daily.
- Almost 80 % of Bulgarian children aged between 9 and 11 have social media accounts even if the minimum age for using such accounts is 14 under Bulgarian law.
- Cyberbullying constitutes the most prevalent danger to children in Bulgaria online.
- The cyberbullying rate among Bulgarian schoolchildren grew by 50 % between 2010 and 2016.
- In the overwhelming majority of cases, the perpetrators of cyberbullying are former victims.
- Often, the perpetrators of cyberbullying merely mean to joke, not considering the impact of their actions on the victims.
- According to Bulgarian law, spreading sexually explicit pictures or videos of underage persons constitutes a criminal offence even in cases where these are spread by the very person featured in the pictures or videos.
- The better part of sexually explicit pictures and videos of underage persons are actually spread by these same persons.

* The data cited comes from a national representative study entitled The Behaviour of Children Online. Risks and Repercussions, which was conducted by the Bulgarian Centre for Safe Internet and published in 2016.

Control questions for children engaged in content creation

?

- How would I feel if somebody was to write that about me?
- I may be angry at this particular person right now but how long could that last? How long would the animosity between us continue if I were to write that about them?
- Instead of observing cyberbullying from a distance, what could I do to make it stop?
- I may think I look 'sexy' in this picture but will I feel the same way ten years from now?

?

- If I sent this picture to my girlfriend/boyfriend now and we broke up at some point, what could happen?
- What repercussions could follow if a nude picture of me leaks online? How would my peers react? What other threats could emerge?

USEFUL RESOURCES

Join us

You can become part of the community of teen journalists by participating in the school media network www.Teenstation.net or by taking part in the regular competitions of the national online platform for student journalism: www.Scoolmedia.com.
Do not forget to keep an eye on the regular competitions organised by the Media Literacy Coalition at: Gramoten.li

Learn more

If you would like to learn more about distinguishing fake news or if you wish to join the fight against their spread, you can use the resources available on the website of the Media Literacy Coalition or on its Facebook page: www.Gramoten.li and https://www.facebook.com/mediinagramotnost/ respectively.

Research and reports

Digital Literacy for Children, UNICEF, August 2019

National representative study entitled The Behaviour of Children Online. Risks and Repercussions, Bulgarian Centre for Safe Internet, 2016.

Terms and Conditions for using Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube

https://www.facebook.com/legal/terms

https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/introduction

https://www.facebook.com/about/privacy

https://blogs.findlaw.com/law_and_life/2014/10/who-legally-owns-your-facebook-posts.html

https://help.instagram.com

Разлики между Facebook и Instagram - https://www.business2community.com/instagram/difference-facebook-instagram-01666068

https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-hashtags/

https://later.com/blog/how-instagram-algorithm-works

https://help.twitter.com/en

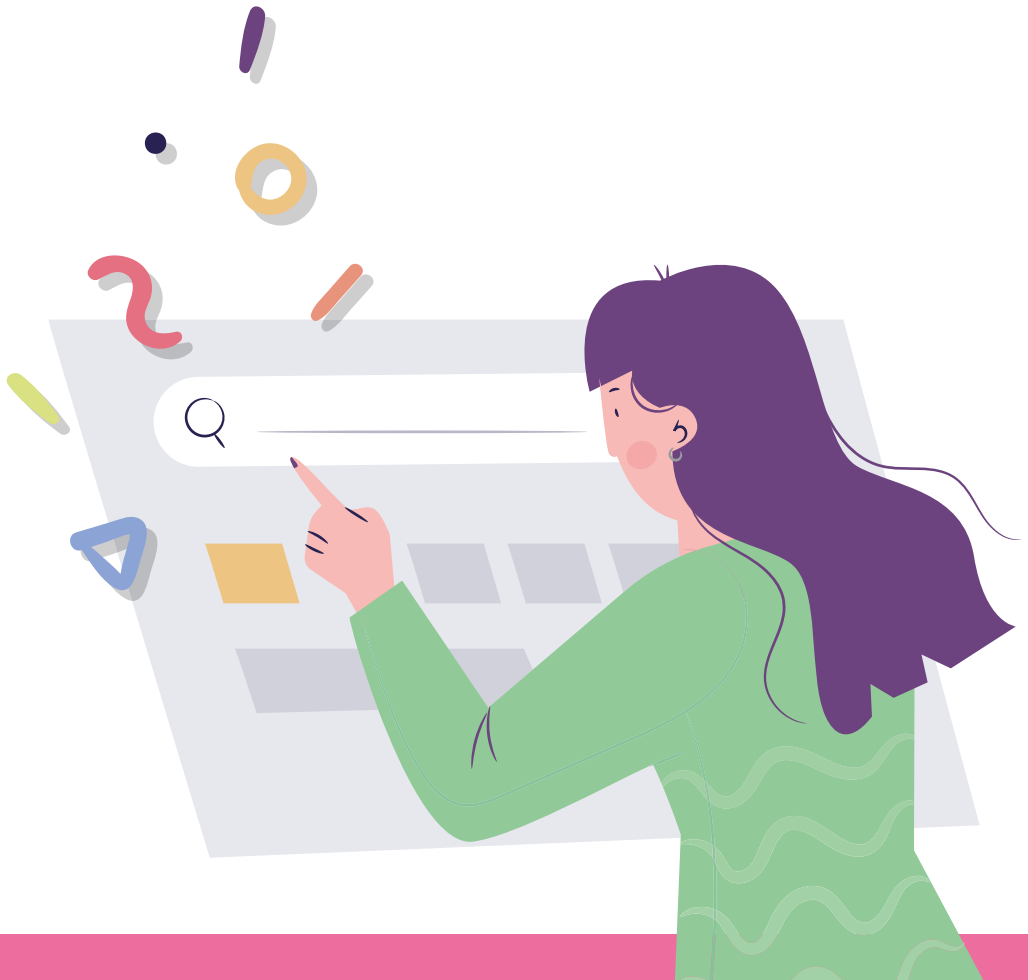
https://support.google.com/youtube/

Websites containing free pictures and images

Pixabay (https://pixabay.com/) - a website offering a wide range of free images, including illustrations and vector graphics.

Unsplash (https://unsplash.com/) - beautiful pictures in the public domain; every ten days, ten new images are uploaded. The images are uploaded by people who have impressed others with their talent and have an account of their own; a picture may be liked and downloaded at the user's account.

Picjumbo (https://picjumbo.com/) - this platform was established in 2013 by designer and photographer Viktor Hanacek, who also maintains it. He took this step after the multiple refusals he received from other platforms, citing 'insufficient quality' of the pictures. Currently, over 2.5 million pictures have been downloaded from Hanacek's platform, all recognisable for their intense colours and the variety of the subject-matter they treat.

Compfight (http://compfight.com/) - by looking up 'Creative Commons' using the search function of this website and specifying your category of choice, you can find thousands of images. For each image, you will be able to see information concerning terms of use, i.e. whether or not the image can be used on a profit-generating website, whether it is necessary to mention its author, etc.

New Old Stock (https://nos.twnsnd.co/) – a website created by Cole Townsend offering freely downloadable vintage photographs with art elements.