

## ARTICLE

# MEDIA IMAGE OF THE CITY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE STRATEGY FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION

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## ABSTRACT

This article is devoted to the analysis of the image of the Russian city Naberezhnye Chelny, which is created by local mass media. The authors consider this topic actual, because for this city with a population of more than 500 thousand people, the problem of outflow of young people is typical. At the same time, the good conditions for comfortable living, training and work are created Naberezhnye Chelny. This is evidenced by the latest achievements of the city - the first place in the rating of the ecological development of Russian cities, the first place in the rating of the quality of housing and communal services of the country and so on. The authors think that mass media form a negative image of the city of Naberezhnye Chelny. The results of the content analysis, the survey of the population and the questioning of school leavers confirm this. On the basis of the data obtained, several basic problems concerning the image of the city were identified, and ways of their solution were suggested. The statements and conclusions formulated by the authors can be used as a basic material for actions to create a positive image of the city. In addition, the study's method of analysis of the media image of the city can be used to study this problem in other localities.

## INTRODUCTION

Today the formation of the image of any subject and object is largely dependent on the mass media, which have the ability to present information in a positive and negative light. The image of the city is one of the most important semantic results of the activity of local mass media. For Naberezhnye Chelny as a city that recently received the status of a territory of advanced socio-economic development, the formation of a holistic media image becomes important.

One of the main participants and at the same time the most active subjects of forming the media image of the city are the media. The solution of most problems of the city doesn't depend on local media, which are not able to change the architecture or the economic indicator in the city. But in the forces of the media to create a positive image of the city from its residents, to tell about interesting places, people, to encourage visiting cultural events. Urban media, processing and transforming information, thereby affect the transformation of urban reality. So, the information positioning of the city is technologically and represents a set of actions aimed at promoting positive information about the city in the media environment, forming a positive attitude towards it. At the same time, there are a number of problems related to the media's capabilities in designing and positioning the image of the city. Therefore, the problems identified in the study will help to find the correct path of development of the city in the information and cultural plan. [1]

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The theoretical basis of the study are works of E.N. Bogdan [2], I.V. Rogozina, T.N. Galinskaya [3] and L.V. Khochunskaya [4]. Forming the basic means of creating a media image, we relied on the development of scientists in the field of political socialization O.V. Korzheneva [5], imagology R.B. Kvesko [6]. Thanks to the works of the classics of Russian psychology of journalism as A.E. Levchenko [7] and E.E. Pronina [11], we identified the main psychological aspects in the formation of the image.

A special role in the study was played by publications in the field of urban planning by K. Lynch [8]. Publications of researchers I.S. Semenenko [8], V. Vakhshstein [9] helped to understand the potential of the media in the process of designing the media environment. Theoretical developments G.G. Pocheptsov [10], T.N. Galinskaya [11], T.A. Morozova [12] contributed to the definition of the concept of the image of the city and its laws of functioning.

For the solution of theoretical tasks we have used techniques such as description, comparison, analysis, content analysis, and questionnaire survey. We used the author's questionnaire "Image of the city" among the eleventh graders of the city of Naberezhnye Chelny, this allowed us to obtain a characterization of the image of Naberezhnye Chelny, to identify the emotions and feelings most clearly manifested in the recipients in the perception of the city. In the course of the research we identified the most important transformations of the urban environment and the positive qualities of the city, on which it's necessary to emphasize the publications of local mass media. We also conducted a survey "What is our city?" among the population in the social network "VKontakte".

The materials of the study were the publications of three local electronic media (Chelninskiye Izvestia, Chelnybiz.ru, Chelny LTD). A total of 3,096 materials were analyzed (Chelninskiye Izvestia - 1342, Chelnybiz.ru - 987, Chelny LTD - 767) for 2015-2016 years. In the process, the authors studied the strategy of socio-economic development of municipal formation Naberezhnye Chelny city until 2030. Also,

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the materials for the study were the results of sociological research - a survey of 459 schoolchildren, a survey of 3399 residents of the city of different ages and in-depth interviews of 8 journalists of the city's media.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As a result of studying the theoretical literature, we came to the conclusion that the image of the city as a result of media includes two equivalent components. The first is an image as a complex of positive and negative characteristics expressed by definitions and nouns. The second is an image as a system of sub-sketches, representing different spheres of the life of the city. To determine the characteristics of these components of the image, we conducted a content analysis, with the results of which we want to acquaint you. To begin with, we studied the characteristics that give our city the media in its materials. Despite the presence of negative nominations "gray", "shabby", the use of such epithets as "comfortable", "clean", "unique", "attractive", suggests that local Internet media are trying to lay down an image of a pleasant life a city that has prospects for development. It is noteworthy that some positive and negative characteristics of the city are contradictory and mutually exclusive: white and gray, well-organized and shabby, a leading city and an outsider city, unique and not historical, clean and an ecological disaster zone. From this it follows that in the minds of the journalists themselves there is no established image of the city, and they do not have a clear view of that its boundaries can be revealed to the audience.

The authors considered the image as a system of sub-sketches, representing different spheres of the city's life. So, the following sub-sketches of the city were singled out: political, urban, economic, eventual, criminal-deviant, natural-ecological, innovative, cultural, historical, scientific and educational.

The content analysis of journalistic materials showed that the most common are event, criminal-deviant and urban sub-sketches. The smallest amount of material is devoted to the historical sub-sketch. The results show that local online media form a multi-faceted collective image of the city, but elements of its structure are uneven in quality and quantity characteristics.

Next, we analyzed the entire array of publications dedicated to the life of the city with the aim of identifying dominant in their connotation: positive, negative and neutral. Quantitative analysis showed the predominance of neutral and negative information in the media.

In addition, a study was made of the genre and psychological characteristics of journalistic materials. The authors found that in local publications the priority is given to a small amount of material. Thus, information genres occupy 89.1% of all materials.

We have also identified methods of image construction and methods of influencing the audience in the materials studied media. So, the most common method of construction became the method of visualization (38.8%), and the most popular method of exposure has become a method of suggestion (68.7%).

The study will address not only the psycholinguistic aspect of the image, but also hermeneutic. With the aim of identifying the impact of media on the audience, a survey was conducted among the population in a social network "Vkontakte" and a survey of graduates. The views of eleventh-graders are a very important indicator, because if a small number of eleven-graders leaves the city, then from the point of view of urbanism the city is considered successful.

The survey revealed that most residents (71%) formed a negative impression about Chelny. And at the end of the survey, 68.4% of high school graduates going to leave the city after graduation.

The survey results also showed that the majority of graduates (55.1%) refer to Naberezhnye Chelny neutrally. Moreover, the questionnaire allowed the authors to find out the main disadvantages and advantages of the city, which helped to build recommendations for the formation of a positive image of Naberezhnye Chelny.

Based on the results of the study, a number of basic problems related to the formation of the image of the city of Naberezhnye Chelny were revealed. The authors suggested ways to solve them.

The first problem is that local city media form the image of the city that does not correspond to the priority image lines of the strategy "Naberezhnye Chelny-2030".

There are no materials in the information space of the city in which "sign places", "local myths", "place geniuses" are formed, which form a unique image of this territory. Also, in journalistic materials, the concepts "city-innovator", "city of start-ups", "a city with a rich history", and a "cultural city" are not at all present in the strategy of the city "Naberezhnye Chelny-2030". Only a small part of publications in the media are devoted directly to the city and its advantages. It should be noted that journalists of local publications make attempts to create a positive media image of the city, but at the moment a number of mistakes are allowed in its design.

The decision can be a column about successful residents of the city who have realized their ideas. Another solution may be to have regular media coverage of new projects developed in the city. Journalists can

conduct interviews with future designers and architects, talk in detail about the concepts, create a discussion of city residents about the proposed ideas for transforming the environment.

The second problem is that a large amount of crime news provide the image of the city bias in a negative direction.

The solution, according to the authors, is the creation of balance between the main headings of publications and dosed transfer of criminal information.

The third problem was that local Internet media create an image that is uneven in structure and content in terms of subimage. The overwhelming majority of materials are devoted to criminal topics, problems of improvement and urban events, and the cultural and historical sphere does not receive adequate coverage.

The authors of the study recommend to increase the number of materials about the historical past members and create a special project dedicated to the cultural institutions of the city. The fourth identified problem was the monotony of the genres used by local journalists in stories about the city. The authors believe that journalists can try themselves in new genres. For example, in reviews, city reports, longread, portrait sketches or games.

Another problem the authors see a lack of visibility of the city's image in the media (original photography, paintings, drawings, infographics, charts, plans, interactive maps and time lines).

In this regard, We recommend journalists to improve visual content about the city. A special recommendation is the creation of infographics on the future of the city: what other innovative features will be built, projects among architects.

The authors realize that the possible reasons for these problems are a small staff of local media, as well as the formed information culture of the audience, accustomed to the perception of hedonic texts. In support of these words is an interview with journalists from eight different media in the city, which was conducted as part of our study. The authors found a contradiction between the desire of journalists to create a positive image of the city and their activities aimed at covering its negative sides.

The identified problems of constructing the image of the city in local mass media are quite difficult but can be solved by our proposed action. The main difficulty in implementing these recommendations is the small staff of the editorial staff of the urban media, who, in the new information environment, are carrying out an already significant amount of work.

## CONCLUSION

The media image of the city is a complex multifaceted notion that needs to be thoroughly studied. The study carried out a comprehensive analysis of the processes of designing the media image of the city of Naberezhnye Chelny and defined the role of the media in creating and promoting the image of a modern city. It depends on journalists how many residents and guests will see the city - beautiful or dirty, bright or dull, promising or dying. It media is able to place necessary accents in the multifaceted image of the city, but they often are held hostage to ratings and site traffic. Representatives of many mass media noted in an interview that he would like to write more positive material, but the audience will need a crime and scandals. If you do not give readers and viewers what they want, you can lose popularity, which will entail an outflow of finance. In addition to the media, the image of the city is formed by other actors, including power, city activists, users of social networks, tourists. Together these communities create a unique semantic picture of the city, which can be studied for more than a decade.

For successful promotion of the city, a directed and controlled media image creation policy is needed that will be attractive to the external target audience: the media image should broadcast a recognizable visual image of the territory, slogan-positioning, cultural, natural, symbolic dominants of the site and others. In our opinion, the accounting media and strategy of the media image of the area will outfit the space to become more constructive.

In conclusion, it should be noted that Naberezhnye Chelny is favorable to life, education and work of the city in the opinion of many urbanists. The media are the creators of public opinion and in their power to help people see all its facets.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest.

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None

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