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## MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS AND ART DIRECTION IN THE MEDIA INDUSTRY: HISTORICAL EVOLUTION, MODERN MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

*The article examines the transformation of marketing communications and art direction in the contemporary media industry under the influence of digitalization. Particular attention is paid to the historical evolution of advertising and public relations, the transformation of creative management, and the growing role of social media, data analytics and artificial intelligence. The purpose of the study is to identify the main changes in the organization of advertising and PR activities and to substantiate the strategic role of art direction within integrated marketing communications. The research applies historical, systematic, comparative, structural-functional and modeling methods. The study develops a conceptual model that integrates strategic planning, audience analysis, communication architecture, creative concept, art direction, media and PR activation, measurement and strategic adjustment. The proposed approach considers art direction as a managerial function connecting communication strategy, creative execution, brand identity and audience experience. The practical significance of the results lies in their application to the management of contemporary advertising, PR and creative teams.*

**Keywords:** marketing communications, art direction, advertising, public relations, media industry, digital transformation, creative management, social media, artificial intelligence.

**JEL Classification:** M31, M37, M15, O33, L82.

## МАРКЕТИНГОВІ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ ТА АРТДИРЕКШН У МЕДІАІНДУСТРІЇ: ІСТОРИЧНА ЕВОЛЮЦІЯ, СУЧАСНИЙ МЕНЕДЖМЕНТ ТА ОРГАНІЗАЦІЯ РЕКЛАМНОЇ І PR-ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ

*Сучасна медіаіндустрія перебуває під впливом цифровізації, фрагментації медіапростору, зміни поведінки аудиторії, розвитку соціальних мереж, аналітичних технологій та штучного інтелекту, що зумовлює трансформацію підходів до організації маркетингових комунікацій. Метою статті є обґрунтування теоретико-концептуальних засад інтеграції маркетингових комунікацій та артдирекшну в сучасній медіаіндустрії, визначення основних етапів їх історичної трансформації та розроблення моделі управління рекламною і PR-діяльністю в цифровому середовищі. Методологічну основу дослідження становлять системний, історичний, порівняльний та структурно-функціональний підходи, контент-аналіз наукових публікацій і галузевих матеріалів, метод узагальнення та концептуального моделювання. У результаті дослідження встановлено, що розвиток маркетингових комунікацій відбувався від переважно односторонньої масової реклами до інтегрованих, інтерактивних, цифрових та data-driven комунікаційних екосистем. Обґрунтовано трансформацію артдирекшну від функції візуального оформлення рекламних матеріалів до стратегічної складової управління креативною комунікацією. Визначено, що сучасний артдиректор бере участь у формуванні комунікаційної концепції, роботі з аудиторними інсайтами, побудові візуальної системи бренду, адаптації контенту до різних платформ та оцінюванні результативності креативних рішень. Запропоновано авторську інтегровану модель управління маркетинговими комунікаціями та артдирекшном, яка включає стратегічну діагностику, аналіз аудиторії та інсайтів, формування комунікаційної архітектури, креативну концепцію та артдирекшн, медіайну і PR-активацію, вимірювання результатів та зворотний зв'язок. Практична цінність отриманих результатів полягає у можливості застосування запропонованої моделі рекламними агентствами, медіакомпаніями, PR-підрозділами та маркетинговими командами для підвищення узгодженості*

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комунікацій, організації кросфункціональної роботи, розвитку візуальної ідентичності та ефективнішого використання цифрових технологій.

**Ключові слова:** маркетингові комунікації, артдирекшин, реклама, зв'язки з громадськістю, медіаіндустрія, цифрова трансформація, креативний менеджмент, соціальні медіа, штучний інтелект.

**Problem statement.** The contemporary media industry is undergoing a fundamental transformation caused by the development of digital technologies, changes in audience behaviour, media fragmentation and the growing importance of data-driven communication. Traditional media channels such as television, radio and print publications remain relevant, but their role is increasingly complemented by digital platforms, social networks, streaming services, search engines, mobile applications, influencer communication and user-generated content.

These changes have transformed the organizational foundations of marketing communications. Communication can no longer be considered a linear process in which an organization develops a message, distributes it through a selected medium and receives a relatively predictable response. Contemporary audiences simultaneously consume, interpret, share, comment on and create media content. Consequently, organizations increasingly operate within communication ecosystems in which advertising, public relations, content marketing, social media, visual communication and brand management interact.

The transformation is particularly evident in the advertising industry. Digital technologies have expanded the range of tools available to advertisers and have simultaneously changed organizational structures, professional roles and creative processes. Research into advertising agencies demonstrates that the transition from traditional to digital media generated new positions and functions, including creative technologists, user-experience specialists and project managers. The growing complexity of digital advertising has therefore encouraged agencies to develop new combinations of strategic, creative and technological expertise [1, 3].

Marketing communication has also become increasingly integrated. Integrated marketing communication (IMC) is no longer limited to coordinating several traditional promotional tools. Social media, interactive content and consumer-generated media have become part of the communication system. Rehman et al. emphasize that social media should be incorporated into IMC planning rather than treated as an auxiliary activity [2, 5].

The contemporary communication environment also changes the role of creativity. Art direction traditionally focused on the visual realization of advertising concepts through typography, composition, photography, illustration, colour and design. However, digitalization has made the creative process more dependent on platform formats, performance metrics, algorithms, data and automated tools.

Recent research shows that digitalization can redistribute creative agency between human professionals and technological devices. Akmeraner-Kökat and Pellandini-Simányi distinguish between human-led and device-led creative practices and demonstrate that digital formats, metrics, templates and AI-supported tools can influence how creative work is performed.

Therefore, the problem is no longer limited to the question of how to produce visually attractive advertising. The contemporary managerial problem is how to organize strategy, audience insight, creative development, art direction, advertising, PR, media distribution, digital content and performance measurement as components of one integrated communication process.

This problem is particularly relevant for the Ukrainian media and advertising industry. According to the All-Ukrainian Advertising Coalition and IAB Ukraine, the Ukrainian Internet advertising market reached approximately UAH 53.284 billion in 2025, while the forecast for 2026 was updated to more than UAH 62 billion. Search advertising, Internet media, digital development and influencer marketing remain among the important components of the market.

The development of Ukraine's advertising services market is also increasingly associated with artificial intelligence, Big Data, programmatic technologies and digital platforms. Dudarev identifies technological, economic, market, institutional-regulatory and socio-behavioural dimensions among the determinants of the transformation of Ukraine's advertising services market [3, 6].

Consequently, the relevance of the research is determined by the need to reconsider the place of art direction within the contemporary system of marketing communications and to develop an integrated managerial approach that combines strategic communication, creative management, advertising, PR, media and digital technologies.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The theoretical foundations of contemporary marketing communications have developed through several interconnected research directions.

The first direction concerns integrated marketing communications. Luxton, Reid and Mavondo conceptualize IMC capability as an organizational resource that influences communication campaign effectiveness and market-based and financial performance [4, pp. 37–46]. Their research is important because it shifts attention from individual communication tools to the organizational capability to integrate them.

The second direction focuses on the transformation of IMC under the influence of social media. Rehman, Gulzar and Aslam examined the development of IMC through social media and emphasized that social platforms provide opportunities for interaction, feedback, content sharing and consumer participation [2, 8, 10]. Their conceptual approach demonstrates that social media should be integrated into the communication mix rather than treated merely as an additional distribution channel.

The third direction concerns the development of social media marketing itself. Bartoloni and Ancillai conducted a systematic review of 169 academic articles and concluded that the social media marketing literature remains fragmented across different antecedents, behaviours and

outcomes. They proposed an integrative causal-chain framework connecting inputs, contingency factors, organizational social media behaviour and outcomes [5, 7].

This finding is important for the present study because it indicates that contemporary marketing communication cannot be adequately explained by considering individual social media activities independently. Social media should be examined as part of a broader organizational communication system.

Another research direction concerns digital transformation in advertising agencies. Windels and Stuhlfaut studied 34 practitioners and identified new agency roles resulting from the expansion of digital media. Their findings demonstrate that digital advertising requires new forms of cooperation between account management, strategy, creative and production functions [1, 2].

Ceccotti et al. further developed this direction by investigating how digital technologies transform the business models of traditional creative and media agencies. Their study was based on 38 in-depth interviews with communication professionals and considered the influence of social media, mobile technologies, Big Data, artificial intelligence, cloud technologies and virtual and augmented reality [6]. The fourth research direction concerns digital transformation in the media industry itself. Piepponen et al. examined digital transformation of the value proposition in the regional media industry through a case study involving 59 interviews with a service provider and its customers. The study demonstrates that digital transformation changes both the content of value propositions and the practices through which organizations and customers understand and enact them [7].

The fifth direction concerns artificial intelligence and advertising. Qin and Jiang identified four major stages in an AI-supported advertising process: consumer insight discovery, advertising creation, media planning and buying, and advertising impact evaluation [8].

More recent research expands this discussion by examining AI not only as an efficiency tool but as a factor that changes creative work itself. Akmeraner-Kökat and Pellandini-Simányi demonstrate that digitalization can redistribute creative agency between human actors and technological devices, with different degrees of human involvement in creative production [9]. The literature therefore demonstrates considerable progress in understanding IMC, social media, digital advertising, agency transformation and AI. However, these research directions are frequently considered separately.

An insufficiently researched aspect concerns the managerial integration of art direction with marketing communications. Art direction is often conceptualized as a creative or visual production function, while IMC research focuses primarily on communication integration. The relationship between strategic communication objectives, audience insight, art direction, visual identity, media activation, PR and performance measurement remains insufficiently systematized. This unresolved part of the broader research problem determines the focus of the present article.

**Purpose of the article.** The purpose of the article is to

substantiate the theoretical and conceptual foundations of the integration of marketing communications and art direction in the contemporary media industry, identify the main stages of their historical evolution, and develop an integrated management model for organizing advertising and public relations activities under conditions of digital transformation.

**Research methods.** The research is based on an interdisciplinary methodological approach combining marketing, management, advertising, public relations, media studies and creative-industry perspectives. The historical method was used to identify the main stages in the development of marketing communications, advertising, public relations and art direction. The comparative method was used to compare traditional and contemporary approaches to advertising organization, creative management and communication integration. The system approach made it possible to consider marketing communications and art direction as interconnected components of a unified communication-management system. The structural-functional method was used to identify the functions of strategic planning, audience analysis, creative development, art direction, media distribution, PR and performance measurement. The content-analysis method was applied to academic publications and contemporary professional and industry materials addressing IMC, social media marketing, digital transformation, creative advertising and artificial intelligence. The generalization method was used to identify common patterns in the transformation of communication practices. The conceptual modelling method was used to develop the author's integrated model of marketing communications and art direction management.

The study is conceptual and analytical in nature. It does not attempt to estimate statistical causal relationships between art direction and communication performance. The proposed model represents a theoretical and managerial framework that requires further empirical testing in specific organizations and markets.

**Presentation of the main research results.** The evolution of marketing communications can be understood as a sequence of transformations in media technology, audience behaviour and organizational management.

At the first stage, communication was dominated by mass media. Newspapers, magazines, radio and television provided organizations with access to large audiences. Communication was predominantly one-way. The organization developed the message, selected the medium and transmitted the message to consumers. The second stage was associated with the emergence of integrated marketing communications. Organizations increasingly recognized that advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, public relations and other promotional activities should be coordinated.

The third stage emerged with the development of the Internet. Websites, email, online advertising and search engines expanded the communication environment and created new opportunities for targeting and measurement. The fourth stage was characterized by social media and mobile technologies. Consumers became active participants in communication. They could create, share and comment on

content, participate in brand communities and influence the reputation of organizations. The current stage is characterized by data-driven, automated and AI-supported communication. This evolution has changed the role of

communication management. Contemporary managers are increasingly responsible not simply for designing campaigns but for coordinating communication ecosystems (tab. 1).

Table 1

### Evolution of marketing communications and art direction in the media industry

| Historical stage         | Dominant media                    | Communication model           | Advertising role                         | Art direction role             | Management logic          |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mass media               | Press, radio, television          | One-way                       | Information and persuasion               | Visual execution               | Functional                |
| Integrated communication | Multiple traditional media        | Coordinated                   | Integrated campaigns                     | Creative coordination          | Campaign management       |
| Digital media            | Websites, search, online media    | Interactive                   | Targeted communication                   | Digital adaptation             | Data-supported management |
| Social media             | Social networks, mobile platforms | Interactive and participatory | Content and performance advertising      | Cross-platform visual system   | Agile management          |
| AI-supported media       | AI platforms, automated media     | Adaptive and personalized     | Automated and personalized communication | Human-AI creative coordination | Continuous optimization   |

Source: developed by the author.

Advertising and public relations historically performed different organizational functions. Advertising was primarily associated with paid communication and controlled commercial messages. Public relations emphasized reputation, relationships with stakeholders, media relations and organizational legitimacy.

Digital platforms increasingly blur these distinctions. For example, a branded social media publication can simultaneously perform advertising, public relations, customer relationship management and reputation-building functions. A video can operate as a commercial advertisement, a PR communication and a piece of branded content. This means that the organization of communication should move from isolated instruments toward integrated communication architecture.

The contemporary communication system can be represented through five interconnected functions: advertising - attention and persuasion; PR - trust and reputation; content - meaning and engagement; social media - interaction and community; analytics - measurement and optimization.

Art direction connects these functions through visual and symbolic communication, the development of art direction is closely connected with the history of advertising and visual communication, traditionally, the art director was responsible for visualizing an advertising concept. The creative team commonly consisted of a copywriter and an art director, supported by photographers, illustrators, designers and production specialists.

The traditional division of responsibilities could be

described as:

Copywriter - verbal idea;

Art director - visual idea;

Producer – production.

Digital media have significantly expanded this structure, contemporary creative teams may include: creative director; art director; copywriter; graphic designer; motion designer; UX/UI designer; photographer; videographer; social media manager; content strategist; media planner; data analyst; PR specialist; influencer manager; AI or technology specialist.

Windels and Stuhlfaut's study demonstrates that digital advertising generated new professional roles and organizational functions, their findings show that technology increasingly became a strategic rather than merely production-related component of advertising agencies [1, 2, 6]. This transformation means that the contemporary art director must work across organizational boundaries.

The most important transformation of art direction is the transition from visual execution to strategic creative management, consequently, contemporary art direction requires knowledge of: brand positioning; target audience; audience insights; communication objectives; competitive environment; media behaviour; platform requirements; content formats; visual identity; analytics. Thus, art direction becomes a bridge between strategy and execution, this sequence indicates that art direction should be involved at an early stage of communication planning (tab. 2).

Table 2

### Functional transformation of art direction in contemporary marketing communications

| Traditional art direction            | Contemporary art direction                 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Visual execution                     | Strategic creative management              |
| Print-oriented communication         | Cross-platform communication               |
| Campaign-based production            | Continuous content ecosystem               |
| Human-only creative production       | Human-AI collaboration                     |
| Visual consistency within a campaign | Consistency across a brand ecosystem       |
| Creative intuition                   | Creativity combined with data and insights |
| Final production stage               | Participation from strategic planning      |
| Static visual materials              | Dynamic, interactive and adaptive content  |

Source: developed by the author.

Digital transformation has affected not only communication channels but also the organizational structure of agencies, traditional advertising agencies were often structured around relatively distinct functions such as account management, creative development, media planning and production. The digital environment requires greater cross-functional integration.

Ceccotti et al. identify digital technologies such as social media, mobile technologies, Big Data, AI, cloud technologies and virtual and augmented reality as important drivers of agency transformation, their qualitative study included 38 communication experts and examined changes in offerings, customers and agency business models [6]. The contemporary agency can therefore be conceptualized as a communication technology and creativity hub, its functions increasingly include: strategic consulting; creative development; art direction; content production; social media management; media planning; data analysis; influencer marketing; public relations; technology integration.

This transformation also changes the competencies required from communication professionals, creative professionals increasingly need: digital literacy; data literacy; platform knowledge; project management skills; interdisciplinary communication; understanding of audience analytics; knowledge of AI-supported tools. Social media have fundamentally changed the relationship between organizations and audiences, unlike traditional media, social

networks provide opportunities for immediate interaction, feedback, sharing and content co-creation, rehman et al. emphasize that social media combine characteristics of traditional promotional communication with expanded word-of-mouth communication generated by consumers [2, 10].

This creates several consequences for marketing communication management, first, the organization loses complete control over communication content, second, communication becomes continuous rather than campaign-limited, third, visual communication must be adapted to different platform formats, fourth, audience response can influence subsequent creative decisions, fifth, communication becomes increasingly measurable.

Social media therefore require a new creative-management principle, one idea multiple executions, continuous adaptation, a single creative concept may be transformed into: Instagram post; Instagram Story; short-form video; TikTok video; YouTube content; website banner; PR publication; influencer integration; outdoor advertising.

The role of art direction is to ensure that these different executions remain connected through a common creative idea and visual system. The increasing importance of social media has transformed the basic unit of communication from a single advertising message into a content ecosystem, a content ecosystem includes (fig. 1).

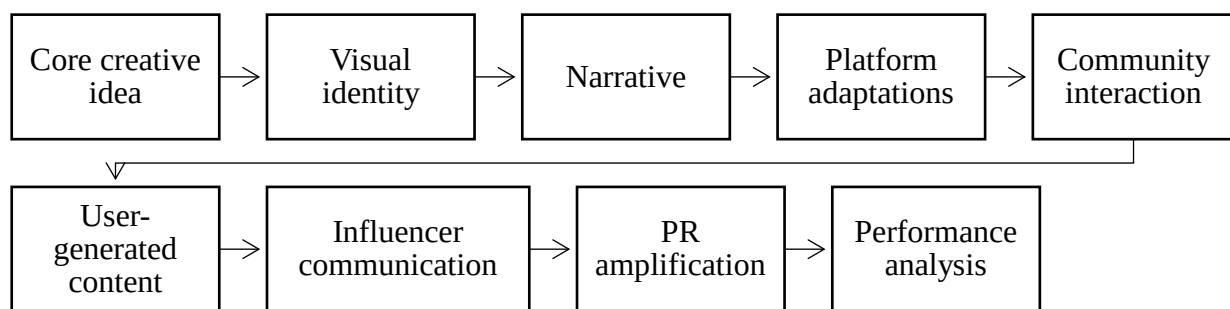


Fig. 1 Content ecosystem includes  
Source: developed by the author.

This model is consistent with the broader development of social media marketing, Bartoloni and Ancillai's systematic review of 169 studies indicates that social media marketing research increasingly needs an integrated perspective linking organizational inputs, contextual factors, social media activities and outcomes [5, 7].

For art direction, this means that the visual system must be scalable, a scalable visual system contains: primary colours; typography; graphic elements; photography principles; illustration principles; motion principles; layout rules; tone of visual communication.

The system provides consistency while allowing platform-specific adaptation.

The development of digital media has also changed public relations, traditional PR was heavily dependent on relationships with journalists, press releases, conferences, events and media coverage, contemporary PR additionally includes: social media; digital storytelling; influencer relations; online communities; visual content; branded

editorial content; reputation monitoring; crisis communication.

This creates a closer relationship between PR and art direction, visual communication influences not only advertising effectiveness but also organizational reputation. For example, an institution's social media profile, visual identity, event design, photography style and video production collectively form a visual representation of organizational values.

Therefore, art direction contributes to brand identity or organizational image stakeholder perception reputation, this is particularly important for media organizations, universities, cultural institutions, technology companies and public organizations whose communication depends heavily on credibility and symbolic representation.

Artificial intelligence is becoming increasingly important throughout the advertising process, qin and Jiang identify four major stages of AI-supported advertising: consumer insight discovery; advertising creation; media

planning and buying; advertising impact evaluation [8, 11]. This structure demonstrates that AI can affect almost every stage of communication management, for art direction, the most significant applications include: generation of visual concepts; moodboard development; image variation; content adaptation; personalization; rapid prototyping; video generation; creative testing.

However, technological efficiency does not automatically equal creative effectiveness, recent research by Akmeraner-Kökat and Pellandini-Simányi demonstrates that digitalization can redistribute creative agency between human professionals and technological devices, their distinction between human-led and device-led creative practices demonstrates that AI can influence both the structure and meaning of creative work [9]. Therefore, the contemporary art director should increasingly perform four functions, define, curate, evaluate, integrate, the art director defines the creative direction, curates alternatives generated by human or technological means, evaluates their strategic and aesthetic relevance, and integrates them into the overall communication system.

The growing role of AI should not be interpreted simply as a replacement of human creativity, instead, three models can be distinguished.

Model 1. Human-led creativity, the human creative team determines:

- concept;
- narrative;
- visual style;
- execution.

Technology primarily serves as a production tool.

Model 2. Human-AI collaborative creativity, humans establish the strategic and creative direction while AI supports: idea generation; visualization; adaptation; experimentation.

Model 3. Device-led creativity, algorithms and automated systems determine a substantial part of the content configuration based on: data; templates; performance metrics; platform requirements.

The third model can increase efficiency but creates potential risks of visual homogenization and loss of distinctive brand identity, consequently, a strategic art director should determine the appropriate balance between automation and human creative control.

The transformation of marketing communications is particularly relevant to Ukraine, the Ukrainian advertising market has demonstrated substantial digital development despite the economic and social challenges caused by the full-scale war. The updated 2026 assessment of the Ukrainian advertising and communication market indicates that Internet advertising accounted for approximately UAH 53.284 billion in 2025, the forecast for 2026 was updated to approximately UAH 62.322 billion. Search advertising, digital video, Internet media, influencer marketing, SMM and digital development represent significant components of this market.

This development confirms the growing importance of digital communication for Ukrainian organizations, at the same time, the Ukrainian market operates under conditions that differ from those of stable economies, organizations

face: communication uncertainty; changes in consumer behaviour; reputational risks; infrastructure limitations; financial constraints; rapid technological adaptation.

Therefore, communication management needs to combine strategic flexibility with visual and message consistency, dudarev's recent research identifies digital platforms, social media, programmatic advertising, AI and Big Data as major technological determinants of the development of the Ukrainian advertising services market [3, 4, 5]. This context increases the practical relevance of an integrated approach to marketing communications and art direction.

Based on the analysis, the article proposes an Integrated Marketing Communications and Art Direction Management Model (IMC-ADMM), the model contains six interconnected components (fig. 2).

The main characteristic of the proposed model is its cyclical rather than linear structure, traditional campaign management can be represented as strategy, creative, media, results. The proposed model expands this sequence strategy, insight, communication architecture, creative, activation, measurement, learning, strategic adjustment, this distinction has significant managerial implications.

First, creative development begins with a strategic problem rather than with an isolated visual idea, second, art direction is informed by audience insight, third, advertising and PR are developed within one communication architecture, fourth, data are used not only to evaluate the final campaign but also to improve subsequent communication decisions, fifth, the process is continuous.

Implementation of the proposed model requires a cross-functional organizational structure, five major functional areas can be distinguished.

Strategic management responsible for: business objectives; communication objectives; market analysis; positioning; campaign strategy.

Creative management responsible for: creative concept; art direction; visual identity; storytelling; content system.

Media management responsible for: media planning; channel selection; audience targeting; paid media; distribution.

PR and reputation management responsible for: stakeholder relations; media relations; reputation; crisis communication; public engagement.

Analytics and technology responsible for: data; KPIs; dashboards; attribution; AI; optimization.

The model therefore changes the organizational principle from functional separation to cross-functional cooperation

The effectiveness of creative activity in the media industry depends not only on the professional competence and individual talent of individual specialists, but also on the organizational conditions in which the creative process takes place. In contemporary advertising and public relations, the development of a creative idea is increasingly becoming a collective process that involves specialists with different professional backgrounds, including art directors, copywriters, designers, strategists, SMM specialists, media planners, PR professionals, analysts and digital technology

specialists. Consequently, the quality of the final communication product depends to a significant extent on the

ability of these specialists to coordinate their activities and work toward common strategic objectives.

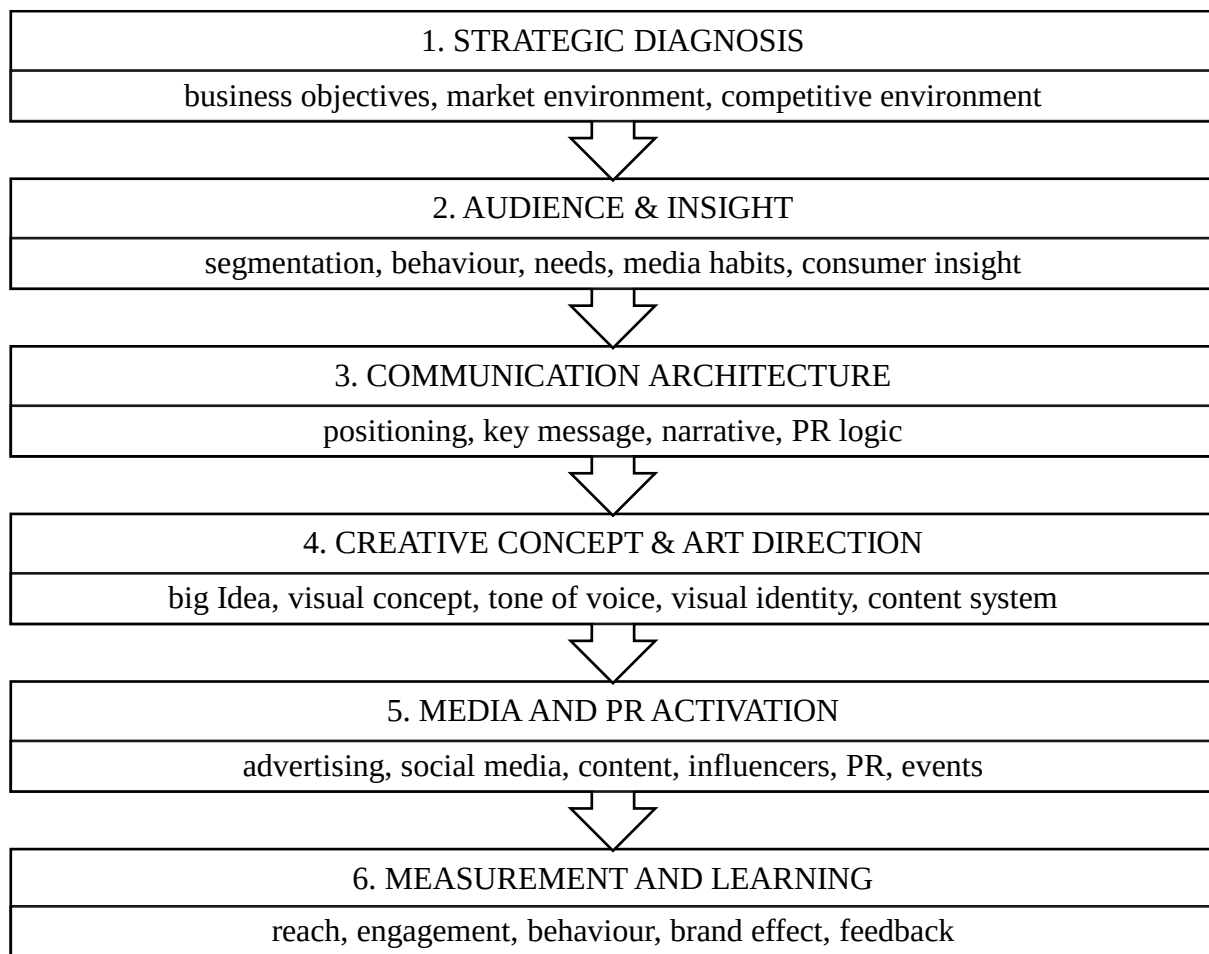


Fig. 2. Integrated marketing communications and art direction management model in the media industry

Source: developed by the author.

The organizational structure of a creative team should not be understood as a rigid hierarchy. In contemporary media practice, project-based and cross-functional forms of cooperation are becoming increasingly important. A single advertising or PR campaign may require the simultaneous participation of specialists responsible for strategy, creative development, visual communication, content production, media placement, public relations and digital analytics. Their interaction makes it possible to combine different professional perspectives and reduce the risk that creative decisions will be made independently of the overall communication strategy.

One of the central managerial challenges in such an environment is therefore the balance between creative freedom and strategic control. Creative professionals need sufficient autonomy to experiment with visual solutions, narratives, formats and communication approaches. Excessive managerial control can restrict experimentation and reduce the originality of the resulting communication product. At the same time, complete absence of strategic restrictions may result in communication that is visually attractive and technically sophisticated but does not correspond to the positioning, values or objectives of the brand [3-4].

For this reason, the proposed model introduces the concept of strategic boundaries, strategic boundaries do not determine the exact creative solution; instead, they establish the framework within which creative decisions should be made. They include the characteristics of the target audience, communication objectives, brand values, positioning, visual identity, available budget, legal and ethical requirements, as well as the technical and media limitations of particular communication platforms.

Such an approach allows organizations to combine strategic consistency with creative autonomy, the art director and other members of the creative team can independently search for appropriate visual and conceptual solutions, while the established strategic boundaries ensure that these solutions remain connected with the overall communication objectives of the organization. In this context, management should focus not on controlling every individual creative decision but on creating the conditions under which creativity contributes to measurable communication results.

An important consequence of this approach is the changing role of the art director, the art director increasingly performs a coordinating function between strategic

and creative processes. Rather than simply supervising the visual execution of a previously developed advertising concept, the art director can participate in the interpretation of audience insights, formulation of the creative concept, development of the visual communication system and adaptation of the concept to different media environments, this makes art direction an important component of strategic communication management rather than merely a production function [5].

**Conclusions.** The research demonstrates that marketing communications and art direction in the media industry have undergone significant transformation under the influence of digitalization, social media, data analytics and artificial intelligence, the historical development of marketing communications can be described as a transition from mass, predominantly one-way communication toward integrated, interactive, digital, data-driven and increasingly adaptive communication ecosystems.

Advertising and public relations have also become more interconnected, digital platforms enable individual communication activities to simultaneously perform advertising, PR, content, reputation and community functions. Art direction has undergone a corresponding transformation, from a predominantly visual-production function, it has developed into a strategic creative-management activity connected with brand positioning, audience insights, content systems, platform requirements and communication effectiveness.

The research confirms that digital transformation has changed the organizational structure of advertising and media agencies. New roles, cross-functional cooperation and technological competencies have become increasingly important. The scientific novelty of the research lies in the development of the Integrated marketing communications and art direction management model, which combines six components: strategic diagnosis; audience and insight analysis; communication architecture; creative concept and art direction; media and PR activation; and measurement and learning.

The proposed model demonstrates that art direction should be integrated into communication strategy from the initial planning stage rather than treated exclusively as a final production function. The model also emphasizes the cyclical nature of contemporary communication management, performance measurement should not represent the

final stage of a campaign but should generate information for strategic adjustment and subsequent creative decisions.

The increasing use of artificial intelligence creates new opportunities for creative experimentation, personalization, content adaptation and process automation, at the same time, AI requires appropriate managerial governance related to originality, intellectual property, transparency, data protection and human responsibility. The practical significance of the research lies in the possibility of applying the proposed model in advertising agencies, media organizations, PR departments, marketing teams and creative studios. It can support the organization of cross-functional teams, communication planning, visual identity development, advertising and PR coordination, content management and communication performance evaluation.

For Ukraine, the proposed approach is particularly relevant because the advertising and media market is undergoing rapid digital transformation while organizations simultaneously operate under conditions of economic, social and communication uncertainty. Current market data indicate the continued expansion of digital advertising and the importance of search, video, social media, influencer marketing and digital development. Further research should focus on empirical testing of the proposed model in advertising agencies, media organizations and corporate communication departments. Particular attention should be paid to developing quantitative methods for measuring the contribution of art direction to integrated communication effectiveness and examining how human-AI collaboration affects creativity, brand differentiation and audience engagement.

**Declaration on the use of artificial intelligence.** During the preparation of this article, the author used the generative artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT (GPT-5.6 Luna, developed by OpenAI, 2026) for assistance in structuring the manuscript, language editing, translation support, refinement of English-language formulations and organization of research material. AI was not used as an independent source of scientific evidence, the author critically reviewed, verified and edited the AI-assisted material. The author is fully responsible for the originality, accuracy, interpretation of the research results, correctness of references and final content of the article.

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