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REPUTATION MANAGEMENT IN FOOD INDUSTRY IN UKRAINE

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O. Derevianko. Reputation management in food industry in Ukraine. The applied aspect of reputation management in Ukraine remains relatively unexplored. However, the peculiarities of external reputation management are likely to influence the development of separate enterprises and branches in this country. Prior studies, mainly, call for the investigation of the product management and marketing. The representatives of food industry belong to five groups according to the type of their reputation management organizational structure. The effect of external reputation management tools usage is greater for "consumer" and "newly created" types of reputation management organizational structure than for a "developed" one.

Keywords: reputation management's organizational structure, effectiveness, factors and tools, external management

The demands of modern enterprises mean that enterprises are increasingly feeling the effect of good reputation scarcity. Furthermore, the necessity of purposeful use of PR-technologies as a tool for the reputation management system is fairly recent in business circles in Ukraine. Despite more than twenty years of independence of this country, business-owners and top-managers understand the importance of external relations and their reputation management besides finance, marketing and sales just nowadays.

Because of the above mentioned issues importance, there is a sufficient number of public relations research abroad. In particular, this theoretical and empirical research of Jefkins and Yadin (1998), Cutlip, Center and Broom (2006), Maister, Green and Galford (2001), A. Ries and L. Ries (2009), Bobrova and Zimin (2006), Vasylenko (2002). Mostly, the foreign experience of other countries is only adopted for usage in Ukraine. However, there is already some original theoretical research of Ukrainian scientists. For example, it is present in works of such authors as Korolko (2001) and Pocheppcov (2001, 2006).

An important role in the development of theory and practice of public relations is also played by social organizations. For example, the Kyiv session of the World Forum "Communication on Top" (WCFDavos|Kyiv) is one of the world's key events that unite leading global experts in communications. The regional Forum shapes core communications trends defining the industry's future and targets top specialists in communications, government relations and public affairs, as well as business owners and executives who recognize the strategic importance of communications. Representatives of the business community, government and media will meet leading Ukrainian and foreign experts to discuss global trends and challenges in this area. In 2014 the above mentioned forum was focused on understanding between the state, government, business and other parts of the society.

The International Public Relations Association (IPRA) was founded 60 years ago. Today, IPRA is a worldwide organization with members in both established and emerging countries. It is recognized as an international non-governmental organization by the United Nations and has been granted consultative status by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and by UNESCO. The activity of the association includes improving international PR-standards and supporting the best PR-decisions. IPRA's Golden World Awards for Excellence in Public Relations, established in 1990, celebrates each year the outstanding achievements of global communication professionals. This award gathered the largest number of participants in 2015. The last GWAs bring together the 447 professions and their practitioners, which is 8% higher than the number of participants in 2014.

The Ukrainian public association "Ukrainian League of Public Relations" PR-League" was founded in 2003 to develop the national market of public relations according to the international PR-principles. Particularly, its activity is based on the IPRA standards. The association is one of the national professional associations, which are members of IPRA. The "PR-League" organizes the annual International PR-Festival in Ukraine, whose members are able to learn the best international PR-practices. It improves the level of PR-technologies in this country.

Ukrainian business develops rapidly. The transition from simple to highly organized forms and tools of management is observed. For instance, the modern system of reputation management consists of such developed elements as PR, IR and GR. The above mentioned elements represent the relations with the target audiences. Furthermore, in some cases the relations with the government (GR – Government Relations) and investors (IR – Investor Relations) are separated from the Public Relations (PR).

Conversely, the existing research is rarely connected with reputation management. Attention of the foreign and Ukrainian scientists is mainly paid to the questions of the product management and marketing.

Therefore, there are a lot of issues, connected with the place of PR in the system of corporate reputation management. For example, the connection between PR and marketing is one of the subjects of scientific discussion. Some scientists understand marketing as a part of the system of external connections of the company. Conversely, PR is able to be an additional component of Marketing mix (product, price, promotion, place).

A lot of PR-managers think that the external connections are more important than marketing, because the last one plays the role of reputation management system's part. For example, the programs of social responsibility do not represent the direct economic effect or the terms of its obtaining.

Analysis of recent researches and publications

Our previous studies suggest that "reputation management" is gaining ground as a driving philosophy behind corporate public relations (Derevianko, 2013, Derevianko, 2014).

The reputation means stakeholders' trust to the company, which represents expecting results of cooperation with the enterprise and is realized by support of its activity (purchase of goods, credit affairs, business contracts and investment).

Reputation management consists of the process of planning, organization, motivation, implementation, monitoring and control of management's effectiveness in terms of the company's reputation formation and support among its stakeholders.

Stakeholders are persons or entities that are interested in enterprises' activity. Stakeholders depend on the enterprise or they are able to influence its activity.

The tools of reputation management include elements of internal and external communications, which create the entrepreneur's reputation. It is one of the three elements of reputation management system.

Particularly, the tools of external reputation management are newsletters publishing, media activity (websites, social networks and blogs), public speeches of the company's representatives, organization of special events (presentations and press tours for media), participation in conferences, forums, festivals, exhibitions, seminars, etc, special events for the company's stakeholders (for example, partners and staff of the company), sponsorship, participation in social and charitable projects, monitoring (content analysis) and neutralization of negative information about the company, reputation auditing (complex studies of the company's reputation in the target groups – stakeholders).

The main part

The analytical part of the paper is based on analysis of five different reputation management organizational structures in the food industry of Ukraine. The 19 representatives are chosen among the Ukrainian food industry's companies and described within the consumer, transition, developed, newly created and zero/subsidiary reputation management organizational structures. The characteristics of such reputation management organizational structures are presented in tab. 1.

Table 1. Ukrainian food industry's companies and main characters of their reputation management organizational structures

Group / Type of reputation management organizational structure	Company	Main characters of reputation management organizational structure of the companies
Group 1. The "consumer" type of reputation management organizational structure	SE Confectionery Corporation "ROSHEN"	Primarily, the reputation management is aimed to support the external image and, especially, the consumer loyalty to the product brand of the company. The companies of the first group create in their organizational structure the positions of a PR-specialist (as a part of marketing department), a specialist for creating and maintaining the corporate website and a journalist (occasionally, as a part of the corporate media edition).
	PrJSC Kyiv Soft Drinks Company "Rosinka"	
	PrJSC "Chumak", SE "Milkiland-Ukraine"	
	IDS Group (PJSC Morshyn Mineral Water Factory "Oskar", PJSC "Mygorod Mineral Water Factory"). PrJSC "AVK" PJSC "Myronivsky Hliboprodukt"	Partly, the elements of organizational conditions of functional, systematic and strategic levels are present. They bring the following advantages: the "spot" focus on the critical vectors of reputation support creates the advantages because it is the starting point for "smooth transition" from the outside (outsourcing) reputation management to the internal reputation management and, conversely, the reputation management, which can be balanced at the fundamental level, has the possibility to be effective and economical at the same time.
Group 3. The developed type of reputation management organizational structure	Nestle Ukraine Company Limited PJSC "Carlsberg Ukraine"	Generally, the structure is typical for the well-known international companies operating in Ukraine. More than 80% of the fundamental level elements are present. It creates the ability to focus on the most loyal - internal – reputation management specialists who prevent the unauthorized information outflow and reduce the period of emergency reaction to the external treats to reputation.
	Vitmark Ukraine Company Limited	
	Veres Company Limited	
	PJSC "Hlibprom Concern" Oasis CIS Mozart Import Company Limited Shelf Company Limited PrJSC "Kyivmlyn"	The fundamental level of reputation management system is not often absolute. It is caused by the presence of all necessary functions at the level of the main (mother) company. Among them the economy on the differentiation of organizational elements of reputation management system can be mentioned because their creation is not reasonable according to the small volumes of subsidiary enterprise activity.
Group 5. The "zero/subsidiary" type of reputation management organizational structure	Kargill Company Limited PJSC "Odeskiy Korovay"	Mostly, more than 80% of elements of the fundamental level of the reputation management system are absent. Although, the reputation management can be effective at the levels of quality management and competitiveness of products. Especially, it is possible for enterprises which produce a single product or use a single resource and do not need additional expenses for their own reputation management system.
	Lux chips Company Limited	

Source: own elaboration

PR-managers, customers, top managers and representatives of the main partners of the companies were interviewed to clear the reputation management organizational structures in the food industry within our research.

The factors of measuring the influence on the consumers attitude to the company. The list of reputational factors which influence the consumers' attitude to the companies of food industry is formed according to the previous analytical studies. Among the reputational factors, the attention is paid to the companies' activity in new-media, fulfilment of companies' obligations, manufacturing of new (innovative) products, absence of negative information (disadvantage occasions), companies' (trade mark) activity, access to information about the company, kind of companies' reaction to the negative information about their activity, social projects, charity, sponsorship, connection between price and quality and quality of the products.

Considering the above mentioned factors, the factors of "product group" are the most important for consumers. The mark for the quality of the products is 9.40; the mark for the correlation between price and quality is 9.34; the highest mark is 10.

The three factors from the informational group are sufficiently important too. The mark for the companies' reaction to the negative information about their activity is 6.44; the mark for the absence of negative information (disadvantage occasions) is 6.32; the mark for the access to information about the company is 6.20 (fig. 1).

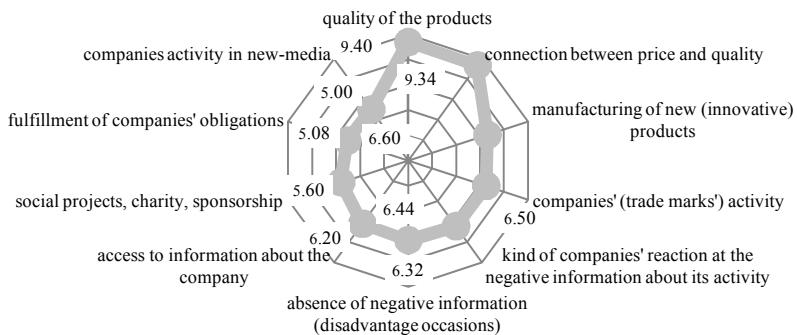


Fig. 1. Significance of reputational factors affecting the attitude of consumers to food industry enterprises, scores (for the scale 0-10).

Source: own elaboration

In addition to the estimation of the company's products quality, the "factor of reliability assessment's" is introduced. It is calculated as the correlation between the estimated ratings and the total number of ratings.

The products of IDS Group, "ROSHEN" and Nestle S.A. companies have the best quality. The quality of companies' products is the worst, which is, firstly, connected with the limited quantity of people, who are able to estimate the products of the above mentioned companies (fig. 2).

Mostly, the respondents relied on their own consumer experience when estimating the quality of the companies' products.

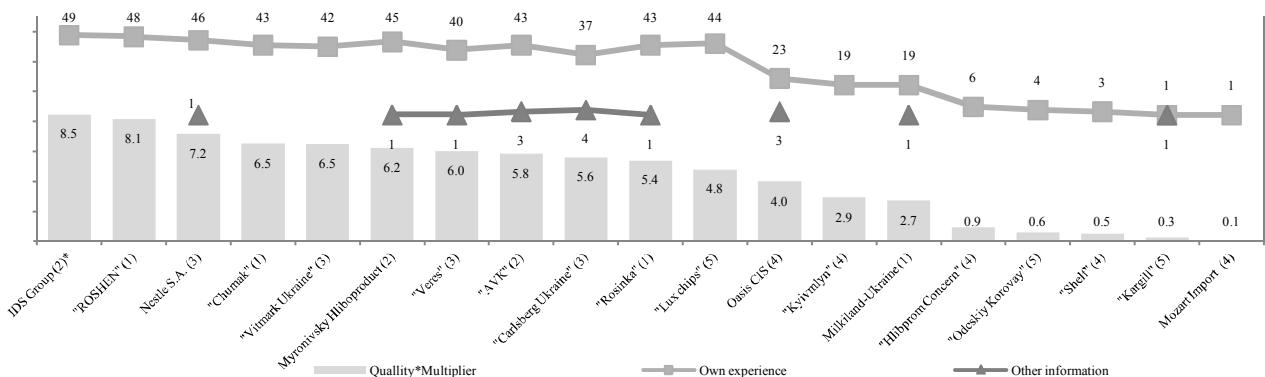


Fig. 2. Evaluation of product quality by consumers taking into account the level (coefficient) of consumer awareness (on a scale of 0 to 50 points) about the products of companies

* the numbers of the groups are given in the brackets

Source: own elaboration

As a result of consumers' survey, the majority of the chosen companies have a balanced system of price and quality. According to the consumers' points of view, the price of products meets its quality in full.

Nevertheless, the price for the products is higher than their quality for "AVK", "Lux Chips", "Hlibprom Concern" and "Shelf". Therefore, the connection between the prices and quality of the above mentioned companies' products is not balanced.

A small part of the consumers thinks that some companies' products have lower prices than their quality. For example, these are such companies as "Lux Chips" (12.82%), "Chumak" (7.69%), "AVK" (7.32%), "Kyivmlyn" (5.41%), "Rosinka" (5.41%), IDS Group (4.44%), "Myronivsky Hliboprod" (2.50%), Nestle S.A. (2.44%) and "ROSHEN" (2.17%) (fig. 3).

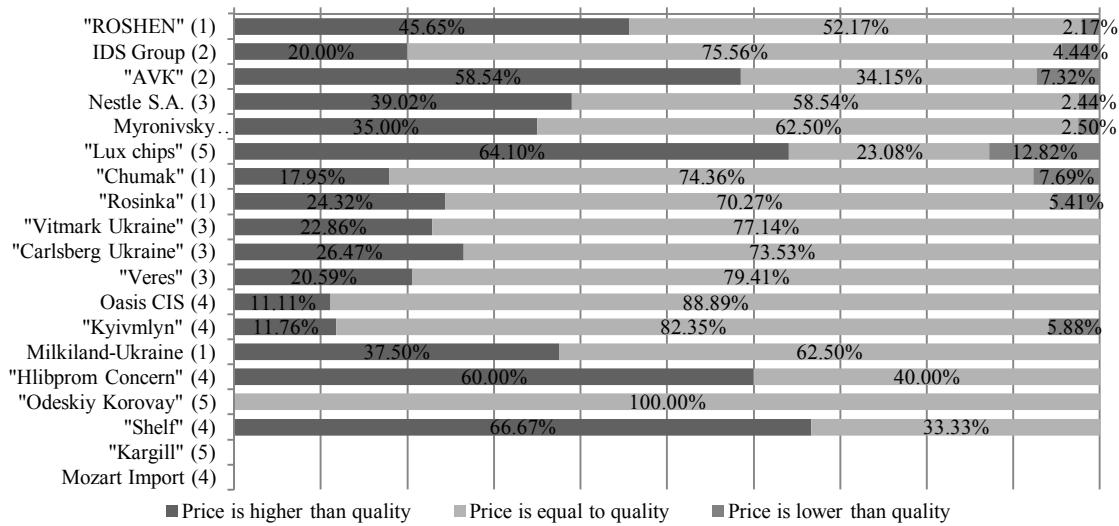


Fig. 3. The "price-quality" balance of products, in % (consumer estimates)

Source: own elaboration

According to our respondents' points of view, effective reputation management means an active approach to formation and management of reputation, the company's position in the media and the social area.

Furthermore, the most important tools of reputation management are "Monitoring and neutralization of negative information" (7.6 scores), "Press releases" (7.5 scores), "New-media activity" (7.1 scores) and "Sponsorship" (7.1 scores) (fig. 4).

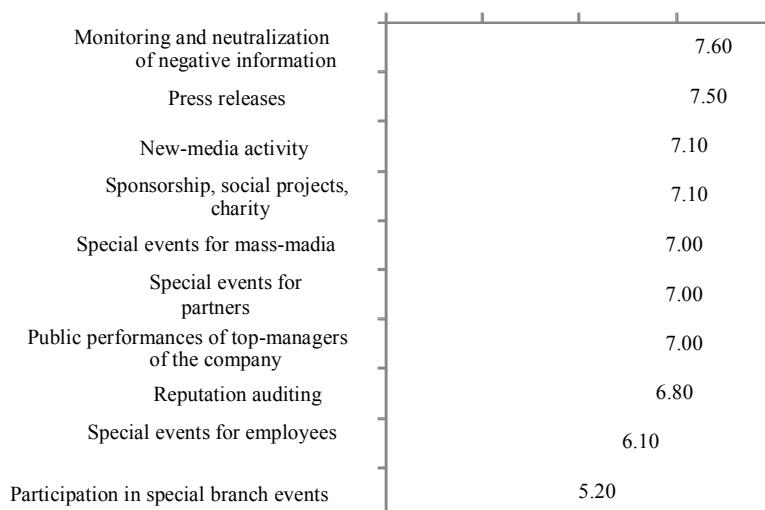


Fig. 4. The effectiveness of the internal reputation management tools (on the scale [0-10])

Source: own elaboration

Conversely, such a passive practice of reputation management as "Participation in branch events" (5.2 scores) is estimated as the least effective.

The optimal frequency of internal reputation management's tools usage

The frequency of internal reputation management's tools usage is closely connected with their effectiveness and necessary amendments to the peculiarities of the tools (fig. 5).

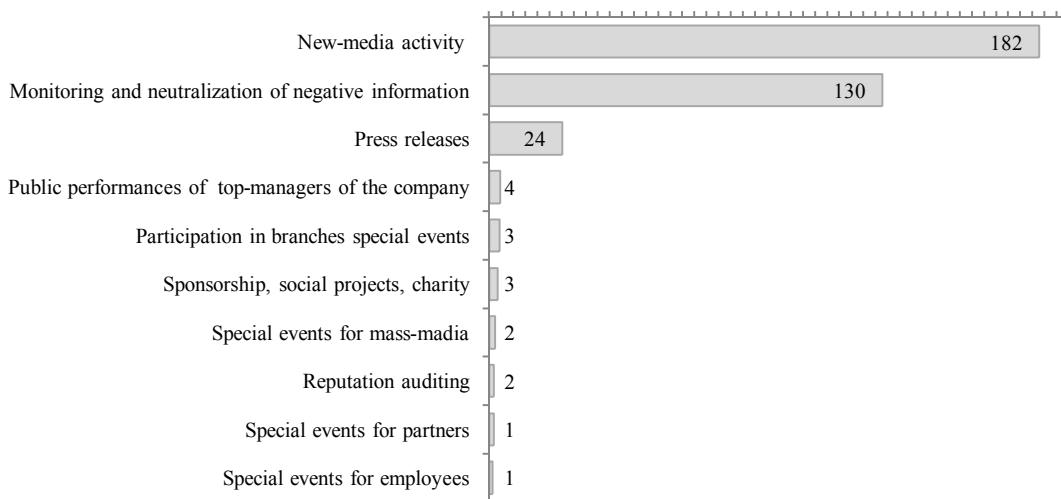


Fig. 5. The optimal frequency of internal reputation management's tools usage (number of actions per year)

Source: own elaboration

The frequency of cooperation with new-media should be made according to the average speed of modernization and wide spreading of information. It is more than 15 times per month.

On average, PR-managers face negative information about their company more than 10 or 11 times per month. Therefore, "Monitoring and neutralization of negative information" takes the second place according to the frequency of its usage with amendment for the need for constant monitoring and immediate neutralization of negative influences.

The frequency of other internal reputation management's tools usage should not be excessive. For instance, press-releases should not be used more than two times per month. Other tools have to be used from one time per year to one time per quarter.

The level of acknowledgment of the chosen companies' reputation management.

The peculiarity of this research of the brand companies is the mixture of the respondents' personal and professional experience (fig. 6).

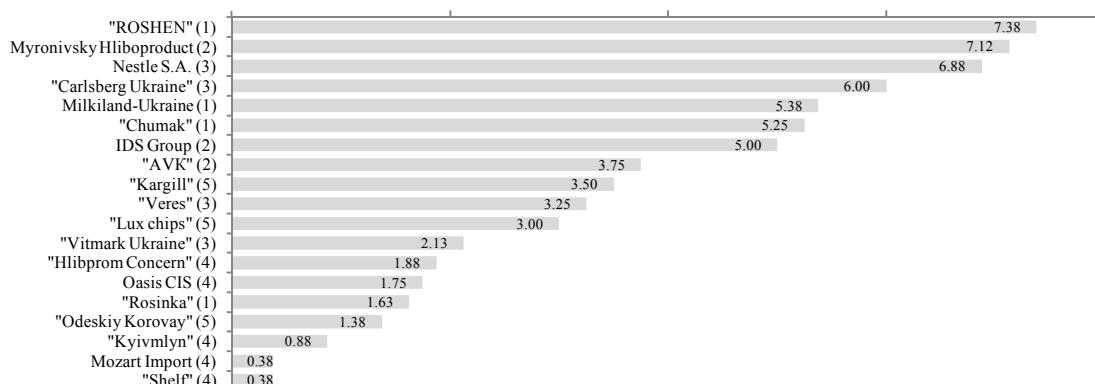


Fig. 6. The level of PR-specialists' acknowledgment of the reputation management of the chosen companies

(on the scale [0-10])

Source: own elaboration

The graph gives information about the traditional PR-managers' points of views upon the level of their acknowledgment of the reputation management of companies.

The investigated companies are divided into groups according to their reputation management organizational structure.

Overall, eight companies with the highest levels of their acknowledgment of the reputation management represent three development types of management organizational structure (developed, transitional and consumer types).

Approval of the companies' reputation management tools.

The Top-5 companies with the most approved reputation management include two companies with the developed organizational structure of reputation management system, one company with the transitional organizational structure of reputation management system and two companies with the consumer organizational structure of reputation management system. However, four out of five companies have famous brands. For instance, Nestle, ROCHEN, Carlsberg and Chumak are among such brands. The brand and the name of Mironovsky Hlibprodukt are not connected.

The five companies with the least efficient reputation management represent the "newly created" type of reputation management organizational structure.

The Nestle Company is the leader according to the tools of external management application. It has the developed organizational structure of reputation management system. Thus, the PR-department of Nestle uses such tools as "New-media activity" (64.5 scores) and "Special events for the media organization" (64.5 scores) in the best way (fig. 7).

The scores are calculated in the following way:

1. The average mark according to the respondents' points of view is calculated for each tool and for each company.
2. The coefficients of efficiency are calculated previously for each tool.
3. The marks of each company for each tool are multiplied by the coefficient divided by ten.

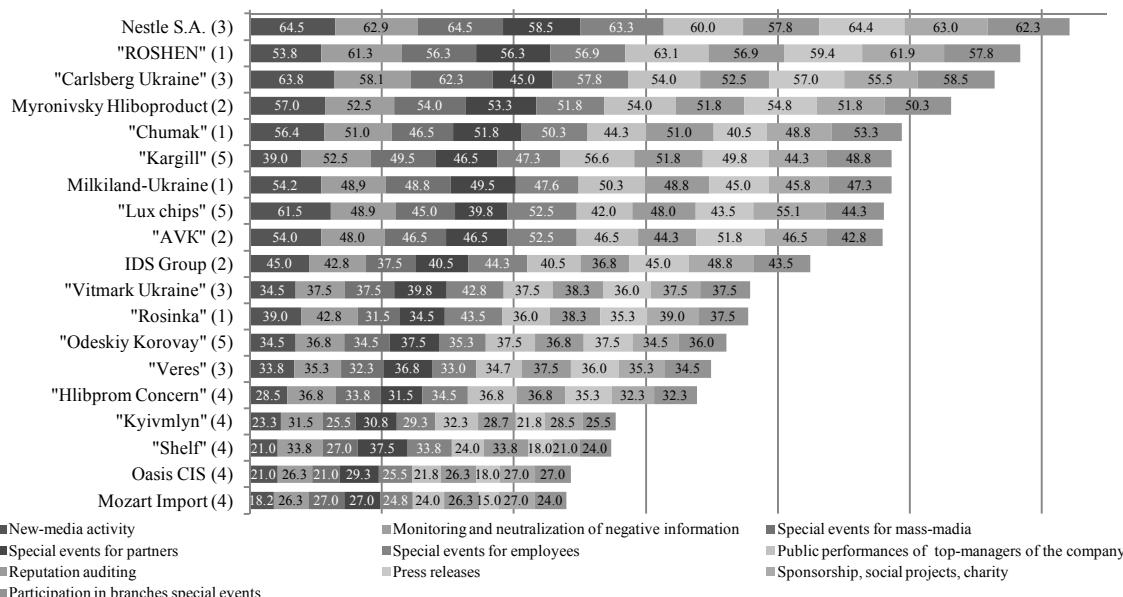


Fig. 7. Approval of the companies' reputation management tools, from the position of PR-specialists (scale [0-10])
 Source: own elaboration

Approval of the companies' reputation management tools use frequency.

The represented data are among the most subjective in this area. Furthermore, they represent the points of view of PR-managers on the matching of the frequency of reputation management of the food industry's companies and the optimal frequency of the internal reputation management tools use.

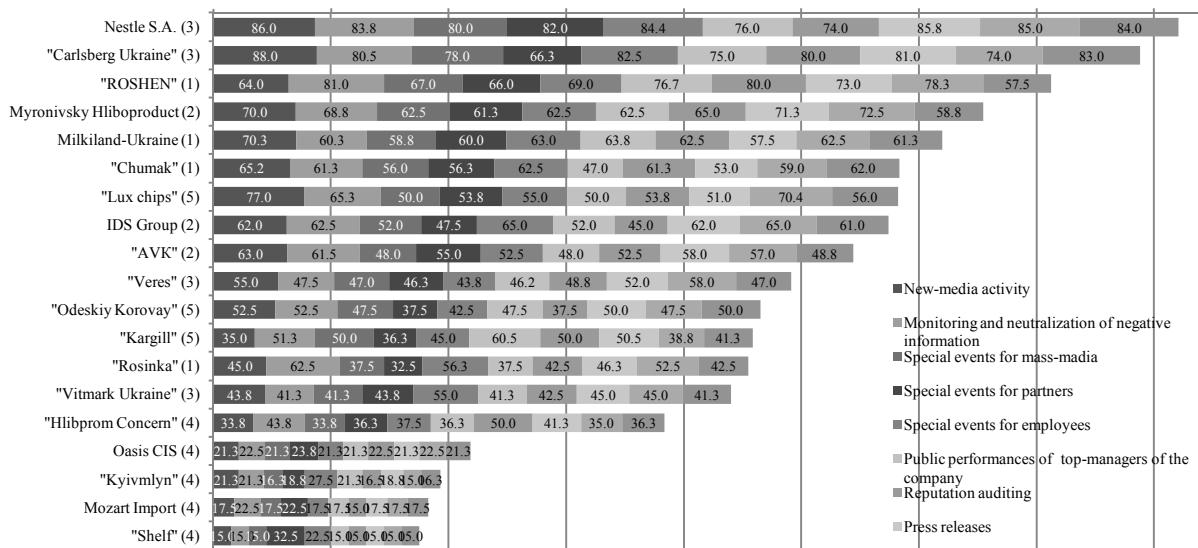
The Top-5 companies with the most optimal frequency of the internal reputation management tools use includes two companies with the developed organizational structure of reputation management system, one company with the transitional organizational structure of reputation management system and two companies with the consumer organizational structure of reputation management system. These are such companies as Nestle, Carlsberg, ROCHEN, Mironovsky Hlibprodukt and Milkiland (fig. 8).

The five companies with the least optimal frequency of internal reputation management's tools use represent the "newly created" type of reputation management organizational structure.

The Nestle Company is the leader in the case of optimal frequency of internal reputation management's tools use.

The group of PR-managers has evaluated the existing level of knowledge about the implementation of the food industry's companies' reputation management, approval of the companies' reputation management tools and frequency of such tools usage. The current estimations are included into the integral index of reputation management activity. The current integral index is calculated as the average index of the above-mentioned points of views. It is the percentage from the greatest mark.

The integral index is calculated in two ways. The first way means the calculations according to the organizational structures of the reputation management (fig. 9). The second way means the calculations for each separate company (fig. 10).



Note: The organizational structure of reputation management's system:

(3) developed;
 (4) newly-created
 (2) transitive;
 (5) zero / subsidiary
 (1) consumer

Fig. 8. Approval of the companies' reputation management tools use frequency, from the position of PR-specialists (scale [0-10])

Source: own elaboration

Level of reputation management activity (PR-managers)

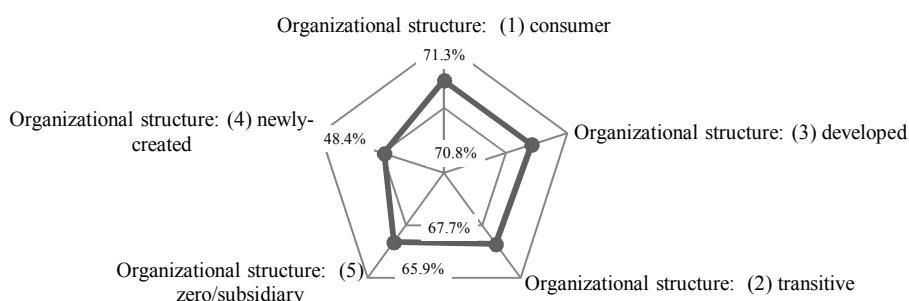


Fig. 9. Level of reputation management activity (organizational structures)

Source: own elaboration

Fig. 9 gives us information about different organizational structures levels of reputation management activity. The enterprises of the consumer organizational structures have the main level of reputation management activity (integral index is 71.3%). The enterprises of the newly-created organizational structures have the lowest level of reputation management activity. Overall, the decrease of reputation management activity depends on organizational structures, which are arranged as Consumer, Developed, Transitive, Zero / subsidiary and Newly-created. Although the organizational structures of reputation

management activity are arranged in the following way: Developed, Transitive, Consumer, Newly-created and Zero / subsidiary. It depends on their components.

The most active reputation management is inherent in Nestle S.A. and "Carlsberg Ukraine" (Developed organizational structure), "Rochen" and "Chumak" (Consumer organizational structure), "Myronivsky Hliboprod" (Transitive organizational structure) (fig. 10). Generally, three out of five best enterprises according to the increase of their reputation management activity belong to the two most developed organizational structures of reputation management.

The effectiveness of internal reputation management tools use (top-managers' estimation). The representatives of top-managers of food industry companies were offered to estimate the effectiveness of internal reputation management tools use in their own company and other companies.

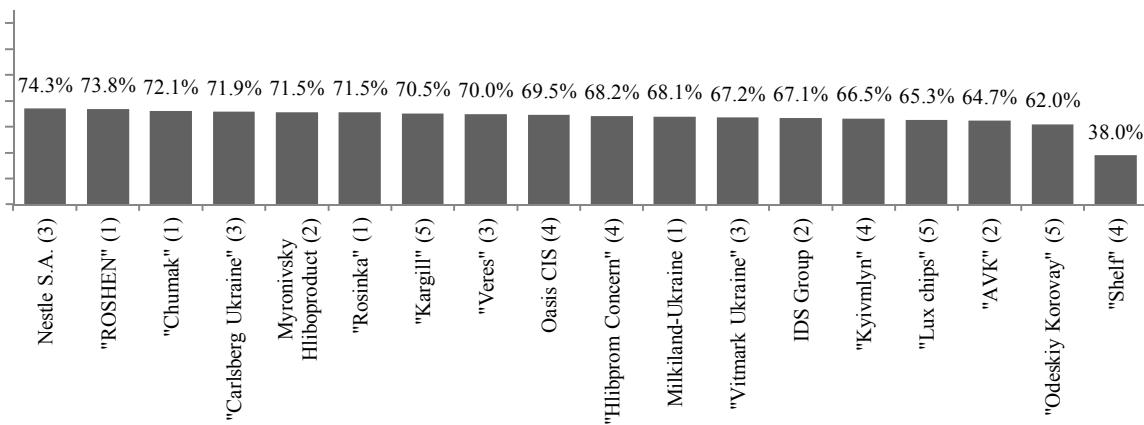


Fig. 10. Level of reputation management activity (companies)

Source: own elaboration

The "ROCHEN" uses the internal reputation management tools in the best way (fig. 11). Although the main tools of this company's internal reputation management are "Press releases" (nine scores out of ten), "Public performances of top-managers of the company" (nine scores out of ten), "Special events for mass-madia" (nine scores out of ten), "Special events for partners" (nine scores out of ten) and "Monitoring and neutralization of negative information" (nine scores out of ten).

"Chumak", "Rosinka" and "Myronivsky Hliboprod" are also among leaders considering internal reputation management tools use with the general score of organizational structure effectiveness 80.

None of the chosen top-managers was prepared to estimate the internal reputation management of "Mozart Import".

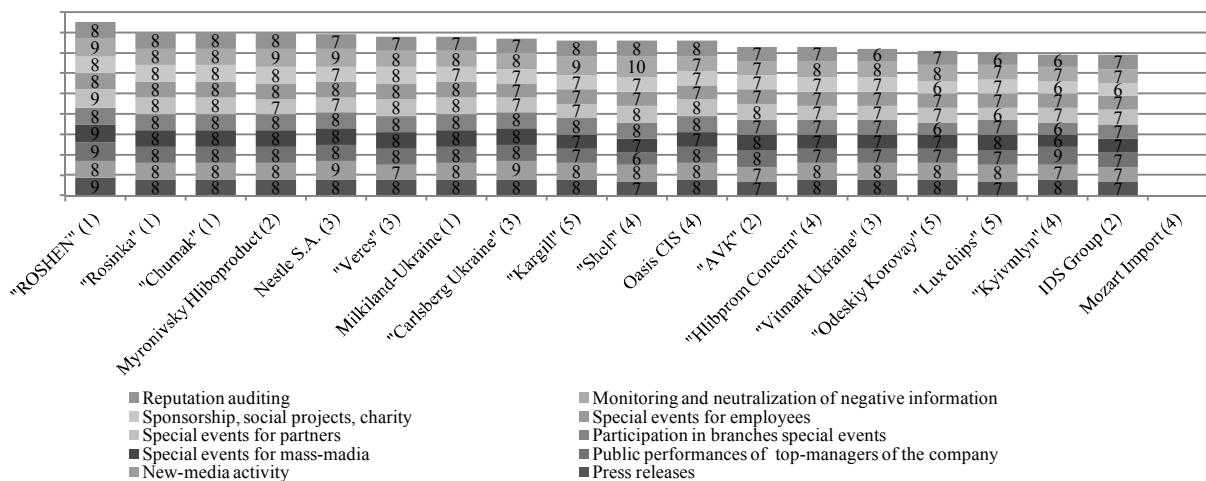


Fig. 11. The effectiveness of internal reputation management tools use
(the estimation of top-managers, scale [0-10])

Source: own elaboration

The level of internal reputation management acknowledgment

The research of answers of the main partners of the food industry's companies shows a high degree of the level of internal reputation management acknowledgment (fig. 12).

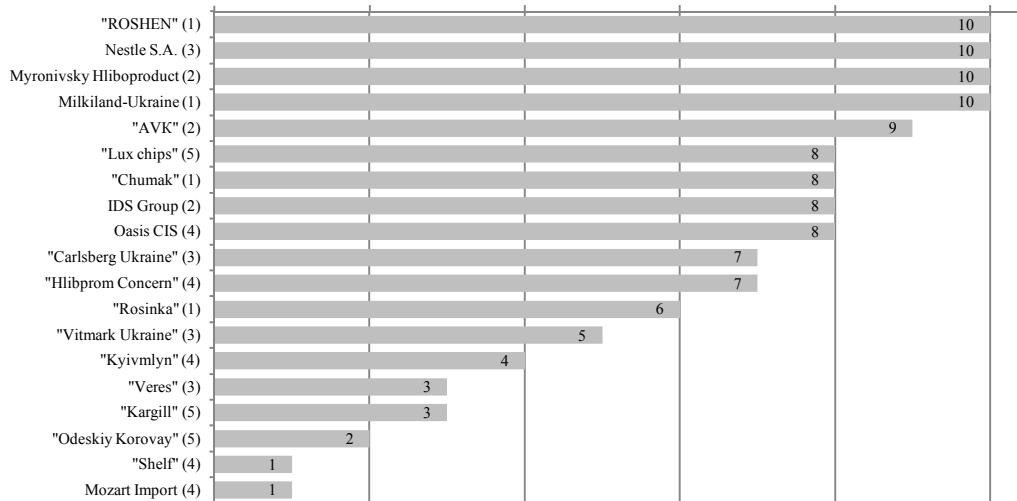


Fig. 12. The level of internal reputation management acknowledgment of the companies
(the estimation of top-managers, scale [0-10])

Source: own elaboration

The leaders of internal reputation management acknowledgment are "Rochen", Nestle S.A., "Myronivsky Hliboprod" and "Milkiland Ukraine". The lowest level of internal reputation management acknowledgment is characteristic for "Kyivmlyn", "Veres", "Kargill", "Odeskiy Korova", "Shelf" and Mozart Import. From one to four respondents know about the internal reputation management of the above-mentioned companies.

The approval of external reputation management tools of the food industry's companies

The evaluation by experts of the effectiveness of the external reputation management tools of the top 5 companies with the most effective external reputation management included two companies from the consumer organizational profile CPM – Rosinka (1st place, 85.0 points) and Rochen (2nd place, 81.6 points), two of the germ – Concern "Khlibprom" (3rd place, 80.0 points) and Oasis CIS (5th place, 77.0 points) and one from the developed – Nestle SA (4 place, 77.8 points).

The Top-5 list of the companies with the most effective approval of external reputation management tools of the food industry's companies consists of two companies with the consumer organizational structure of reputation management system, two companies with the newly-created organizational structure of reputation management system and one company with the developed organizational structure of reputation management system. Accordingly, these are such companies as Rosinka (the first place and 85.0 scores), Rochen (the second place and 81.6 scores), Hlibprom Concern (the third place and 80.0 scores), Oasis CIS (the fifth place and 77.0 scores) and Nestle S.A. (the fourth place and 77.8 scores).

The representatives of partners' organizations are not able to estimate the effectiveness of external reputation management tools of such food industry companies as "Kargill", "Kyivmlyn", Mozart Import, "Odeskiy Korovay" and "Shelf".

Among the most effective tools of external reputation management of food industry's companies are New-media activity (the average estimation is 6.67 scores), Press-releases (the average estimation is 6.41 scores) and Reputation Audit (the average estimation is 6.17 scores) (fig. 13).

Conclusions

According to the goals of reputation management activity's study of the food industry's companies in Ukraine the representatives of four expert groups were interviewed. Such groups as PR-managers, customers, top managers and key partners of the companies are differentiated. The most important factors of reputation management are the attention paid by new-media to the companies' activity, fulfilment of companies' obligations, manufacturing of new (innovative) products, absence of negative information (disadvantage occasions), companies' (trade marks') activity, access to information about the company, kind of companies' reaction to the negative information about their activity, social projects, charity, sponsorship, connection between price and quality of the products.

The majority of the chosen companies of food industry have a balanced system of price and quality. Therefore, the price of products meets its quality in full. Conversely, "AVK", "Lux Chips", "Hlibprom Concer" and "Shelf" have a higher price for the products than their quality.

The base for the most effective system of external reputation management creation is connected with the active approach to formation and management of reputation. For instance, the most important tools of reputation management are "Monitoring and neutralization of negative information" (7.6 scores), "Press releases" (7.5 scores), "New-media activity" (7.1 scores) and "Sponsorship" (7.1 scores). The "Participation in branch events" is estimated as the least effective reputation management tool (5.2 scores).

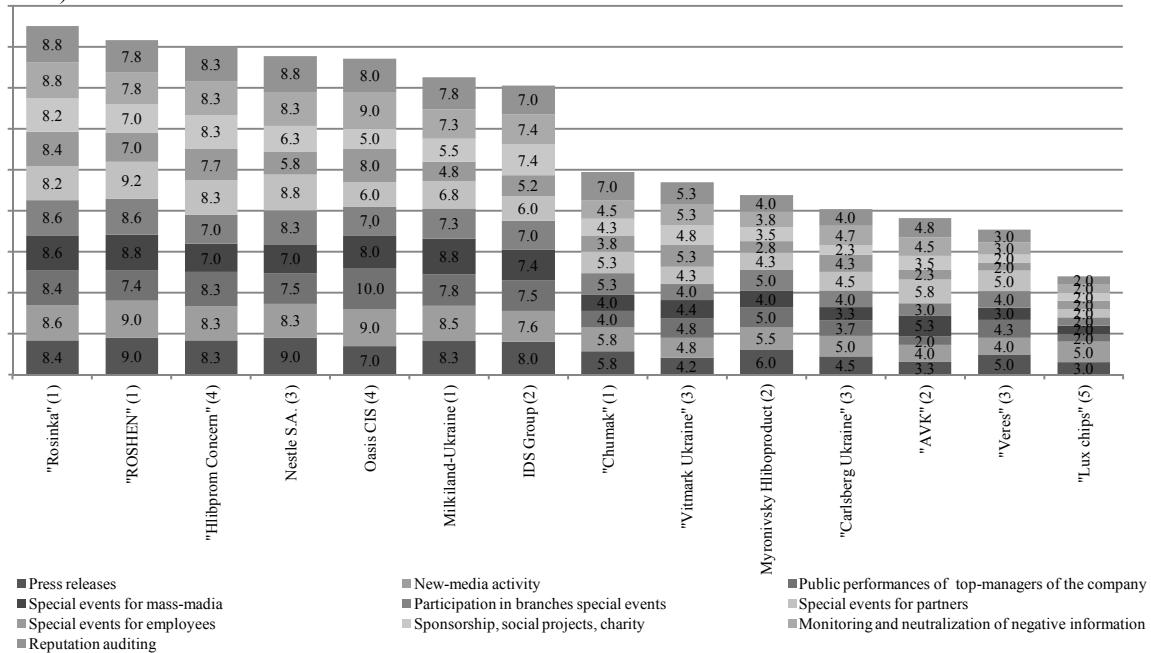


Fig. 13. The approval of external reputation management tools of the food industry's companies
(the estimation of top-managers, scale [0-10])

Source: own elaboration

The optimal frequency of cooperation with the new-media is more than 15 times per month. On average, the PR-managers face negative information about their company more than 10 or 11 times per month. Furthermore, "Monitoring and neutralization of negative information" takes the second place according to the frequency of its usage. Nevertheless, the other internal reputation management tools should not be used too often. For example, the press-releases should not be used more than two times per month. Other tools have to be used from one time per year to one time per quarter.

Top-managers of the main representatives of food industry – "Roshen", "Vitmark Ukraine", IDS Group, Milkiland-Ukraine, Myronivsky Hliboprod, "Hlibprom Concern", Oasis CIS, Nestle S.A. – were asked to estimate the effectiveness of internal reputation management tools use in their own company and other companies.

The most effective use of internal reputation management tools is characteristic for the Roshen Company, which marks make nine out of ten scores in such directions as "Press releases", "Public performances of top-managers of the company", "Special events for mass-media", "Special events for partners" and "Monitoring and neutralization of negative information".

Among the most effective tools of external reputation management of food industry's companies are New-media activity (the average estimation is 6.67 scores), Press-releases (the average estimation is 6.41 scores) and Reputation Auditing (the average estimation is 6.17 scores). The most effective is the external reputation management activity of Rosinka and Rochen (the consumer organizational structure of reputation management system), Hlibprom Concern and Oasis CIS (the newly-created organizational structure of reputation management system) and Nestle S.A. (the developed organizational structure of reputation management system).

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