



## OPINION<sup>1</sup>

on the submitted works for participation in a competition for the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR in professional field 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Integrated marketing communications), announced by Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in SJ, issue 24/7.03.2023

**Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Stella Angova**

**Candidate (s): Assoc. Prof. Alexander Hristov**

I. Evaluation of the scientific and practical results and contributions of the scientific and educational production submitted for participation in the competition

The candidate's publications show a systematic and in-depth scientific interest that is relevant to the topic of the competition. The publications are respectable in terms of the quantity and quality of the problems studied. The professional activity of Assoc. Hristov is a proof of his qualities as a researcher and practitioner in the field of integrated marketing communications. In his scientific texts he identifies contemporary scientific problems, which he develops at the theoretical and practical level.

The habilitation thesis "Integrated Marketing Communications and Digitalization" examines the contemporary communication environment in the context of digitalization. The author highlights synergy as a key concept for communication activities - as the author metaphorically puts it, they sound in the same key (p.22). He successfully argues that designed strategic communications will lead to the realization of multiple goals.

The monograph focuses on foundational knowledge set in a contemporary context. A significant contribution of this work is the articulated role of digitalization in improving marketing communications, in integrating them effectively and obtaining high results, and in bringing integrated marketing communications to a qualitatively new technological level.

The work is built around the important theme of ethics in professional communication actions. Issues of regulation and self-regulation are raised for discussion, with the very logical conclusion that "being ethical is advantageous" or rather, acting unethically is disadvantageous" (p. 30).

In fact, the topic of ethics is present in a number of the candidate's publications, indicating an enduring interest in the study of ethical integrated communications. It can be seen in a number of texts: 'On ethics in PR - hypothetical and pragmatic' (2007), 'Problems in the application of regulations and ethical principles to advertising' (2008), 'Problems in the application of regulations and ethical principles to advertising' (2008), 'Negative impacts of advertising: Balkan syndromes' (2008), 'Self-regulation in advertising: applicability and perspectives' (2009), 'PR and interference in editorial content: Admissibility, General Principles and a Private Case' (2009) "Forms of Convergence of

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Recommended volume of the opinion - 2-3 standard pages.



Editorial and Advertising Content in Bulgarian Media"(2012), "Contemporary Developments in Corporate PR: Dialogue and Responsibility" (2014), "Ethics in Marketing Communications - a Prerequisite for Sustainable Growth" (2015), "Economic effects of the fake news on companies and the need of new PR strategies" (2018) "Economy of the fake news: business side and effects" (2019)," Economic effects of the fake news: an attempt at systematization" (2020), etc.

In theoretical terms, the candidate's publications show a build-up of existing frameworks for communication effectiveness and its measurement, including proposed opportunities for the development of new metrics.

In all publications of the candidate is clearly visible both the knowledge of the research on the topic and the author's own view. There are own interpretations of processes and trends. An original research perspective and an original opinion are noticeable.

Integrated marketing communications are explored both globally and locally, given that there are no borders for the market on the Internet, it is international.

There is also a contribution in terms of offering training practices. Examples include the publications Measuring brand awareness, campaign evaluation and web analytics (2020, Routledge, 296-316) and Future users, content and marketing (2020, Routledge, 317-333).

The texts are oriented and useful for audiences such as educators, students and marketing professionals. Their effect is both scientific, applied and educational.

## II. Notes and recommendations

I have no comments on the publications submitted for the competition. I would recommend the candidate to continue working with the same scientific confidence on the topic of integrated marketing communications.

## III. Conclusion

*Having carefully read the presented publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alexander Hristov, I believe that he is a suitable candidate for the academic position of Associate Professor at FJMC. His texts are scientifically precise, well argued and contribute to Bulgarian communication science. He examines integrated marketing communications from a variety of original perspectives, and this approach allows him to present the big picture of transformations - economic effects, ethical approaches and deficits, issues of legislation and media practices, professionalism of practitioners, metrics, etc. The candidate is recognizable in both academic and professional circles as a teacher, researcher, expert and analyst. With these arguments, I declare that I will vote positively for the election of Alexander Hristov to the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR in professional field 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Integrated Marketing Communications).*

Jury member: Assoc. Prof. Stella Angova

Date: 28.07.2023