



## 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, 17.03.2023

**Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Dimitrina Stefanova, PhD**

**Candidate: 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 present scientific articles by Assoc. Prof. Alexander Hristov, for participating in the concurs are nineteen of which are basic habilitatin work – monography „Integrated Marketing Communications and Digitization“, C., AMG Publishing, 2023, participating in two monografies Chapter 12. Measuring brand awareness, campaign evaluation and web analytics – in: Heinze, Aleksej, Gordon Fletcher, Tahir Rashid, Ana Cruz (editors). Digital and Social Media Marketing: A Results-Driven Approach (second edition). London, Routledge, 2020, pp. 296 – 316. II Chapter 13. Future users, content and marketing – in: Heinze, Aleksej, Gordon Fletcher, Tahir Rashid, Ana Cruz (editors). Digital and Social Media Marketing: A Results-Driven Approach (second edition). London, Routledge, 2020, pp. 317 – 333 and 16 articles and reports published in national and international scientific publications. The meaningful analysis of the main scientific works determines the connections, interdependencies and relationships in integrated marketing communications in the current context. The monograph "Integrated Marketing Communications and Digitalization" falls into an interdisciplinary field in which research is based on the conclusions of management, marketing, public relations, etc. In addition, their methods are used to understand in depth the problems of integrated communications, viewed through the prism of digitalization and ethical communication principles. In the scientific field in which there are many studies, the author presents a distinctive complex approach of communication integrity with the necessary synergy, without which integrated marketing communications will be a simple assembly of activities without a stable and strategically built foundation. The idea of digitalization in communications is developing, which naturally and to a significant extent provide opportunities for integration and contribution to the development of integrated marketing

---

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



communications. A new point is the evaluation of the effectiveness of "integration" itself as a cohesive element in the construction of communication programs. The monograph makes a detailed theoretical summary of leading concepts in the field without pointing to the predominance of one or another communication technology.

Definitely evident in the practical experience in which the scientific potential and affinity for bringing out scientific and applied principles in the advantages of communication synergy in the digital age with an emphasis on their ethical application is highlighted. The discourse on self-regulation and regulation is designed from the idea of moral universalism and moral relativism moving into basic distinctions between advertising and PR in the context of the possibilities for integration, the peculiarities of practical application, its predominant importance with the role of professional organizations. It is logically and reasoned that in a crisis context and a digital environment saturated with misleading and false information, the attributive aspect of ethical communication practices occupies its fundamental field, which requires a high level of competence and a clear awareness of benefits and harms to the organization, stakeholders and society in the long term.

In the other applied scientific publications, mainly with a focus on marketing and PR communications, a scientific-practical discussion of the nature, problems and elements of integrated marketing communications is clearly outlined, which are further developed, enriched and supplemented with metrics and approaches to effectiveness. A significant contribution is the analysis of the results of communications, which are related not only to the impact but also to the change of behavior in relation to communications, including integrated ones. In the actual topic that is present in the research and permanent practical activities of Alexander Hristov are some peculiarities of communication in the media and digital environment, crises and crisis communications. The foundation of digital marketing and social media marketing, presented in correlation with digital technologies, search engine optimization, presence and measurement of brand awareness to achieve business results, are also placed. In terms of the economic consequences of the creation and spread of fake news, the conclusions of the study of disinformation are quite real.

All of this defines the research as self-contained, significant and contributory, with up-to-date sound on problems corresponding to different branches of the social sciences, but with a specific focus on new interpretations, classifications, methods and technologies in the creations of additional knowledge about the integrated marketing communications.

Long term work, scientific interests, teaching and expert activities of the candidate testify to the purposeful, systematic and permanent attitude to the development, dynamics and establishment of the theoretical and practical system of integrated marketing communications and in particular PR. Participates in national and international conferences and seminars, projects, conducts trainings. Lecturer at the University of National and World Economy in subjects such as "Marketing Management", "International Marketing Communications", Marketing and Social Networks and Online Store Management and others that are in the subject area of the competition. In parallel, Alexander Hristov demonstrates a lasting connection in the efforts to strengthen professional communication communities, creating



value and authority for both professionals and the public to the actions of the "communication core".

## II. Notes and recommendations

Any theory or the theoretical formulation could be based on scientific criticism which is the meaning of the scientific discussion. The tendency for interaction between science, technology and society, examined from different points of view with a view to generating innovative ideas and solutions in the social sciences, seems like a fruitful approach that the author presents to us. I will allow myself to recommend Alexander Hristov to continue to develop in scientific, creative and educational unity communication concepts with methodological applicability.

## III. Conclusion

Based on the materials submitted for participation in the competition, I accept that the applicant meets the requirements for taking an academic position of "Associate Professor" both according to law on the development of academic staff in the republic of Bulgaria and the Rules of Procedure of Sofia University. The analysis of the presented publications, their significance and contained in them scientific, theoretical and practical contributions, as well as the overall rich research, expert and teaching experience, characterized by high professionalism, confidently give me grounds to vote positively Dr. Alexander Hristov to be elected to the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.5 Public Communications and Information Sciences (Integrated Marketing Communications).

Jury member:

Date: 25.07.2023

**/Assoc. Prof. Dimitrina Stefanova, PhD/**

/