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Abstract

This thesis explores the attributes of nonprofit marketing, discusses external communication as represented by three campaign case studies, and analyzes the nature of messages that the selected fundraising campaigns communicate in the Slovak market.

This qualitative research study is both analytical and comparative. A design of case studies is employed to address the problem formulation. The research is focused on a case of external marketing communication in the Slovak nonprofit environment. Thus, two domestic and one international nonprofit organization create a basis for a comparative study as the specific cases of the Slovak NPOs' campaigns are analyzed both individually (each case) and across the cases.

Dealing with the topic of external communication, a discourse analysis approach is applied to examine the visual elements of the campaigns. Analysis focuses on the ways the objects are depicted, and also takes elements of language into consideration. Thus, the thesis deals with both graphic and textual parts of the NPO's external communications and contributes to comprehensive findings.

The theory chapter merges key theories (both traditional and nonprofit approaches) on principles of marketing activities characteristic for a nonprofit environment, and discusses elements of various communication processes. Furthermore, the theories on creating a communications campaign with a focus on message design are expanded with principles and elements of psychology present in the campaigns. The combination of several theories and methods helps to dig deeper into the aspects of nonprofit external communication.

1. Introduction

Non-profit organizations¹ are becoming increasingly confronted with market pressures typical of for-profit organizations, like competition for funding and the need to earn money to fulfill their mission. Thus, they have started to adopt for-profit business-like techniques and approaches². Marketing plays a very important role in the lives of non-profit organizations and all NPOs undertake marketing whether they know it or not. In order to “survive, grow and strengthen their contributions to the general welfare”, it was suggested that marketing had a great deal to offer the tertiary sector.³ Practicing marketing and application of principles in a right fashion will benefit all the concerned segments.

It took a long time for marketing to develop into business discipline providing sophisticated and useful theories for companies operating under competitive market conditions. Some marketing methods and tools – advertising, branding, public relations etc., were and still are commonly used also in the non-profit sector. In the past three decades non-profit organizations have also started to implement comprehensive marketing as an integrated strategy that aims to increase the effectiveness of their work. Marketing tools, methods and theories originally developed for the needs of for-profit business have been continually modified and transferred to the tertiary sector. Also new and original techniques have emerged within marketing. These are closely related to activities typical for non-profit organizations – e.g.: fundraising, volunteers recruitment.⁴

Nonprofit organizations (NPOs) are an important part of modern society. The number and significance of nonprofit organizations in Slovakia has been gradually developing since 1990. While in 1996, contribution to the country's GDP was only 1.3%, in 2002 it was 1,6%. The number of full-time employees (in that period) increased from 16 198 to 18 627.⁵ Dynamics in the tertiary sector development indicates that the service sector and nonprofit organizations management in the Slovak republic deserves considerable attention. The growth of the nonprofit sector and enhanced commercialization has increased the

¹ short form NPO

² Goerke, 2003, in Dolnicar and Lazarevski, 2009, p.275

³ Dolnicar and Lazarevski, 2009, pp.275-277

⁴ Helmig and Thyler, in Taylor, 2009, p.151

⁵ Svitkova, 2004, p.4

competition among organizations. Proper application of marketing activities in the sector is critical for attracting resources and publicity.⁶ All these aspects imply the rising relevance of nonprofit marketing – marketing in the sector without a purpose of making profits.

Even though the third sector is a sector where organizations lack a purpose of making profits, marketing activities represent key aspects. Previous research has shown a disjoint between traditional (or for-profit) marketing and nonprofit marketing, and marketers recognize that for-profit marketing practices often do not apply within the context of nonprofit organizations.⁷ This paper aims to examine the context and nature of social marketing used by specific domestic and international nonprofit organizations operating in Slovakia. The thesis seeks to address issues of marketing in terms of external communication as represented by the campaigns of selected NPOs. Specifically, the work discusses the concept of communication processes and message transmission. Analysis is focused on what and, more importantly, how the nonprofit organizations convey messages and how they wish to be seen and perceived by the public.

Based on this, the problem formulation of this thesis is as follows:

What attributes, if any, are characteristic for nonprofit marketing? What are the principles of nonprofit marketing communication activities represented by the fundraising campaigns of three selected domestic and global nonprofit organizations operating in the Slovak market? Does the international or local character of a nonprofit organization have an impact on their communication processes?

To answer the problem formulated above this thesis is divided into six chapters. Introduction, methodology followed by the theory chapter that discusses particularities of nonprofit marketing and the third sector in Slovakia. Further, the theory examines the elements of social marketing mix, communications process and campaigns' messages attributes. The fourth, analytical chapter is devoted to three nonprofit organizations and their campaigns. *Children of Slovakia Foundation* (CSF) (chapter 4.1.) is a Slovak nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting long-term projects with a preventive impact that raise the quality of life of children and youth in Slovakia. *The Children's Hour* grant program is the organization's

⁶ Wymer and Samu, 2003, p.1

⁷ Pope et al., 2009, p. 186

largest grant program.⁸ The second case is represented by the *Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union* (Slovak acronym: UNSS) (chapter 4.3.) established in 1990 to improve the quality of life of visually impaired Slovak people. The NPO's nation-wide charitable public collection called *Biela Pastelka* (The White Pencil) is aimed at supporting programs for visually impaired and purblind citizens.⁹ The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (chapter 4.5.) is the third organization that represents a global case in the analysis. The organization is active in more than 190 countries and has "*the global authority to influence decision-makers, and the variety of partners at grassroots level to turn the most innovative ideas into reality. That makes UNICEF unique among world organizations, and unique among those working with the young.*"¹⁰ *Týždeň modrého gombíka* (The Week of Blue Button) is UNICEF's activity when blue button badges are sold and collected money is used to help endangered children in different countries of the world. The analysis is followed by the discussion and conclusion.

⁸ <http://www.nds.sk/informacie/children-of-slovakia-foundation/>

⁹ <http://unss.sk/en2/>

¹⁰ http://www.unicef.org/about/who/index_introduction.html

2. Methodology

Communication, interpretation, appeal and nature of the message are characteristic terms of this thesis. People see the world differently and they interpret the reality according to their points of view and previous experiences. Following that line of thought there is no one truth or reality, and individuals construct their own realities within their own mental framework.¹¹ This means that I acknowledge that individuals have different perceptions of and attitudes towards the nonprofit sector. People are active in creating their own ideas and opinions on nonprofit marketing activities and they interpret the messages that are being communicated, differently. These ideas change and evolve in time. In the same manner, nonprofit organizations and the interaction with their customers (or users) are in a constant state of revision.

The thesis is presented in a social constructivist point of view. This ontological position implies an approach that social phenomena and categories are built up in and through social interactions.¹² As mentioned by Egon Guba, “reality exists only in the context of a mental framework for thinking about it”, and “realities are multiple”.¹³ Since just one objective truth does not exist, it is not claimed that there is only one valid and functional strategy for effective nonprofit communications campaigns. Instead, the main aim of this project is to examine what marketing principles do nonprofit organizations employ, and explore distinctive factors that seem to be relevant for third sector marketing campaigns. In line with the ontological stance, I accept that this thesis and the results of the analysis are shaped by my interaction (as a researcher) with the topic; therefore the work bears signs of subjectivity.

As the thesis aims to discuss nonprofit external communication, campaigns and the nature of messages, a qualitative research strategy is employed. One of the assumptions of qualitative research is that unlike the objects of the natural sciences, people can assign the meaning to events and their environment¹⁴. Therefore, the first part of the thesis is concerned with description and explanation that provide an account of the context – the social world being

¹¹ Bryman, 2008, pp. 19-21

¹² Bryman, 2008, pp.19-20

¹³ Guba, 1990, p.25-26

¹⁴ Bryman, 2008, p. 385

examined. Understanding the Slovak nonprofit market might reveal significant findings for further analysis of the campaigns.

This thesis represents a case study research design. The research is focused on a 'case' of external marketing communication in the Slovak nonprofit environment. For the analysis, three nonprofit organizations have been chosen, two of which are domestic and one is international. As mentioned earlier, the analysis aims to generate understanding of processes, not ultimate results or final conclusions. The individual cases have been chosen to represent a *typical instance*.¹⁵ That is, all three nonprofit organizations operate in the Slovak market and the campaigns are communicated for nearly the same target audience. A common characteristic of all the campaigns involved in the analysis is their fundraising aspect. Even though the campaigns convey different messages, they encourage the public to make donations. Adding to that, the three nonprofit organizations are the most popular in Slovakia, and the campaigns are very well-known and widespread. These similarities make a base for a coherent analysis in which the same theories may be applied to several cases.

Including an international nonprofit organization (as opposed to domestic) allows for a comparative study. Unfortunately, the situation in the Slovak nonprofit market as well as circumstances beyond my control effected the selection of global organization and ended in '*no real choice*' in the selection of cases.¹⁶ There seems to be no other international nonprofit organizations with strong marketing activities and well-known campaigns in the Slovak market. Thus, only one NPO represents a global case (as opposed to two domestic organizations). However, as a researcher, I bear in mind that the number of cases might not be sufficient for drawing conclusions and revealing patterns.

The theory chapter merges key theories for the problem analysis. Adrian Sargeant in his book *Marketing Management for Nonprofit organizations* suggests principles of social marketing and aspects of effective communications campaign. In line with his theory the Slovak organizations and their campaigns are analyzed to discuss the principles of marketing of ideas within Slovak nonprofit organizations. Traditional marketing strategies as represented by Smith and Zook in *Marketing communications* help to find and point out the attributes that are characteristic for social marketing activities. In addition, other theories on advertising

¹⁵ Denscombe, 2007, p.33

¹⁶ Ibid. p.35

including psychological variables introduce more methods and tools of effective marketing communication. This would allow for in-depth analysis and help to answer the problem formulation on what methods and elements are present in both local and global NPO's campaigns.

The research is both analytical and comparative. This qualitative study aims to analyze the specific cases of Slovak NPOs' campaigns both individually (each case) and across the cases. Dealing with the topic of external communication, a discourse analysis approach is applied to examine the visual elements of the campaigns. Analyzing the ways of how the object is depicted frames the way we comprehend that object.¹⁷ This method helps to understand how the nonprofit organizations wish to be seen and perceived by public. The focus is placed on visual aspects of the communication as represented by the campaigns' websites and graphic advertisements (posters, flyers, print). The aim is to identify patterns (if any) in communicating messages and 'selling' ideas in the tertiary sector. Furthermore, the analysis of the campaigns agrees with the approach of Fairclough who views the language as a form of social practice¹⁸. Language is a relevant part of the social processes and plays an active role in social interactions, creating meanings, interpretations and understandings. Fairclough further claims that "*there is not an external relationship between language and society, but an internal and dialectical relationship. Language is a part of society; linguistic phenomena are social phenomena of a special sort, and social phenomena are (in part) linguistic phenomena*"¹⁹ In this way, the practical part of the thesis does not analyze texts as independent units, but tries to find mutual relations between visual depictions and text messages. The combination of methods helps to 'dig deeper' into the aspects of nonprofit external communication and thus provides comprehensive answers to the problem formulation.

¹⁷ Bryman, 2008, p.499

¹⁸ Fairclough, 2001, p.18

¹⁹ Ibid, p.19

3. Theory

To build an effective communication strategy, any nonprofit organization needs to know the target market, understand their attitudes and behavior. Many organizations do not know who their customers are and the needs of their target market. Smith and Zook in *Marketing Communications* say that: *“The first step in formulating a marketing communications strategy is to identify, analyze and ultimately understand the target market and its behavior.”*²⁰ Economic and political transformations in the Slovak society caused changes in the attitudes towards the nonprofit sector. Society’s viewpoint has evolved. However, some negative opinions still persist.

To address the topic of external communication within the Slovak nonprofit sector it is necessary to include the characteristics of nonprofit organizations in general. Hence, this chapter is devoted to description and explanation of nonprofit sector and its historical development in the Slovak republic. Development of a country reflects all changes in the economic and also broader social, political and cultural matrix. Historical facts help to understand not only the evolution of society’s stance toward the nonprofit sector, but also the contemporary social setting. Expressions ‘tertiary’ or ‘third’ sector are used as synonyms.

3.1. The Nonprofit Sector In The Slovak Republic

Nonprofits play a unique role as an intermediary between the citizens and their government. There are several definitions of the tertiary sector. Svitkova²¹ explains: *“The tertiary sector organizations are based on the right of free opinion, associating, and cooperating, on the right of free opinion and they provide a mechanism for public initiatives in areas such as charity, humanity, culture and education, environment.”*

Peter F. Drucker defines nonprofit organizations by comparing them to business and government. Business supplies, and government controls. A business has completed its mission once the customer buys the product and is satisfied with it. The government’s aims are effective policies. In the nonprofit sector a changed human being is the product. It is the organizations’ mission that distinguishes them so sharply from business and government.²²

²⁰ Smith and Zook, 2011, p.90

²¹ Svitkova, 2004, p.6

²² Drucker, P.F., 1990, p. xiv

The nonprofit sector is a newly emergent territory the public sector and a private sector: “neither in the profit sector nor the public sector... between the two”.²³ The development of the tertiary sector in Slovakia is connected with both interests and needs of citizens, and the inability of the state to cope with civil demands.²⁴ In Slovakia, economic transition has been in response to multiple dislocations and challenges that have occurred over the last 25 years: The collapse of the Soviet empire, internal political change, the ‘velvet revolution’ (1989) accession into the EU, which took place in May 2004, and adoption of the common Euro currency on the 1st of January in 2009.²⁵ Nearly all nonprofit organizations in Slovakia were founded after 1989. Yet various forms of religious, civic, and educational organizations have existed in Slovakia since the middle ages.²⁶

With the establishment of the autonomous Slovak State during the Second World War the situation within the voluntary sector took a radical turn for the worse and the process of creating organizations became problematic. The whole landscape in Czechoslovakia was dominated by the state, and the operation of civil society was suspended with individuals unable to express religious views, alternative political or social agendas. Similarly, individuals were unable to devote energy or resources to philanthropic or social issues. The development of the tertiary sector was interrupted by the intervention of political and state power. Those restricted mutual association and the ability to contribute to the non-political public good.²⁷

After the fall of communism, in November 1989, due to missing or unsatisfactory legal regulation mostly in the form of civic associations, the tertiary sector started to grow rapidly and many new nonprofit organizations were established. The Velvet revolution was a revolution of democratic change and civil awakening. A new political situation brought unknown problems, therefore nonprofit organizations aimed to teach the citizens how to cope with new life circumstances. People were willing to associate for various purposes, a chance they had not had before. The opening of borders and the opportunity to see the situation in more developed countries brought higher heterogeneity. Respectively, foreign

²³ Wolf, 1999, in Bulla and Starr-Glass, 2006, p.133

²⁴ Laiferova, 1995, p. 65

²⁵ Pribova and Savitt, 1995, in Bulla and Star-Glass, 2006, p.131

²⁶ Lajferova, 1995, pp. 65-66

²⁷ Laiferova, 1995, pp. 65-67

foundations and governments provided significant financial support for activities and organizations that were building civil society in the country.²⁸

In the new independent Slovak Republic, the tertiary sector continued to evolve and the number of organizations was growing: in 1993 there were 6000 nonprofits in the SR, one year later it was already 9800 including 3624 foundations.²⁹ However, in 1994, there was suspicion regarding the purpose and responsibility of nonprofit organizations. Then-current governmental representatives were accusing nonprofit organizations and representatives of the tertiary sector for money-laundering and anti-state or anti-Slovak activities. From the communist era there was an enduring sense that any organizational involvement or affiliation constituted a curtailment of personal freedom.³⁰ Many nonprofits were constructed as shells to cover financial tax manipulation: a fact understood by the general public. *“Sentiments such as lack of trust, lack of personal self-confidence, mutual suspicion, cynicism and a lack of confidence in the emerging civil society further added to the complexity of the task environment for nonprofits.”*³¹ The government prepared a bill, which would solve the alleged accusations, and presented it to The Parliament in 1996 (*Návrh, Zákon Národnej rady Slovenskej Republiky o nadáciách* 1996). The bill was passed in June 1996. After the situation was stabilized the donors redirected their help to other regions. Thus the sector has had to find new financial sources. One of the responses was the *1% law*, allowing individuals to designate 1% of their income taxes to a nonprofit organization of their choice. Two years later the rate was increased to 2%. (Income Tax Act No. 595/2003 Coll.)

The third sector in Slovakia has been growing since the late nineties. There were 29 260 registered NPOs in 2004³². Nowadays, the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic lists more than 34 000 registered civil associations, 1200 non-investment funds and foundations and over 2200 nonprofit organizations.³³ These facts only prove that the nonprofit sector is becoming a significant part of the country’s social development. However, the growth of the tertiary sector has increased competition among organizations that provide similar services.

²⁸ Svitkova, 2004, pp. 11-12

²⁹ Belejova, 1999, in Svitkova, 2004, p. 12

³⁰ Muller, 2003, in Bulla and Starr-Glass, 2006, p. 133

³¹ Muller, 2003, Landmanová, 2003, in Bulla and Starr-Glass, p. 133

³² <http://portal.statistics.sk/showdoc.do?docid=5029>

³³ <http://www.minv.sk/?registre-evidencie-zoznamy-informacie-o-registracii>

Next chapter discusses the significance of marketing activities in the nonprofit sector.

3.2. Nonprofit Marketing

*“Marketing is a basic human activity. The only question is whether or not it is done consciously and competently.”*³⁴

The use of marketing by nonprofit organizations began in the late 1960s, has accelerated in recent years, and has been widely accepted and practiced.³⁵ Nonprofit marketing has great importance for the ever-increasing number of nonprofit organizations, which have in the past 25 years, vastly widened their scope. The nonprofit sector currently provides and contributes to health, education, and social welfare causes all over the world.³⁶ Moreover, commercialization, internationalization and reduced government funding enhance the degree of competition. All these aspects may help explain the increasing attention and the rising relevance of nonprofit marketing.

To promote understanding of nonprofit marketing as such, it is essential to outline the evolution of this discipline, describe key aspects and propose a definition.

3.2.1. Definition of Nonprofit Marketing

Nonprofit marketing became accepted as an increasing research topic only after 1971, when the *Journal of Marketing* for the first time published a special issue devoted to marketing in nonprofit organizations. Since then, American Marketing Association presented various definitions (figure below) that evolved over time.

Figure 1 : AMA marketing definitions over time³⁷

Year	AMA definition	Focus
1935	Marketing is the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producers to consumers	Business activities
1985	Marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives	Normative approach Exchange paradigm
2004	Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders	Relationship Value creation paradigm

³⁴ Nonprofit Marketing Summit Conference, p.2

³⁵ Kotler and Andersen, in Taylor 2010

³⁶ Liao et al., in Taylor 2010

³⁷ Helmig and Thyler , in Taylor, 2010, p. 154

2007	Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners and society at large	Satisfaction of customer wants Serving a society's needs
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Continual growth and acceptance of marketing in the nonprofit sector indicates that it must include “a focus on the satisfaction of customer wants and needs and in the sensitive effort to serve the needs of a society.”³⁸ In line with an organization’s internal and external aspects, Helmig and Thyler bring the definition: “Marketing for nonprofit organizations is a philosophy that includes internal and external activities that aim to contribute to the fulfillment of an organization’s overall mission.”³⁹

As already mentioned, understanding the customers and their behavior is an essential element in creating effective communication. Throughout history researchers and scholars⁴⁰ have tried to delineate nonprofit organization’s unique customers groups. In the nonprofit sector, the marketing strategies must attract and allocate resources. Thus, an elaborated nonprofit marketing concept focuses both on special (e.g. fundraising) and traditional (e.g. promotion, research) marketing applications adapted to the nonprofit context. The figure (2) below depicts a categorization of customer groups in nonprofit sector.

Figure 2 : Customers and respective marketing focus⁴¹

Customers of nonprofit organizations	Direct customers	Indirect customers	Internal customers	Donors
	e.g. members	e.g. families, media	e.g. volunteers	e.g. bequests
Primary marketing focus	Market research, Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Politics		Internal marketing, People, Promoting volunteerism	Fundraising

3.2.2. The Social Marketing

Marketing may be regarded as both a concept and a function. At a conceptual level, marketing is an approach to management that places the customer at the center of everything that an organization does. At a functional level, marketing represents a part of the organization, which gathers research, helps design new services, prices, distributes and promotes them to the consumer.⁴²

³⁸ Helmig and Thyler, in Taylor, 2010, p. 151

³⁹ Ibid, p. 153

⁴⁰ Ibid, pp. 153-154

⁴¹ Ibid. 155

⁴² Sargeant, 2009,p. 33

Considering the conceptual aspect, nonprofit organizations bear the responsibility of subserving social interests not having a legitimate right of making profits. Two basic market segments nonprofit organizations deal with are donors and clients. They subscribe to the objectives that cannot be measured in financial terms. Literature⁴³ uses the term 'social marketing' for all NPOs' marketing activities. Social marketing employs the use of marketing concepts in an effort to persuade consumers to accept social ideas beneficial to society at large. Organizations focus on studying the needs of clientele, identifying the potential donors and communicating to them emotional appeals. Social marketing emphasizes the need to listen to the target audiences and learn what may stimulate them to change. Pezullo and Rice argue that the purpose of NPO activities is not just to raise awareness, but also "*to motivate people to act*".⁴⁴ Hence nonprofit organizations must focus on learning and understanding what motivates people, and thus sizably contribute to the process of social transformation. The formulation of a sound marketing mix that is in tune with the changing needs and requirements becomes significant when thinking of conceptualizing and implementing modern marketing principles.

As mentioned above, nonprofit organizations are not given a right of making profits but generating and mobilizing funds is critical for their existence. Solid application of marketing principles helps generate surpluses for development and expansion. S. M. Jha in his book *Basics of marketing non-profit organizations* lists objectives of marketing the services of nonprofit organizations. Since marketing is considered a process of customer-satisfaction-engineering, the prime objective of an nonprofit organization is to study users, understand their expectations, needs and requirements, and make sincere efforts to orchestrate resources so that the users feel satisfied and potential users develop a temptation to use. Solid application of marketing principles paves the way for persuasion.⁴⁵ Targeting is a strategic decision. An NPO needs to know the segment of potential users. A sound identification of the right target and developing marketing resources accordingly presupposes result-oriented transformation processes.

⁴³ Jha, 2009, p.9

⁴⁴ Pezullo and Rice, 2001, p. 14

⁴⁵ Jha, 2009, pp.13-15

3.3. The Social Marketing Mix

Nonprofit institutions strive to bring about change in a human being. Accordingly, the marketing activities differ from just selling physical products or even services. It is more a matter of knowing the market and selling something intangible that is transformed into a value for the customer. Marketing mix needs to be expanded and adapted to generate a greater relevance to the marketing ideas.⁴⁶ Adrian Sargeant suggests a 'six-P' marketing framework as follows:⁴⁷

Product: The product in a nonprofit context represents the idea that is communicated to the public with the marketers' intention to stimulate a change in behavior that would be good for society as a whole. The change is marketed on the basis of the benefits that accrue as a result. Therefore, the element of persuasion is also important.

Price: The price is represented by the monetary or emotional costs associated with adopting a change. An important point social marketers have learnt is, that it is often better to make some form of charge for any products that they might be involved in distributing.⁴⁸ Simply giving away items runs the risk that no or little value will be placed on them. As mentioned earlier, such surplus-generating activities support an organization's further development.

Place: Place refers either to the channels of information used to reach the target audience, or the location at which the service component will be delivered. It is common that nonprofit organizations often cooperate with educational or medical centers. Such collaboration is in favor of spreading the information.

Promotion: The switch from product promotion to altering people's lives is the most significant element in nonprofit marketing. Social marketers must focus on making society sensitive. The aim is to sensitize and persuade, but not to misguide and miscommunicate. It is necessary that the promotional activities utilize available resources in a creative manner and effectively.

Partnerships: Since some categories of behavior are not easy to influence. To make an impact many smaller nonprofit organizations look for potential partnerships with other

⁴⁶ Kotler and Roberto, 2001, in Sargeant, 2009, p. 228

⁴⁷ Sargeant, 2009, pp. 228-230

⁴⁸ Kotler et al., 2002, in Sargeant, 2009, p. 229

organizations. Such partnerships help acquire necessary resources that the small nonprofit organization is unable to accumulate alone. Nonprofit organizations should remember to give credit to those who made contributions, and honor the donors that contribute to organizational activities. Partners' names and logos are often depicted on the campaign websites or advertisements.

Policy: Due to the difficulties in influencing society, in many cases the only method of achieving the desired results might be the involvement of legislation. Government intervention and social policies can also play a crucial role (banning tobacco advertising) in social changes.

Definitions of social marketing mix vary. Marketers add, modify and adjust the factors in order to expand the mix of individual organizations. A. Sargeant⁴⁹ added two "P"s- partnerships and policy to McCathy's⁵⁰ widespread 4P classification of the marketing mix instruments. Slovak literature⁵¹ uses additional elements such as process, physical evidence or public opinion.

As already mentioned, the goal of social marketing activities is to utilize all available resources in creative and efficient manner in order to communicate social ideas to public. To communicate a message effectively an organization needs to specify the target audience and understand the consumers. Advertising is only successful when it gains consumers' attention. People respond to advertisements in different ways. Their reactions are based on cultural, social or economical variables, and understanding consumer's attitudes, perception, motivation or beliefs can influence the communication process.⁵²

3.4. Designing a Communications Campaign

Marketer Adrian Sargeant in his book *Marketing Management for Nonprofit Organizations* suggests the following seven steps in designing a campaign. These are listed below⁵³:

1. Specification of the target audience

⁴⁹ Sargeant, 2009, pp. 229-230

⁵⁰ Waterschoot and Bulte, 1992, pp.83-84

⁵¹ Bartáková et al., 2007, p.22

⁵² Smith and Zook, 2011, pp. 90-91

⁵³ Sargeant, 2009, pp. 232-248

2. Communications process objectives
3. Specification of promotional message
4. Media selection
5. Schedule
6. Budget
7. Monitoring/control

Following section discusses the first three steps, since only those are relevant for the analysis of the campaigns in chapter 4.

3.4.1. Specification of the target audience

Social marketers have to select only segments of particular importance, therefore deep and detailed specification of behaviors in each segment is a key element. Knowing the potential customers and the target audience helps to make a clear starting point for setting campaign objectives that lead to behavioral change.

3.4.2. Communications Process

According to Colley⁵⁴ a process of effective communication should move through five stages:

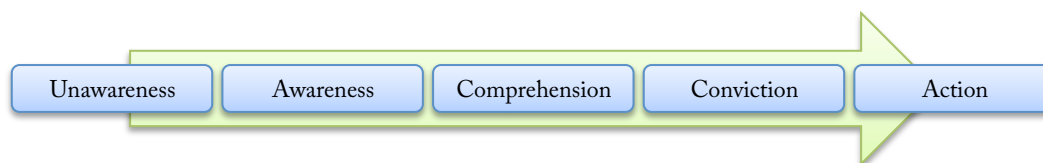


Figure 3 : The five steps of effective communication process

At first, before any social idea can be accepted, the target audience must realize that alternative behaviors exist. For example, to avoid pregnancy in developing countries, communities need to be made aware of birth control methods existence. Secondly, social marketers must strive to explain the benefits that a change could bring and achieve a certain level of understanding among the audience. Then, it is necessary to generate a sense of conviction to change the behavior. The final stage is the ultimate goal of a campaign: securing a change.

3.4.3. Specification of Promotional Message

To design an appropriate promotional message some key considerations must be addressed. These include level of one's involvement, the content of the message and the manner in

⁵⁴ Colley, 1961, in Sargeant, 2009, p. 233

which the message is communicated. All these aspects relate to knowing and understanding the (potential) customers.

3.4.3.1. Level of Involvement

The effectiveness of a message depends on amount and quality of information, and receiver's need for information. Therefore there is a need to strike the right balance when designing a promotional message.

Fill⁵⁵ believes that high-involvement decisions require presentation of detailed information about available options and benefits, and strong, well-documented and supported arguments in favor of the idea. It is because such decisions are relatively rational and require an individual's cognitive functions. On the other hand, low-involvement decisions require less thought. Thus, marketers should aim at generating an emotional response focusing on individual's ego or self-image. The emphasis is put on music, scenery, lighting, imagery or celebrity endorsement.

3.4.3.2. Content of the Message

Social marketers should consider number of issues relating to message content.

One- and Two-Sided Messages

One-sided messages convey only positive impacts of the change while more balanced, two-sided messages show both advantages and disadvantages. Research seems to indicate that message effectiveness depends on recipient's level of education. Highly educated recipients prefer two-sided, more complex messages.

Drawing Conclusions

Social marketers must also decide whether the message will draw a firm conclusion about the need for a change, or whether it will be left open for the recipient's own conclusions. The variety of recipients implies variety of the desirability of drawing a conclusion. *Level of education of the message recipients* is one of the factors that influence the desire. Members of a highly educated group prefer to draw their own conclusions and may feel rejected by the approach which claims to know what is right for them. *Level of complexity* is considered to be another factor. Complex ideas and multifaceted messages or completely new issues require

⁵⁵ Fill, 1995, in Sargeant, 2009, p.233

greater explanation, and guidance in conclusion-drawing. When change and *action is required* immediately the message must be forceful, and conclusion-drawing more pronounced. Taking *level of involvement* into consideration it is believed, that high-involvement decisions are best approached by giving individuals the appropriate facts to make their decisions alone. Any attempts to force a change may be counterproductive.

As already said, effective nonprofit communication requires sensitizing the public utilizing emotions and psychology. The next chapter discusses psychological aspects of communication processes suggested by Smith and Zook in *Marketing communications*.⁵⁶

3.4.3.3. Psychological Variables

The authors agree on several psychological variables that need to be considered when designing a message that is sent out to the public.

Perception, as one of the psychological variables means the way messages, advertisements or any information are interpreted. One's perceptual system has a tendency to organize and modify stimuli reaching it, and is linked with past experiences, motivation, beliefs, attitudes and the ability to learn. Before perception occurs, attention has to be gained. Thus, in the communication process, advertisers use various symbols appealing to the audience. Williams (in Smith and Zook) says that interests, needs and motives determine *'not only what will arouse attention, but also what will hold it.'*⁵⁷ Certain physical properties like size, color, contrast, repetition or using novelties also affect the perception and can increase the likelihood of a message gaining attention.

Motivation is another factor that relates to a consumer's psychology. It is defined as *'a drive to satisfy a need'*.⁵⁸ Advertisers need to remember that there is a great variety of what motivates people. Some motives are instinctive and work on subconscious level, some are socially learnt. Abraham Maslow's⁵⁹ hierarchy of needs categorizes one's needs into five categories: physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization needs. This theory explains that one is driven to satisfy lower-level needs and then move up to the next level afterwards. The nonprofit sector does not sell physical products; therefore the satisfaction of basic

⁵⁶ Smith and Zook, 2009, pp. 103-113

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.104

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 107

⁵⁹ Ibid. P 108

physiological or safety needs is not present in this sector. According to Walker (in Smith and Zook) some products are '*symbolic confirmation and expression of identity.*'⁶⁰ Making a donation to an NPO rather satisfies one's social and esteem needs. Nonprofit marketers therefore focus on the segment of consumers aware of their social status. When people support nonprofit organizations they demonstrate sympathy, social responsibility and show concern about those in need.

Attitudes are characterized as predispositions towards a certain product, a service or a company. Zook and Smith break attitudes into 'cognitive', 'affective' and 'conative' aspects.⁶¹ The first element is the awareness or knowledge of e.g. a brand. Positive or negative feelings associated with a brand represent the affective element. Lastly, the conative 'do' is the intention to buy or use. Identifying the levels of each element helps to set tighter communication. If a nonprofit organization aims to introduce a new social problem and inform the public about e.g. cancer prevention, the strategy will differ from encouraging the public to act, support projects and make donations. Communication strategy and messages should be designed in line with organization's objectives.

When 'selling an idea' in a nonprofit environment, the psychological aspect of perception and learning becomes relevant and important. There are number of theories that explain how attitudes about companies, brands or products develop.⁶² One of the theories suggests that associations can be made between stimuli and responses. '*Associations can be also built up by linking celebrities with the brand.*'⁶³ Organizations often involve popular actors or singers in their campaigns. By associating 'the popular' with 'the unknown' they strive to enhance learning process of the public. Furthermore, constant repetition of stimuli can help building associations and arouse consumers' emotional or behavioral responses.

According to Phillip Kotler and Gary Armstrong in *Principles of Marketing*,⁶⁴ advertising appeals should be meaningful, believable and distinctive. The message should point out benefits and the customer must believe that promised benefits will be delivered.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.109

⁶¹ Ibid. p.110

⁶² Ibid. pp.105-107

⁶³ Smith and Zook, 2009, p.105

⁶⁴ Armstrong and Kotler, 2003, p. 466

A. Sargeant claims that social ideas can be communicated in many ways. Designing a promotional message therefore depends on characteristics of the target audience. Knowing who the recipient is helps to decide whether it is more effective to apply factual or emotional appeal. Many times it is the right balance between the two that helps to design a good campaign.⁶⁵ Advertising appeals can influence consumers rationally or emotionally or can even create a desire for certain products or services. According to Moriarty appeals that “*have the power to arouse innate or latent desire*” are directly related to the thinking process of the audience that involves reasoning process.⁶⁶

It is not known precisely what appeals are the best to use in any given situation. However, several authors (Hubinkova, Sargeant, Gottlichova) agree on following advertising appeals frequent in nonprofit communications: rational, emotional, fear, humor, moral, guilt.

Rational. Rational appeals are linked to facts that inform the audience about various social issues. Marketers often use numbers (e.g. statistics) and specific information to raise the awareness of a problem the organization strives to tackle. Using rational appeals involves supporting evidence that is in favor of nonprofit organization’s trustworthiness and credibility.

Emotional. Given that there is some consensus that donating is a type of pro-social behavior respondents may feel more inclined to donate when particular emotions are expressed by images. Hence some organizations prefer the use of pictures that engender empathy in the potential donator. The indirect experience of sadness or guilt (e.g. a sad image of a child), might suggest that the appropriate response would be to give; whereas an image of a happy child may not prompt such ready donating. This Approach could, of course, could be argued either way. Seeing a happy child on a charitable advertisement might well prompt greater potential donations as it allows the donor to see the results of donations.⁶⁷

Fear appeals. Evoking an emotion of immediate fear or concern for future issues represents one of the approaches. Researchers working in the field of fear in advertising agree on the fact that the greater the fear induced, the greater will be the persuasion.⁶⁸ Other evidence

⁶⁵ Sargeant, 2009, pp. 236-238

⁶⁶ Rajput and Vasishth, 2008, p.85

⁶⁷ Burnett and Wood, 1988, in Burt and Strongman, 2004, pp. 571-573

⁶⁸ Witte and Allen, 2000, in Sargeant, 2009, p.236

claims that shock ads can be effective immediately, but there is a risk that repetition can lead to habituation and it simply stops working.⁶⁹ Smokers have now become used to health warnings on cigarette packs.

Appeals based on humor. Mark Weinberger and Charles Gulas published a book *Humor in Advertising* in 2006 that combines what has been learnt about the application of humor in advertising into coherent whole. Following are some of the implications they concluded⁷⁰:

- humor attracts attention;
- humor is no more effective at increasing persuasion than other promotional messages;
- humor enhances 'liking'; individuals are more likely to develop a favorable impression of advertising that utilizes humor;
- audience characteristics (gender, ethnicity, age) affect the response to humorous appeals;
- humor is more effective with existing products than with new products;
- humor is more effective with low-involvement decisions than those with a high-involvement.

Cartoons/ Animations. Use of animation techniques has become more popular recently. Some communications campaigns feature animated characters that are created and used to address younger audience, but also help to communicate hard-hitting and sensitive messages that might be distressing to show in mass media.

Although it might be impossible to build a universal "how to" manual and a set of appeals that guarantee the success of a communication, organizations must sometimes undertake risky decisions. These, however, should be made in line with campaigns purpose, organizations mission and last not least the audience.

⁶⁹ Fry, 1996, in Sargeant, p. 236

⁷⁰ Winberger and Gulas, 1992, in Sargeant, 2009, p.237

4. Analysis

4.1. The Children of Slovakia Foundation - description



Figure 4 : The Children of Slovakia Foundation logo

The Children of Slovakia Foundation (CSF) is the most famous organization in Slovakia that aims its activities at helping children and youth. It is one of the few nonprofit organizations that has been dedicated to supporting projects with a preventive impact. The foundation is convinced that the prevention of problems is more effective than solving them after they surface. Long-term support enables them to build up stable partnerships as well as developing, testing and implementing innovative solutions.

For almost two decades, the CSF has been successful in establishing and maintaining long term partnerships with NGOs, state bodies, and businesses, which respond to the newly emerging needs of children. The traditional methods of education and upbringing have been found no longer effective. The programs of the Children of Slovakia Foundation are derived from the international survey “Newly emerging needs of children in Slovakia” published in 2010. The survey identified new threats and needs:

- Parents’ engage very loosely in the upbringing of their children.
- Increase in aggressiveness.
- Ineffective methods of education in schools.
- Possibilities and problems connected to the spending of leisure time.
- Pressure on performance and success of children.

One of the fundamental activities of the Children of Slovakia Foundation is the raising of financial resources for supporting a long-term program that raises the quality of life of children and youth in Slovakia. At the same time they strive to develop fellowship and integrity of the expert and laic public towards the vulnerability of children. By carrying out the fundraising activities, CSF develops a philanthropic trend in society.

The Children's Hour campaign

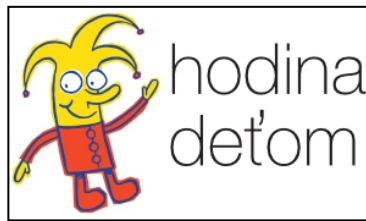


Figure 5
The Children's Hour (Hodina detom)
campaign logo

The Children's Hour grant program (*Hodina detom*) is from the beginning of 2000, the largest grant program of the Children of Slovakia Foundation. Thanks to the annual money collection, the foundation can continue to address those questions that are most urgent. The grant program has been contributing to the professionalization and stabilization of organizations that work with children and youth, encouraging cooperation with interfacing organizations from various sectors with the goal of helping children and youth, drawing attention to the problems which children and youth face in Slovakia. The CSF also acknowledges those persons that are crucial for the development of these children.

The Children's Hour is a yearlong financial collection that concentrates and divides resources for prevention and intervention to help children and youth in Slovakia. The main contribution of The Children's Hour is that independent finances are moved to the program area with the largest identification of need. The Children's Hour managed to help establish and stabilize numerous high quality projects, which systematically support individuals or groups in helping children and youth. The Children's Hour continues to be the most intense and long-term fundraising activity in Slovakia.

Various organizations support The Children's Hour through organizing spontaneous collections. Through the 13th year of The Children's Hour, 31 organizations managed to set up a spontaneous collection of 13 864,88 €.⁷¹

The Children's Hour grant program is communicated through the campaign's webpage and spots broadcast on national TV and radio stations. Various forms of print media support the financial collection all year through. The analysis focuses on the program's webpage and selected print and TV advertisements in order to point at communications marketing principles.

⁷¹ Hodina Detom [online] retrieved from <http://www.hodinadetom.sk/en/Children-s-Hour.alej>

4.2. Children of Slovakia Foundation - analysis

The leading character of the campaign is a cartoon figure named 'Hugo'. This image of a jolly clown is used on the campaign's advertisements in print media and on TV. In addition, Hugo guides the website's visitors and is depicted in different postures, sizes in many places repetitively (see Figure 6). As theories (chapter 3.4.3.3.) suggest, this repetition may affect visitors' perception and helps to build associations. Hugo became a 'trademark' and 'signature' of The Children's Hour campaign's activities found on TV, on radio or in print.



Figure 6 : Images of Hugo used on the campaign's webpage

As written on the website, Hugo was born in 2000 when the program was launched. His mission is *"to play with everyone-children, young, old, ill, children of all skin colors and also help them."*⁷² In line with Helming and Thyler's definition (in chapter 3.2.1.) this cartoon character contributes to the fulfillment of the campaign's overall mission. The name of the program "hodina det'om" (The Children's Hour) and clown Hugo form the logo (see figure 5) of this program. The organization CSF uses the animated character in this program to address the younger audience. Since the campaign aims to encourage the public to financially support the program and establish new partnerships with donors and businesses, this character also speaks to donors, media and adult clients. Hence, this cartoon image may be considered as a symbol representing children's environment communicating sensitive messages of children's problems and threats in Slovak society. This is in line with the theory of using animation techniques by A. Sargeant (chapter 3.4.3.3.).

We saw in chapter 3.4. that selling intangible products often involves use of imagery appeals that trigger customer's emotional reaction and in the end lead to desired reaction. In other words, to stimulate behavioral change in society 'The Children's Hour' campaign utilizes symbols to indirectly motivate customers to support the project. Besides the imaginary world and unreal cartoon figures, The Children's Hour program involves real human beings in their

⁷² translated from <http://www.hodinadetom.sk/sk/O-hodine-detom/Kto-som.alej>

communications campaign. There are photo and video galleries on the webpage documenting activities financed by the program. These picture messages can be linked to Sargeant’s theory emphasizing that factual appeals help to communicate social ideas (chapter 3.4.3.3). As the theory chapter suggests, cooperation with celebrities is in favor of philanthropic activities of this nonprofit organization. The key message of the campaign is a fact that is it important to think about the children and care about the future of the next generations. Popular Slovak actors (see figure 7)– members of The Slovak National Theatre – were involved in making TV spots and advertisements together with children. As mentioned in the background chapter, the development of the Slovak nonprofit sector went through difficult times of suspicions, accusations and mistrust. Despite the unfavorable past, the sector has grown in strength and became a significant part of Slovak economy. Cooperation with local celebrities, most of whom are older actors without previous scandals or shocking stories in media, help create a trustworthy image of the program. Thanks to that, The Children’s Hour has spontaneously grown into the most reliable fundraising campaign for children.⁷³



Figure 7 : The actors involved in The Children’s Hour Campaign

Regarding the physical attributes of the advertisements, the campaign’s webpage, TV spots and advertisements use vivid colors, fonts and images that construct a ‘playful’ image. Major colors are yellow, orange and red- all considered as cheerful and energetic often associated with enthusiasm.⁷⁴



Figure 8 : 2% Income Tax Law Advertisement

⁷³ <http://www.nds.sk/blog/aktuality/zalezi-slovakom-na-mladej-generacii-clanok/>

⁷⁴ <http://www.thinkbrilliant.com/2010/04/the-science-of-colors-in-marketing-and-web-design/>

4.3. The Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union - description



Figure 9 : Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union logo

The Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union (Únia nevidiacich a slabozrakých Slovenska, Slovak acronym: UNSS) is a civic organization established April 7th, 1990.

It pursues the objective to improve the quality of life of visually impaired Slovak people and to give partially sighted and blind citizens chance to live full-value life and participate in the development of an integrated society. One of its missions is the help to overcome the consequences of sight damage or loss of vision. The UNSS advocates the rights and creation of equal opportunities § of life, provides counseling and services, and furthermore supports and develops activities – the purpose of which is a full-value life for people with visual impairment within mainstream society.⁷⁵

The Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union operates within the whole country and offers its services on the basis of the Social Aid Act to everybody who is interested. Social counseling is designed to people for whom loss or damage of vision has become the dominant problem of their life. It offers e.g.: advisory in the field of accepting the impairment itself, social and legal counseling (area of employment and education), or advisory when purchasing assistive technology or optical aids. Besides the counseling activities, the USNN regularly organizes camps for children, group courses or individual-based trainings to improve skills and motivate clients with and without visual impairment.

The White Pencil campaign



Figure 10 : The White Pencil campaign logo

A nation-wide charitable public collection called The White Pencil is aimed at supporting programs for visually impaired and purblind citizens.

The white pencil in the campaign symbolizes a world of visually handicapped people.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ <http://unss.sk/en2/>

⁷⁶ http://spectator.sme.sk/articles/view/30556/14/white_pencil_supported_the_visually_impaired_again.html

4.4. The Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union - analysis

Nowadays, blindness and visual impairment are widely socially accepted subjects in Slovakia. However, the situation for visually handicapped people was not always as favorable as it is now. As previously mentioned (chapter 3.1.), post-war Czechoslovakia operated by state was under the rule of the Communist party. People were unable to express opinions, political or religious views since everything was strictly controlled by the state. Handicapped people were considered 'a shame' of society and therefore people could not freely associate and organize philanthropic activities to help the disabled. The White Pencil campaign now aims not only to accumulate the financial resources, but also educate and draw the public's attention to citizens who were seen as "malfunctioning elements" of the society. The acceptance of visually impaired individuals manifests the country's social development. In addition, this year's motto of the campaign "Pomáhame nevidiacim vrátiť sa do života" – "We help the purblind get back to life" proves that purblind were not integrated in the society in the past, but now the organization strives to make a contribution to their full-value lives.



Figure 11 : The motto of The White Pencil 2012 campaign (We help the purblind get back to life)

As Smith and Zook argue, knowing and understanding the behavior of your target audience is the first and the most important step in creating an effective communication strategy. In fact, this traditional marketing approach is relevant and applicable for the nonprofit sector, and accordingly, to the UNSS's 'Biela pastelka' (The White Pencil). Recognizing the sensitive character of blindness paves the way for a proper communication process.

The Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union created a website – bielapastelka.sk⁷⁷ – for the campaign. As with the previous program (The children's Hour by CSF), Biela pastelka utilizes other forms of advertising on TV, radio and in print media.

The leitmotif of the campaign is a white pencil; a white pencil as a symbol of invisibility; a symbol of a light in the world of darkness. The white pencil helps to find solutions and draws

⁷⁷ English translation: the white pencil

a bright line in gloomy/dark lives of blind and visually impaired people. A more tangible and concrete association can be made with a white pencil representing a white cane (walking stick) as a basic and very necessary element of blind individuals. The white pencil symbol occurs in many versions (see Figure 12).



Figure 12 : white pencils used in The White Pencil campaigns

The public collection lasts for six months. People can donate any amount via bank account transfer or send a 1€ text message. The most important day of the whole campaign is a day when volunteers collect financial donations in the streets of more than 120 towns in Slovakia. For a symbolic 1€ donation, people are given a white pencil or ‘a white pencil badge’ that represents one’s concern for the lives of purblind persons. Selling the pencils is in line with Sargeant’s theory on marketing mix (chapter 3.3.). As stated by A. Sargeant, the UNSS adds significance to these purblind symbols and such approach is more effective. The fact that these items are not simply given away (for free) raises the value of the symbol when bought. However, public may judge financial/ monetary obligations negatively. Therefore, the white pencils are sold for a symbolic sum. In any case, people are encouraged to donate any, even smaller, amount of money. The 1€ condition only ties to symbolic items.

As already stated (chapatr 3.2.2.), it is one of the main and unique characteristics of the nonprofit sector that organizations have no right to make profits. Hence, A. Sargeant adds ‘partnerships’ to the marketing mix framework (chapter 3.3.) as an important factor. Cooperation with partners makes accumulation of resources in the nonprofit sector easier. The white pencil campaign is supported by a strong base of partners, including mobile operators, television, radio stations, national and local businesses. Advertising companies, namely Apple Pie Advertising and Fun House⁷⁸, involved in designing the campaign materials (TV spots, print advertisements) work with no claim for profits. The UNSS gives

⁷⁸ http://www.nrozp-mosty.sk/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=877:22-september-deň-bielej-pastelky

credit to their partners listing their names on the website. In addition to that partners logos can be found on print advertisements. (see Figure 13 below)



Figure 13 : A list of The White Pencil campaign partners (on the print advertisement and the campaign’s webpage)

Referring to the physical aspects of the campaign, the color plays a distinctive role. The use of dark blue backgrounds and texts in white color is in favor of the campaign’s overall mood. Proper use of colors in outdoor media, print advertisements and the webpage constructs an image of a dark world of purblind people where a white pencil represents a light in the dark. These physical attributes of a message convey a symbolic meaning. The white pencil, however, might not be immediately understood as a symbolic tool for improving lives of visually handicapped people. Sargeant’s theory (chapter 3.4.3.2.) emphasizes that level of recipient’s education and level of complexity of a message have an impact whether the message is read and understood. The White Pencil campaign therefore adds textual explanations that guide the reader in drawing conclusions.

Written messages are a significant part of the campaign. This year print advertisements promote: “Za každou pastelkou sa skrýva ľudský osud. Pridajte ďalšiu a podpíšte sa tak k pomoci zrakovo postihnutým.” (Each pencil personifies a real life. Throw one in and you add your signature to the help to purblind.) (see Figure 14)



Figure 14 : The White Pencil 2012 campaign's message

Furthermore, there is a mutual relation between visual depictions and the text messages. Advertisers point out the fact that the white pencil is only a symbol. It is an item representing an improvement in real lives of visually impaired people. The message invites the public to 'sign' (podpíšte sa). Only these 'signatures' can help 'draw' a brighter future. Advertisements are designed to gain readers' attention. Attention is one of the psychological variables (chapter 3.4.3.3) involved in perception followed by message interpretation and understanding. With the combination of visual elements and textual messages, The White pencil campaign conveys a message in a very original but appropriate manner. Such a communication is an example of a creative promotion approach as presented by A. Sargeant (chapter 3.3.).

4.5. UNICEF Slovakia - description



Figure 15 : UNICEF logo

UNICEF was originally created as an organization to help children affected by the Second World War. Later, its scope expanded, and today it helps the most vulnerable children worldwide. Within the development and humanitarian assistance, it cares for survival and development of children, promotes their rights and attracts attention to their compliance.

While UNICEF is a UN organization, it has a specific position – it is the only United Nations fund, which is neither funded by the UN, nor has assigned a fixed budget item from the state budget. UNICEF's work to help children is entirely dependent on voluntary contributions from individuals, corporations and other donors. UNICEF is funded purely by voluntary contributions.⁷⁹

Nowadays, the organization UNICEF is active in more than 190 countries worldwide, including the Slovak republic. UNICEF Slovakia was established in 1993 and is now registered as a civil association. The overall purpose of UNICEF Slovakia can be split into the following three missions:⁸⁰

- to raise funds for UNICEF: Volunteers and donors contribute by supporting the financial collections or buying UNICEF's cards or gift items. Corporate partners often organize events to support UNICEF's activities and projects;
- promote children's rights: UNICEF advocates the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and strives to create integrated politics performed on behalf of the children;
- organize programs to improve the quality of life of all the children in Slovakia: For more than 15 years UNICEF Slovakia has worked with a number of hospitals and medical centers, schools and educational institutions. These partnerships contribute to quality life of Slovak children.

⁷⁹ <http://www.mvro.sk/en/members/full-members/46-slovensky-vybor-pre-unicef>

⁸⁰ <http://www.unicef.sk/sk/o-unicefe/unicef-slovensko/>

The Week of The Blue Button Campaign



Figure 16 : The Blue Button symbol

The third week of May is traditionally the time for collection of *The Week of the Blue Button* campaign— designed to help the most vulnerable children worldwide. Project themes vary every year. With the help of donors, sponsors, partners and the general public, UNICEF Slovakia provided sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities for children in Uganda (2008), collected money for shipping the anti-tetanus vaccines to Laos (2009-2010), and helped children in Southern Sudan (2011) to get proper elementary education so they have a chance to defeat poverty and live healthier lives. In 2012, The Week of the Blue Button aimed to raise funds to support children in Zimbabwe to get access to drinking water by repairing old and building new water wells.

4.6. UNICEF Slovakia - analysis

UNICEF Slovakia makes effective use of all Slovak media in their campaigns. Besides the traditional television, radio and print media, the organization added alternative communication channels (outdoor advertising, ATMs, stickers).

Characteristics of social marketing discussed in chapter 3.2.2. present the need of nonprofit organizations to do more than make the public aware of a social problem. UNICEF Slovakia represents a case when an organization warns about a threatening situation in other countries and proposes a specific plan to change the situation. The communication campaign does not only aim to raise awareness. The Week of the Blue Button encourages people to act and motivates them to make donations. Again, marketing activities developed to persuade the consumers to act, are characteristic to traditional marketing approaches. UNICEF Slovakia proves Jha's argument (chapter 3.2.2.) that persuasion becomes critical also in the nonprofit sector.

To communicate messages about vulnerable children, UNICEF Slovakia uses a blue button. This blue button symbolizes the connection between the world of adults and children, between rich and poor, between near/present 'us' and distant 'them'. The spot broadcast on television explains that 'this blue button connects childhood and happiness', and that 'everyone can help to button up (i.e. fasten) this idea'. This symbolic connection refers to the NPO's slogan: "Svet deti sa nas tyka." (Unite for children). Everyone is involved in the lives of those children who suffer from hunger, pain, fear or sadness.

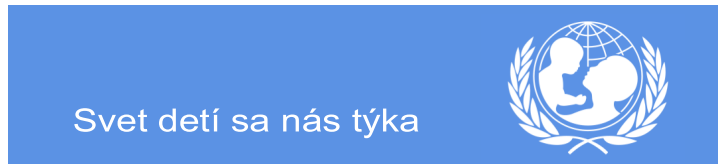


Figure 17: 'Unite for Children' UNICEF's motto

However, The Week of the Blue Button does not seek to blame or make society feel guilty. Even Though the appeals of the messages are emotional, they are rather supportive and encouraging. Blue button communicates a message on how to change the unfavorable situation of children living in developing countries.

UNICEF, being a very well-known international organization, has a specific position in the Slovak nonprofit market. As previously mentioned, the number of both local and international nonprofit organizations in Slovakia has grown in the last decade. The history and development of Slovak society caused some Slovak nonprofit potential customers to be reserved and restrained towards the third sector. Smith and Zook (chapter 3.4.3.3.) agree that attitudes are relevant psychological factors involved in communication. Persistent doubts, mistrust and money-laundering accusations are not in favor of UNICEF's interests. Furthermore, the problematic of endangered children living on the African or Asian continents is very distant for Slovaks. Local nonprofit organizations and their activities seem to relate to the Slovak market better and closer. Taking the economic situation into consideration, financial assets of the Slovak society are limited. Thus, when supporting philanthropic activities, people prefer to choose the ones that tackle specific issues relating to their lives. Being aware of this situation in the market, UNICEF Slovakia broadened its



Figure 18 : Stickers on a mirror saying " The Blue Button looks good on you"

mission and implemented activities that benefit the children in the Slovak republic too. This proves the proficiency of UNICEF and the fact Smith et. al. and Jha (chapter 3. and 3.2.2.) emphasized: knowing and understanding the target audience is critical in designing a communications campaign.

The blue button has become a significant element in the campaign's communication. Blue button badges are sold for a symbolic 1€ donation during The Week of the Blue Button. Referring to psychological variables (chapter 3.4.3.3.), the badge

(or the pin) becomes a symbolic expression of one’s philanthropic identity. A badge in the campaign is used to motivate people to support the collection. For a 1€ financial contribution one gets a visible symbol that is very well known and understood in Slovakia. To a certain extent, a blue button becomes a brand that is proud to be worn.

The Week of the Blue Button campaign serves as an example of a creative implementation of marketing tools and methods. As already mentioned, the blue button is used not only as a logo or isolated campaign’s symbol. Marketers used the image to construct the messages of the campaign. As seen on the figure⁸¹ below (Figure 19), typical UNICEF blue buttons were used to depict messages. ‘Pomôžte dopraviť’ vakcíny k deťom’ (Help us deliver vaccines to the children) was a headline of the campaign in 2009. UNICEF Slovakia creatively combined written messages and the campaign’s symbol to explain the objectives and benefits of the campaign. Such explanation brings understanding among the audience. And as A.Srageant emphasizes, understanding generates ‘a sense of conviction to change the behavior’ (chapter 3.4.2.).



Figure 19 : ‘Help us deliver vaccines to the children’ advertisements; right: the detail of a plane constructed of buttons

⁸¹ <http://personalvalve.deviantart.com/art/Unicef-Advertising-119562779>

5. Discussion

Marketing a nonprofit organization with limited funds can be a challenge. Yet, marketing activities help generate flow of contributions. Fund raising is an absolutely vital part of an organization's survival. Therefore, it is important to the impact the organization can have on its community. Marketing has an interdisciplinary character, involving creating, communicating and exchanging values for consumers. The process of communication becomes essential in nonprofit fundraising activities. Effective communication determines an effective campaign.

Theories suggest that several key elements of an effective nonprofit communication process exist. The analysis pointed out the use (presence and absence) of following aspects:

- Campaigns communicate organization's mission and vision
- Definition and understanding of the target audience
- Expanded and adapted marketing mix
- Physical and psychological variables

5.1. Mission and Vision

The Children of Slovakia Foundation clearly states its vision and purpose on the organization's webpage. This Slovak nonprofit organization strives to raise quality of children in Slovakia, and encourage and develop cooperation of the expert and laic public towards vulnerability of children. The cartoon character Hugo is used in the campaign as 'an intermediary' to encourage and represent the organization's mission. Hugo's purpose is to 'play with everyone' (page XY). In other words, Hugo approaches children who are the center of CSF's program activities. This Clown also attracts the general public, donors and partners as a symbol and 'trademark' of the campaign.

Similarly, The Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union uses a symbol of a white pencil in The White Pencil campaign. In the same manner, this white pencil helps to 'draw a brighter future' for purblind citizens. That is in line with the organization's mission to improve the quality of visually impaired Slovak people.

In the same way, the mission of the international organization UNICEF is presented in The Week of the Blue Button campaign via the blue button. The organization is fully dependent

on contributions from partners, donors and volunteers and strives to help vulnerable children in developing countries and in Slovakia. The blue button is a symbol of a connection and cooperation that is necessary to fulfill their purpose. Adding to that, buttons symbolize a connection between happiness and childhood that is one of the children's rights spelled in the Convention of the Rights of the Children – a document that UNICEF Slovakia activities aim to fulfill and promote.

5.2. Target Audience

The analysis has shown that The Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union is very well aware of the situation in the Slovak nonprofit market. To talk about handicapped citizens is not an easy subject. The organization is aware of the country's history and understands the attitudes towards purblind people that prevailed in the past. Even more than 20 years after the fall of communism, the topic of blindness is still a sensitive matter. All the above mentioned is present in The White Pencil campaign. The motto manifests that purblind citizen should no longer be 'hidden' but they have a right to live full-quality lives.

Accordingly, CSF included popular Slovak celebrities in the campaign. This approach represents two elements. Firstly, adult celebrities address the adult audience of the campaign and point out the organization's mission – relating the adults' world to the children's world. Secondly, the cooperation with local actors is in favor of the organization's trustworthy image. This helps to suppress remaining traces of distrust and lack of credibility that may still be present in the Slovak market. The target market of this campaign is very broad. Since the overall impression the Children's Hour projects is rather 'youthful' and 'childlike', the messages might not appeal to and eventually reach every potential donor or partner.

The element of understanding the target audience is present in The Week of the Blue Button campaign only to a limited degree. Since the campaign focuses on distant problems of children in developing countries, it is not an easy task to appeal to the Slovak market. UNICEF Slovakia triggers feelings of concern and responsibility among the people. The financial situation of potential donors can represent another obstacle in creating messages and designing an effective campaign. To encourage the public to donate, UNICEF Slovakia utilizes 1€ donation by making comparisons. This amount of money might be symbolic for a Slovak citizen, but could save two children's lives in, e.g. African Uganda.

5.3. Social Marketing Mix

Theories (chapter 3.2.1.) agree that nonprofit marketing developed from traditional for-profit business activities. Similarly, nonprofit marketing mix was expanded and adapted to specifics of a nonprofit environment. It is evident from the analysis that all the organizations communicate an idea that brings about a change in human behavior. All three campaigns present messages that are in favor of the social development. Be it Children's Hour's raising the quality of life of children in Slovakia, or UNSS's improving the unfavorable lives of purblind people and making their lives better. All these ideas represent one 'P' in nonprofit marketing mix framework- a product.

The analysis shows that fundraising can be done in different ways. All the campaigns encourage the public to donate optional amounts of money. Adding to these voluntary contributions, The Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union and UNICEF Slovakia utilize a fixed symbolic 1€ donation for the pencil and the button symbols. These elements may help to motivate the public to give donations, since in return they receive physical tokens. So the analysis showed that the element of price (monetary cost) is an optional choice.

Sargeant's partnerships factor are present in both local Slovak organizations' campaigns. Establishing new partnerships is even rooted in a mission statement of The Children of Slovakia Foundation. All three campaigns included a list of their partners and donors on the websites. Only The Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union also depicts the partners logos on posters and print advertisements.

Sargeant's 'policy' element is not present in the campaigns that were analyzed. The fundraising character implies voluntary participation of the audience. There are no political interventions or laws that make donations obligatory in Slovakia. However, as mentioned in the chapter 3.1. individuals are allowed to donate 2% of yearly income tax to nonprofit organizations. The Children of Slovakia Foundation as the only organization of those analyzed makes use of this Income Tax Law to attract more resources (see figure 8 in chapter 4.2.).

Channels of communication represent 'place' in the marketing mix. All the campaigns similarly utilize internet, television, radio, print and outdoor media. However, UNICEF Slovakia does not use a separate website devoted to The Week of The Blue Button campaign. This organization provides all the information about the campaign on their homepage

www.unicef.sk in the section 'I want to help' (Chcem pomôcť). It is the way the organizations promote the messages that makes them distinctive. While CSF promotes the message in a playful and 'jolly' fashion, The White Pencil campaign creates a parallel to a dark purblind setting. UNICEF Slovakia proved its creativity when placing stickers on mirrors in public with a message: "The blue button looks good you". (see Figure 18).

5.4. Physical and Psychological Aspects

The analysis points in the direction, that a combination of physical and psychological factors as well as marketers' creativity is critical in the advertising process. Children's Hour's advertisers know that colors help to create the mood of the ad and therefore have an impact on the receivers' attention and perception. Using bright colors creates a playful mood typical for a children's environment. The jolly clown Hugo emphasizes the overall mood and image that is promoted. Similarly, The UNSS utilizes colors to address the consumers. Again, the symbol of the white pencil is in line with the purpose of the campaign – it helps to promote the brighter and better future. Written messages guide the audience to the right understanding of the message. UNICEF Slovakia does not utilize color psychology in the campaign of The Blue Button. Instead, the NPO creatively utilizes the button symbol to construct the message. The same blue button is also used as an element that motivates potential donors to contribute. A badge (a pin) represents one's philanthropic concern. As seen in The White Pencil campaign, also UNICEF Slovakia added written texts that reveal hidden meanings for the audience with a low level of involvement.

None of the analyzed campaigns use appeals based on fear or guilt. On the contrary, the chosen nonprofit organizations utilize symbols (button, pencil), colors and celebrity endorsement to address the social issues in a sensitive manner. All the campaigns prove that emotions and emotional appeals are dominant in the communication process. They inform about the unfavorable conditions (e.g. of purblind people or vulnerable children), but they bring solutions to change the situation. Therefore they strive to encourage the audience to act and donate. The analysis indicates that the messages communicated by nonprofit campaigns are not complex. With the right amount of advertisers' creativity and hints, messages become easy to understand, interesting and motivating.

All three analyzed campaigns have some common characteristics. Firstly, the campaigns' messages are communicated on the same market to roughly the same audience. Secondly, all the messages have fundraising character. In order to attract financial resources and encourage public to make donations, campaigns aim to attract and consequently persuade potential donors. Since the social marketing does not involve physical products and does not seek to satisfy physiological needs, the focus is placed on emotions, attitudes and one's identity. Analysis is a reflection of what theories agree on: the process of communication is a complex and interconnected.

6. Conclusion

Nonprofit organizations represent an important part of today's modern society. The Slovak third sector has been in progress and the number of nonprofit organizations in Slovakia is still growing. Both domestic (Slovak) but also international nonprofit organizations still emerge with a mission to tackle various social issues threatening society. Without a right to make profits, the nonprofit organizations compete for funds and voluntary donations that are crucial for their existence and, eventually, for fulfilling their missions. To attract finances from various sources organizations perform a broad range of marketing activities similar to profit oriented businesses (e.g. advertising, branding, PR). Fundraising is one of the marketing activities typical for the nonprofit sector. It is an activity that secures the ability of an organization to perform activities and fulfill its mission. Organizations raise funds via sponsorships, cooperation with other partners, and also by organizing public events and annual money collections in the streets of Slovak towns. In order to motivate and persuade people to make donations, nonprofit organizations need to build strong and effective communication (messages and channels).

The analysis (chapter 4) focused on fundraising campaigns of three well-known nonprofit organizations in Slovakia. The very effective communication of these nonprofit organizations makes them widespread and popular in the Slovak market. According to the study, these three cases really seem to perform in line with the theoretical recommendations. Even though it is most likely impossible to build a definite and universal "how to" manual for successful communications, the nonprofit organizations and their campaigns in the analysis seem to fully agree with three main theoretical recommendations. The analysis indicates that an effective communication is an interconnection of "who" (target audience), "what" (mission) and "how" (message). The work suggests that a deep understanding and specification of the target market helps built up a message that is appealing to the audience. Making the organization's mission and purpose clear and understandable has an impact on the process of communication, too. Finally, the most important in the process of communication is to bridge the nonprofit organization and the public with messages that attract, motivate and persuade. The process of designing a campaign involves various cultural and social aspects that need to be considered. The analyzed nonprofit organizations seem to be familiar with the Slovak nonprofit market and its unfavorable history. Many years under the rule of the

Communist Party have an impact on shaping the attitudes and opinions of Slovaks. All the campaigns seem to approach the public in a very sensitive manner, and explain the benefits of philanthropic activities. Knowledge of history and the development of the Slovak third sector make for understanding of Slovak customers – their attitudes and behavior. The nature of the audience and character of the message is reflected in a way ‘how’ the information is communicated. The fundraising aspect of the campaign in the analysis is reflected in the character of messages. The main purpose of all three campaigns is to motivate and encourage donating. Raising the awareness concerning vulnerability of children and visually impaired people could be considered and a sub-purpose. Since the fundraising aims to attract as much capital as possible, the campaigns focus on individual contributors, donors, corporate partners and businesses. To appeal to all clients might be complicated, but the analysis shows that the combination of creativity and a sensitive approach form the basis of effective communication.

In most ways, effective marketing is the same in overall approach for nonprofit organizations as it is for profit-making businesses. Theory implies that social marketing developed from business-like activities. Also, the analysis indicates that some techniques and communication approaches are applicable in traditional marketing, too. Following that line of thought, the campaigns also pointed out additional elements of marketing mix (i.e. partnerships and policy). Nevertheless, nonprofit organizations strive to bring about a change in human behavior by sensitizing the audience. Selling intangible ideas and tackling sensitive social issues requires altered marketing approaches. Social marketing seem to be considerably adapted to people’s emotions, values and moral principles - maybe even more so than traditional marketing of selling products.

The international dimension of the research represented by the global organization UNICEF hasn’t indicated any outstanding communication approaches that the international organization might have adopted. This research pointed out that the international nonprofit organization expanded its mission by adding a focus on local vulnerable children in Slovakia. By doing so, UNICEF might become more appealing to a Slovak market that is rather reserved towards problematic of distant developing countries. Slovaks prefer contributions and support towards domestic issues and Slovakia’s own further development. However, the communication techniques employed in The Blue Button campaign does not seem to employ distinctive factors or point towards any ‘international uniqueness’.

The topic of nonprofit marketing has become significantly popular research topic. The high number of studies, publications and scholarly articles is still increasing. Understanding the broad and interdisciplinary subject of social marketing is definitely in favor of the nonprofit organizations. Yet, the third sector is a territory between the public and a private sector. Considering the broad audience the nonprofit organizations (aim to) reach, a deliberate cooperation might be favorable for entrepreneurs and businesses.

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