

стимулирования и поощрения интеграции людей с ограниченными возможностями в общество. В Азербайджане примерно 600 000 инвалидов. Паралимпийские идеалы, реализованные Паралимпийским комитетом, играют важную роль в интеграции этих людей и преодолении стереотипов в обществе. Поэтому изучение этого вопроса имеет большое значение. В этом исследовании рассматривается появление Паралимпийских игр и развитие Паралимпийского движения в Азербайджане.

Ключевые слова: Национальный Паралимпийский Комитет Азербайджана, Паралимпийские Игры, Инвалидность

HOW THE CURRENT MEDIA STRATEGY OF THE NATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE OF AZERBAIJAN PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND AUDIENCE AND INFLUENCE PRIOR TO THE TOKYO 2020 PARALYMPIC GAMES

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Abstract: With the preparations for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games already underway, the media strategy of the Azerbaijan Paralympic Committee is facing a critical test. The objective of the Paralympic Committee of Azerbaijan is not only to promote and channel the efforts of the country's Paralympic athletes, but to promote a more inclusive civil society. The run-up to the Paralympic Games and during the competition itself represents a major opportunity for the Committee to expand its reach and audience, attracting new

supporters, sponsors and potential athletes and helping to inspire those facing physical challenges in Azerbaijan. But are the media strategy and current channels of the Paralympic Committee ready to take on this challenge? This research aims to assess the current strength of the Paralympic Committee's media strategy, through comparison with Paralympic Committee activities in other countries, and through analysis of their current platforms using industry standard benchmarking. It goes on to assess the potential for further development of the Paralympic Committee's media framework, both through improvement of existing channels and through innovation. My research strongly suggests that there is potential for improvement and an opportunity to expand the audience for Paralympic-related news and information. My research will be made available to the Paralympic Committee, in order to support and inform their media strategy. Further research and planning will be conducted into the potential to launch innovative new channels, as part of my Master's programme studies and as part of a commitment to support the ideals and objectives of the Paralympic Committee of Azerbaijan.

Keywords: Paralympics, Paralympic Committee of Azerbaijan, media, social media

Introduction: The National Paralympic Committee of Azerbaijan plays a critical role in developing not just the sporting achievement of those with physical challenges, but move towards a more inclusive, diverse civil society. More than 100 athletes covering 13 types of sport involved in its activities. (1) The Paralympic Committee is active online and established its first social media platform eight years ago. It is currently posts reports and information to its website (paralympic.az) in both Azerbaijani and English and on its social media platforms, namely Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. The

Paralympic Committee operates with limited resources, both human and financial, and the efficiency of its media operation is reflected by these constraints. The National Olympic Committee, by comparison, places significantly greater investment into its social media operation. However, interviews conducted with staff at the Paralympic Committee suggest there are similar limitations experienced by the Committees in other countries. Therefore, an important consideration in this research is whether the Committee's media presence could be expanded within their limited resources. In order to make this assessment, and provide a basis for evidence-based conclusions, the media channels of Azerbaijan's Paralympic Committee have been compared with those of neighbouring countries: Russia, Turkey and Ukraine.

Methods: In order to restrict the impact of variables in comparing the online and social media activity of the Paralympic Committees of Azerbaijan, Russia, Ukraine and Turkey, it is first necessary to establish benchmarks. This has been approached using several established analytics tools and data sources. Personal observations are made with reference to Google best practices for

website design and efficiency to maintain objectivity. From a combination of these research factors, an assessment of the potential opportunities facing the Paralympic Committee of Azerbaijan can be made. In addition, personal observation is included in the research, resulting from the author's knowledge and involvement with the Paralympic Committee, in particular as a member of its media team during the 2019 IBSA Judo Grand Prix.

Results: The population of Russia at around 144 million (2) is 14 times that of Azerbaijan 10 million(3). However, the internet penetration in both countries is similar (76% versus 80%), allowing a degree of reasonable comparison. Indeed, the internet penetration in Turkey is similar at 83% with Ukraine enjoying the highest internet penetration of the four countries at 93%.

Statistics available for Facebook penetration at December 2018 show significant differences between the four countries, ranging from 53% in Turkey to 9% in Russia. Facebook penetration in Ukraine is 22% and 18% respectively. It is reasonable to assume that that these penetration levels give a likely indication of the use of other social media networks.

	Population (2019 Est)	Penetration Population %	Facebook Penetration % (Dec 2018)
Ukraine	43,795,220	93	22
Turkey	82,961,805	83	53
Azerbaijan	10,014,575	80	18
Russia	143,895,551	76	9

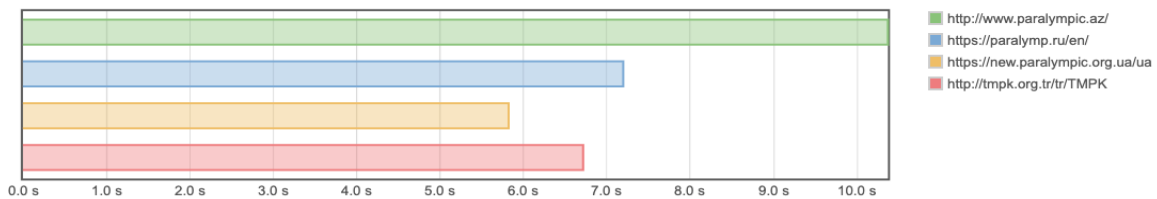
Website performance. All four countries have dedicated websites, which have been evaluated using a variety of measures and analytical tools. When it comes to interface

design and technical efficiency, Azerbaijan's site (4) does not generally score highly. (Nor do those of Turkey and Russia, it should be noted). Along with Turkey (5), Azerbaijan's

site does not offer accessibility facilities for visitors with sight impairments and fails to project fresh content ‘above the fold’ (the part of the site first visible on computer or mobile device). The volume of content generated on Azerbaijan’s site is around two stories per week, broadly in line with Turkey and Russia (6), but behind Ukraine (7). The promotion of social media channels on Azerbaijan’s home page can at best be described as average, broadly in line with the other comparison countries. Azerbaijan does, however, offer an English version of its site, unlike Turkey and Ukraine. Of the four sites compared, only Ukraine scores highly for consistency of design and ease of navigation, both on desktop computers and on mobile. When it comes to the optimisation of the site

for search engines and for use on mobile - both critical to the reach of the website - Azerbaijan’s site shows significant weaknesses. Elements of so-called metadata (including title tags, sitemap, description and relevant keywords) are either missing or badly executed. These attributes help search engines like Google to index and rank the site. In this, Azerbaijan is only marginally worse than Ukraine and Turkey. Modern websites are judged, by Google and increasingly by visitors, on their ability to provide a viable mobile experience. Azerbaijan’s website is only partly ‘responsive’ (able to detect and adjust to the size of screen on which it is displayed). Even so, in this respect, Russia and Turkey are no better.

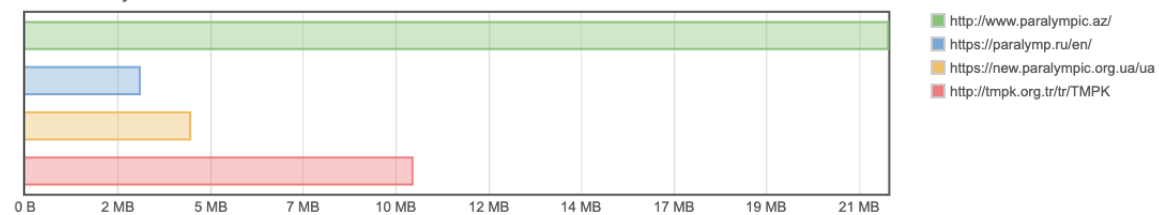
Fully Loaded Times
Lower is better



One of the ultimate tests of modern websites is speed. And in repeated tests, Azerbaijan’s website under-performed against the three comparison sites. The Azerbaijan home page is slowed down by its large ‘weight’ (22MB, compared with Ukraine: 4.2MB, Russia:


3MB, Turkey: 10MB), resulting in consistently slow load times against the comparison sites, even allowing for network issues. (As a further indicator, the content-rich bbc.com website is only 2.1MB).

Page Sizes
Lower is usually better



Social media. Azerbaijan, Russia, Ukraine and Turkey Paralympic Committees promote their activities through social media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Youtube. To understand productivity and consistency a variety of measures and analytical tools has used, most notably fanpagekarma.com. On **Facebook**, Azerbaijan leads the comparison countries with 10,508 Page likes (8), Turkey

is second with 9, 881 (9), third is Ukraine with 8,200 followers (10) and fourth is Russia with 6,800 followers (11). The critical metric used for comparison is engagement (the total of reactions, comments, shares on posts). A percentage score allows for comparison of Pages with different numbers of followers. By this measure, analysing data from 1 January 2019

	NUMBER OF LIKES	TOTAL REACTIONS, COMMENTS, SHARES
 Azərbaycan Milli Paralimpiya Komitəsi	3.0k	3.7k
 National Sports Committee for the Disabled of Ukraine, Paralympic Committee	7.0k	14k
 Russian Paralympic Committee	430	489
 Türkiye Milli Paralimpik Komitesi	3.3k	4.8k

to 10 October 2019 (which allows for the variation over both peak winter/spring months and lower-engagement summer months) Ukraine emerges a clear winner Number of Page likes and total engagement scores for the four Paralympic comparison sites (Period: January 1, 2019 - October 10, 2019)

On **Instagram**, Ukraine's account again returns the highest level of engagement at 8.7% (12). However, this is due to its relatively small total of 238 fans (who, experience suggests, are closely allied to the committee's activities). Russia's 8.6% engagement level is based on a much larger fanbase of 2,600, and higher posting rate of over two posts per day on average. Azerbaijan has an engagement rate of 5.8%, with a fanbase of 306. Similar to Ukraine, Azerbaijan posts to Instagram on average only once every two days. Turkey does not have an Instagram account.

While Turkey may not be present on Instagram, it's efforts to build audience on **Twitter** have paid dividends. The Turkish Paralympic Committee (13) has 5.7k followers with 1.3k total reactions, comments and shares during period just over nine months. Russia (14) and Ukraine (15) have a similar number of followers (1.2k and 1.4k respectively) and an engagement total of less than 100. Azerbaijan Paralympic Committee (16) has only three followers, 32 posts during the period, with negligible engagement. All four Paralympic Committees have channels on YouTube,

with 6.4% while Azerbaijan, Russia and Turkey achieve scores of 1.3%, 0.26% and 1.8% respectively.

with similar numbers of channel likes: Azerbaijan - 147, Russia - 175, Ukraine - 157. Turkey has nine channel likes. Of the four, Ukraine is by some margin the most active.

Conclusion: My research shows that by almost all objective measures, Azerbaijan's online and social media presence is currently underperforming, compared with those of the other three comparison countries. Nevertheless, using the same measures, it could also be concluded that Russia and Turkey show considerable room for improvement. That there are weaknesses in the online and social media presence of two such established sporting nations as Turkey and Russia provides, it could be argued, an opportunity for Azerbaijan. Of the four countries compared, Ukraine emerges with the greatest merit, and provides examples of practice worth considering by other nations. However, some of the core issues with the Azerbaijan website could, experience suggests, be addressed relatively easily at modest cost, and the Azerbaijan Paralympic team deserve credit for uploading content in both English and Azerbaijani. My research suggests that existing and emerging online channels provide a significant opportunity for the Azerbaijan Paralympic Committee and that, with resources within its reach, audience and influence could be expanded in

the run-up to Tokyo 2020, during which interest in the Paralympics and Azerbaijan's Paralympians will inevitably reach a peak.

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Podkastingin Tokio 2020 paralimpiya yarışlarında Azərbaycanın paralimpiya hərəkətinə dəstəyinin artırmasında rolu

Sabina Məmmədova

Xülasə: Tokio 2020 Paralimpiya Oyunlarına hazırlıq işləri ilə əlaqədar olaraq,

Azərbaycan Paralimpiya Komitəsinin media strategiyası ciddi bir sınaq qarşısındadır. Azərbaycan Paralimpiya Komitəsinin məqsədi təkcə ölkənin Paralimpiya idmançılarının söylərini təbliğ etmək və yaymaq deyil, daha əhatəli vətəndaş cəmiyyətini təşviq etməkdir. Paralimpiya Oyunları ərəfəsi və yarışı zamanı Komitə yeni tərəfdarları, sponsorları və potensial idmançıları cəlb etməklə və Azərbaycanda fiziki çətinliklərlə üzləşənlərə ilham verməyə kömək etmək üçün imkanlarını və auditoriyasını genişləndirmək üçün böyük bir fürsətdir. Bəs Paralimpiya Komitəsinin media strategiyası və hazırkı kanalları bu çətinliklə üzləşməyə hazırdırlar? Bu tədqiqat Paralimpiya Komitəsinin digər ölkələrdə fəaliyyətlərini müqayisə etməklə və qəbul olunmuş standartların tətbiq edilməsindən istifadə edərək mövcud platformalarını təhlil etməklə Paralimpiya Komitəsinin media strategiyasının mövcud gücünü qiymətləndirmək məqsədi daşıyır. Tədqiqatın auditoriyasını genişləndirmək məqsədilə Paralimpiya ilə əlaqəli xəbərlərin yayılmasında yaxşı inkişaf potensialı olduğunu göstərir. Mediya strategiyasını dəstəkləmək və məlumatlandırmaq üçün araşdırmalarını Paralimpiya Komitəsinə təqdim edəcəyəm. Magistr proqramımın bir hissəsi və Azərbaycan Paralimpiya Komitəsinin ideallarını və hədəflərini dəstəkləmək öhdəliyinin bir hissəsi olaraq, yenilikçi kanalların işə salınması məqsədilə daha sonra tədqiqat və planlaşdırma aparılacaqdır.

Açar sözlər: Paralimpiya, Azərbaycan Paralimpiya Komitəsi, media, sosial media

Каким образом нынешняя медийная стратегия национального паралимпийского комитета Азербайджана дает возможность расширить аудиторию и оказать влияние до начала паралимпийских игр в Токио 2020 года

Сабина Маммадова

Аннотация: Поскольку подготовка к Паралимпийским играм в Токио-2020 уже ведется, медийная стратегия Паралимпийского комитета Азербайджана сталкивается с серьезным испытанием. Целью Паралимпийского комитета Азербайджана является не только продвижение и направление усилий паралимпийских спортсменов страны, но и содействие более инклюзивному гражданскому обществу. Подготовка к Паралимпийским играм и во время самих соревнований предоставляет Комитету большую возможность расширить охват и аудиторию, привлекая новых сторонников, спонсоров и потенциальных спортсменов и помогая вдохновлять тех, кто сталкивается с физическими проблемами в Азербайджане. Но готовы ли медиа-стратегия и действующие каналы Паралимпийского комитета принять этот вызов? Это исследование направлено на оценку текущей силы медийной стратегии Паралимпийского комитета, путем сравнения с деятельностью Паралимпийского комитета в других странах, а также путем анализа их нынешних платформ с использованием сравнительного анализа отраслевых стандартов. Далее проводится оценка потенциала для дальнейшего развития медиа-структуры Паралимпийского комитета, как путем улучшения существующих каналов, так и посредством инноваций. Мое исследование убедительно показывает, что есть потенциал для улучшения и возможность расширить аудиторию для новостей и информации о Паралимпийских играх. Мое исследование будет доступно Паралимпийскому комитету, чтобы поддержать и проинформировать их медиа-стратегию. Будут проведены дальнейшие исследования и планирование потенциала для запуска новых инновационных каналов в рамках

обучения по программе моего магистра и в рамках обязательства поддерживать идеалы и цели Паралимпийского комитета Азербайджана.

Ключевые слова: Паралимпийские игры, Паралимпийский комитет Азербайджана, СМИ, социальные сети

HOW THE GROWTH OF ECOTOURISM HAS THE POWER TO DRIVE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS FOR AZERBAIJAN

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Abstract: As Azerbaijan's national strategy has shifted to encourage non-oil revenues, tourism has become one area of focus. While the impact of some tourism activities, such as the influx of visitors during Baku's Formula 1 or other major sporting events, are both tangible and visible, the value of other tourism sectors may appear less evident. Ecotourism is one such niche. This research shows that ecotourism offers significant potential for development, with benefits for the environment and national brand, as well as stimulation for local economies. Azerbaijan has in abundance the most important attributes required to develop its ecotourism industry: Natural areas of recognised outstanding beauty, rich cultural and gastronomic history, and a stable, welcoming climate. Added to this is the country's investment in the renovation of historical places and transport links, growth of international languages such as English and improvement in accommodation and tourism infrastructure. This research is supported by data and interviews from public and private sector organisations. But