

PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT IN MIXED MARTIAL ARTS – STATUS QUO AND WAYS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

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Annotation: Modern PR is virtual technologies for controlling the communicative sphere and managing the media. In this work, we will consider the specifics of PR in the Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) industry. It is worth noting that this is an absolutely new and unexplored species, because there are practically no specialists in it. Nevertheless, the MMA sphere is now in great demand, it has become a full-fledged part of the martial arts industry. It follows from this that the relevance of this thesis arose because the development of the sphere and the positive dynamics of the growth of the popularity of our fighters in the West are obvious. Names such as Khabib Nurmagomedov [9], Petr Yan [9], Rafael Fiziev [11], Tofiq Musaev [6], Fedor Emilianenko [2] created the "boom" of Post-Soviet fighters in America, which is a mecca and standard of the sports industry. But for these fighters it took too much time to get into it, most of which was wasted. Therefore, the necessity of creation of the high level Azerbaijan industry of combat sport came only today when some of our athletes became leaders in the world. There are really many good fighters in Azerbaijan, but they do not develop fully in their craft because there are no specialists who would help them. Our thesis will explain why no one wants to engage in MMA fighters and how to make more professionals appear in this matter.

Keywords: *Modern PR, Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) industry, MMA, marketing management, fighters in Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan*

MMA Federation, popularity of fighters, Image of MMA fighters.

People's interest in competition in Mixed Martial Arts is dense and eternal. Big money revolves around this sport, and it depends on how willingly and often people attend tournaments and MMA evenings. These events take place not only with the participation of fighters (the most important link), but a whole mass of people involved in the process. Therefore, financial success in this area depends on the promotion of each fighter. The purpose of such PR is wide: from the general popularization of sports to making large sums of money in this industry. And the more interesting the promoted character, the more willing people will be to buy tickets for his fights and broadcasts with him, watch interviews or use the goods that he advertises. Therefore, the main task of PR is to find the most effective technologies in this completely new area, which is not just poor developed in Azerbaijan, but is in its infancy. The purpose of our work is to prove necessity of PR development in this sphere through analysis of influence of positive and negative image of athletes on popularity of the fighter and PR-technology, which are not very different from methods of promotion in other spheres [8].

We need to gain the proof that fighters need to be promoted otherwise the sports industry without this can suffer as a whole:

- *It will lose in the public;*
- *Fighters will not receive well-deserved fees (taking into account their performance and return on this unnoticed business);*
- *The broadcast of television screens will be filled with compressed and modest retell-*

ling of fighting biographies found on the Internet, which will not be full coverage of sports.

And all these problems occur due to the lack of feedback from athletes.

This research work will prove the need to create and promote images of fighters through the real stories of athletes and the analysis of existing PR technologies.

Subjects of research - Azerbaijan and Post-Soviet MMA fighters, experts in this field, promotion companies, target audiences.

The object of research is the martial arts market in our country with its long series of problems and strengths, as well as a strategy for forming a positive and effective boxing image in this industry. Because of the created image, this industry can become more profitable and interesting to the wider masses than it is now. We will show the formation of images through real examples, explain the strategy and errors. Also consider the tools to influence target groups.

The subject of research is strategies for promoting fighters in the field of MMA.

From ancient times, people were cruel, and they liked to watch and participate in fights. This is a reference to the bloody, primitive instincts of hunters and warriors, which in the modern world are increasingly difficult to apply, but they are so deeply captured in the blood that they resonate in the contemplation of other spectacles. Others embark on the path of professional fighters, earning money and status from their thirst.

The purpose of the thesis is to study PR in the Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) industry through the strategy of forming an effective image of boxers, identifying current problems that arise during this process, as well as finding ways to improve PR technologies in this area, which is practically unexplored. It is worth noting that there is neither a single full-fledged book, nor a single thin brochure has been written about this problem.

The objectives of the thesis in connection with this goal are:

- Industry Specific Overview
- Research of segments of this market: promotion companies, revenue items, target audience
- Studying the archetypes of fighters, finding the most effective
- Research of the strategy of formation of the image of fighters
- Discover new PR technologies

This is possible if the study exposes the weaknesses of the MMA industry in the system of promoting fighters in our country, which in the future will be able to be removed using the detection of effective PR technologies.

Given the novelty of the topic and its extremely unexplored status, in the research will also be used the interviews with professional MMA managers such as Ali Abdel Aziz manager of the UFC lightweight champion Khabib Nurmagomedov [9], a native of the Republic of Dagestan, in which will be revealed the issue of signing the post of Soviet fighter in the UFC; MMA expert as well as UFC Heavyweight Champion Frank Mir [5], in which we will touch on all the difficulties of creating the image of fighters; Frank Berzynski, President of the German promotion organization "We Love MMA", where will be raised the issue of the growing popularity of MMA in Germany in recent years; President of Azerbaijan MMA Federation Rovshan Gasanov [7] where we will discuss today the situation of amateur MMA in the country; Vice-president of Azerbaijan MMA Federation and President of the International Fighting League (IFL) former Pro MMA fighter Heydar Mammadaliyev with whom will be touched upon the issue of popularity of MMA and problems of professional sports development in Azerbaijan.

The practical significance of this thesis is that if there are specialists who purposefully want to promote fighters without proper knowledge in this matter, and then they will be able to fill this gap with information that they will

learn here. The value of these knowledge is confirmed by the author of this work, who himself is directly inside the structure of martial arts quite a long time and close [13]. As one example of a weak PR management, we will take MMA fighter Jamil Ibragimov, who is the first Azerbaijani to fight in the USA Top Promotion - BELLATOR, but does not have much popularity and recognition. We will try sorting out the mistakes in building his image [18].

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УПРАВЛЕНИЕ СВЯЗЯМИ С ОБЩЕСТВЕННОСТЬЮ В СМЕШАННЫХ ЕДИНОБОРСТВАХ – СТАТУС – КВО И ПУТИ УЛУЧШЕНИЯ

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Аннотация: Современный PR - это виртуальные технологии для управления коммуникативной сферой и управления ме-

диа. В этой работе мы рассмотрим специфику PR в индустрии смешанных единоборств (ММА). Стоит отметить, что это аб-

солютно новая и неисследованная сфера, потому специалистов в ней практически нет. Тем не менее сфера ММА сейчас очень востребована, она стала полноценной частью индустрии единоборств. Из этого следует, что актуальность этого тезиса возникла потому, что развитие сферы ММА в нашей стране и положительная динамика роста популярности наших бойцов на Западе очевидны. Такие имена, как Хабиб Нурмагомедов [9], Петр Ян [9], Рафаэль Физиев [11], Тофик Мусаев [6], Федор Емельяненко [2], создали "бум" постсоветских бойцов в Америке, которая является мекой смешанных единоборств. Но для этих бойцов потребовалось слишком много времени, чтобы попасть в Топ, большая часть которого была потрачена впустую. Поэтому необходимость создания высокоуровне-

вой азербайджанской индустрии боевого спорт, которая возникла только сегодня, когда некоторые наши спортсмены получили признание в мире. В Азербайджане действительно много хороших бойцов, но они не развиваются в полной мере в своем ремесле, потому что нет специалистов, которые помогли бы им. Наш тезис объяснит, почему никто не хочет заниматься бойцами ММА и как сделать так, чтобы в этом деле появилось больше профессионалов.

Ключевые слова: Современный PR, индустрия смешанных боевых искусств (ММА), ММА, менеджмент маркетинга, бойцы в Азербайджане, Федерация ММА Азербайджана, по-пулярность бойцов, Образ бойцов ММА.

QARIŞIQ DÖYÜŞ SƏNƏTİNDƏ İCTİMAIYYƏTLƏ ƏLAQƏLƏRİN İDARƏEDİLMƏSİ - STATUS QUO VƏ İNKİŞAF YOLLARI

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Annotasiya: Müasir PR kommunikativ sahəni idarə etmək və medianı idarə etmək üçün virtual texnologiyalardır. Bu işdə Qarışıq Döyüş Sənəti (MMA) sənayesində PR-ın xüsusiyyətlərini nəzərdən keçirəcəyik. Qeyd etmək lazımdır ki, bu tamamilə yeni və araşdırılmamış bir növdür, çünki praktik olaraq heç bir mütəxəssis yoxdur. Buna baxmayaraq, MMA sahəsinə indi böyük tələbat var, döyüş sənayesinin tam hüquqlu bir hissəsinə çevrildi. Buradan belə çıxır ki, bu tezisnin aktuallığı sahənin inkişafı və döyüşçülərimizin Qərbdəki populyarlığının artımının müsbət dinamikası açıq-aşkar göründüyü üçün ortaya çıxdı. Khabib Nurmagomedov [9], Petr Yan [9], Rafael Fiziev [11], Tofiq Musaev [6], Fedor Emilianenko [2], Amerikada postsovet döyüşçülərinin "bumu" nu yaratdı ki, bu da idman sənayesinin məkkəsi və standartıdır. Ancaq bu döyüşçülər

üçün içəri girmək çox vaxt çəkdi, əksəriyyəti boş çıxdı. Buna görə yüksək səviyyəli Azərbaycan döyüş idman sənayesinin yaradılması zərurəti yalnız bu gün bəzi idmançılarımız dünyada lider olduqda ortaya çıxdı. Azərbaycanda həqiqətən yaxşı döyüşçülər çoxdur, lakin onlara kömək edəcək mütəxəssis olmadığı üçün sənətlərində tam inkişaf etmirlər. Tezimiz heç kimin MMA döyüşçüləri ilə niyə məşğul olmaq istəmədiyini və bu məsələdə daha çox mütəxəssisin necə görünəcəyini izah edəcəkdir.

Açar sözlər: Müasir PR, Qarışıq Döyüş sənəti (MMA) sənayesi, marketing menecment, Azərbaycandakı döyüşçülər, Azərbaycan MMA Federasiyası, döyüşçülərin populyarlığı, MMA döyüşçülərinin imici.