



On Global Media Synergies: Merging Music, Television and Digital Games to Generate Profit

RADOŠINSKÁ, J., TOČENÁ, Z., MACÁK, M.: *Synergia odvetví globalizovaného mediálneho priemyslu*. Prague: Wolters Kluwer, 2022. 195 p. ISBN 978-80-7676-586-3.

Mária Dolniaková

The constant change of the socio-cultural, political, economic and technical-technological situation in the world requires continuous examination of the media industry. The monograph *Synergia odvetví globalizovaného mediálneho priemyslu* (in English *Synergy of Globalised Media Industry Segments*) focuses on three major media industries and their interconnections, providing an overview of the historical background and explaining current trends and changes related to digital technologies and the Internet.

In the first chapter, entitled *Globalizovaná hudobná produkcia* (in English *Globalised Music Production*), the authors discuss the music industry. They provide a historical overview of the issue, from the days when the world was dominated by gramophone records, through vinyl, CDs to digital streaming. The chapter examines MTV, which spurred the popularity of TV broadcasting among teenage audiences. The text captures the issues of royalties, the gradual decline of radio DJs, and the illegal acquisition and distribution of music. In the section focused on the economic aspects of globalised music production, we learn more about how to generate profit from music production. The authors also explore phenomena such as subscription music services and social media licensing, dealing with the development of contracts, the popularisation of exclusive contracts, the commercialisation of music and monetisation. The position of independent music production is discussed as well.

Particularly noteworthy is the mapping of an important milestone in the digital distribution of music – the advent of streaming services. The publication describes amateur music production and its importance, and discusses alpha consumers and influencers. The authors highlight the importance of contextual services in the music industries of the future and draw attention to the issue of hyper-consumption or the changing expectations of audiences. The readers gain insight into genre dominance throughout history, the consequences of globalisation, or the issue of homogenization of mainstream music production. The text discusses issues of diversity in contemporary music production, musical tastes, celebrities, music videos, and sexualisation of music. We learn more about the phenomenon of individual music listening or the commercial potential of live music. The authors refresh in a pleasant way the thesis about the aura of artworks proposed by Walter Benjamin. Also interesting is the assessment of Live Nation Entertainment's monopoly in the music industry. The reader is introduced to narrative and film music, the phenomenon of soundtracks, marketing campaigns in this segment as well as to the participation of musicians in mainstream film projects. An idea worthy of reflection at the end of the first part of the book is that music production can now be seen as an important source of data on consumer behaviour. The authors make predictions about music listenership or profits of the music production segment. They draw attention to problematic and pathological phenomena such as antisemitism or misogyny present in musical works. They make interesting connections between karaoke and digital games and point to the emergence of holograms and visual effects, which are now an important element of making music production more spectacular and eye-catching.

The industry of Internet-distributed television is discussed in more detail in the second chapter of the publication. Definitions of terms such as “television”, “Internet-distributed television” (IDTV), “over-the-top television” or “over-the-top video” provide a useful introduction to the issue. The readers become acquainted

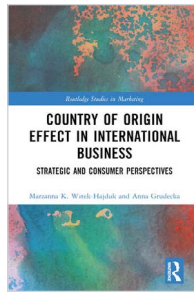
with the evolution of the television industry, the state of linear television today, and the transformation of television culture. The authors discuss the phenomenon of “second-screen experience” and address the contradictions between the aggressive activity of audiences and the creative integrity of television producers. They interestingly grasp the idea of media audiences, which are often considered a commodity, especially in the context of the advertising market. The second chapter also discusses distribution windows, cinema distribution and the commercial success of films screened in cinemas versus home-viewed IDTV titles. The text reflects on the activities of the major companies – specifically *Netflix*, *Amazon Prime Video*, *Apple TV+*, *Disney+* and *MAX*, including their major products, subscription status or availability. In the conclusion, the authors anticipate the future direction of the industry.

In the third and final chapter, entitled *Digitálno-herný priemysel* (in English *The Digital Game Industry*), the authors examine the segment of digital games production. They begin by selecting the most important events within the history of the gaming industry, working their way from the first arcade machines, through the various generations of consoles, to the present day. They explain the video game crises, the so-called console wars and assess the Internet's impact on the entire development of the segment. They address the segmentation of the digital gaming market, discussing the key companies that comprise the console market in the 21st century, namely Nintendo, Microsoft and Sony. The readers learn details about over 15 of the most profitable digital game developers and publishers, including their specifics, creative practices, economic profit and key products. The authors do not forget to mention indie digital games and their creators. The publication also addresses the issues of digital and physical game publishing, subscription-based distribution or streaming. We find the overview of standard and collector's editions of game titles to be a rather interesting part of the text. The authors give examples of numerous adaptations while also exploring the anime genre and the otaku subculture, outlining the connection between the digital game industry and the film and television industries. They point out the links between music and digital games. In particular, they look at musical and rhythmic digital games, significant creators of original soundtracks, game music concerts, and the profitability and availability of game music through streaming services. The last chapter concludes by summarising shortcomings of gaming consoles and the impact of Chinese digital games market, which is gaining substantial economic potential. They address the topic of live streaming of digital gaming, which plays a specific role in the gaming industry. They also mention a variety of freely accessible digital games.

At the very end of the publication, the authors draw attention to a number of essential facts that frame contemporary media production for global audiences. They discuss the various interconnections between different spheres of the media business, presenting their findings visually. They claim that “*the fields of music, film, television and digital games production intersect at different levels, particularly in relation to distribution models, technological provision of production processes and ownership connections between different companies*”.¹ The publication also deals with digitalisation and its implications for different media industries. It examines the issue of overproduction, not only of musical works, but also films and TV shows which are spread across the oversaturated global markets. Throughout the monograph, the authors present and compare numerous theories and statements of various authors, offering their own definitions and explanations. They enrich the book's content with insights and specific examples of media products, explaining their relevance in given contexts. We also appreciate the authors' efforts to make the monograph's language gender-balanced, which is a very pleasant change, given the specifics of the Slovak language and its practical use. We highly recommend the monograph to scholars, professionals in the field of media and communication studies, as well as to readers who are interested in music, television and digital games and their economic aspects.

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¹ RADOŠINSKÁ, J., TOČENÁ, Z., MACÁK, M.: *Synergia odvetví globalizovaného mediálneho priemyslu*. Prague: Wolters Kluwer, 2022. p. 166.



Country-of-Origin Effect in International Business: Strategic and Consumer Perspectives

GRUDECKA, A., WITEK-HAJDUK, M. K. (eds.): *Country-of-Origin Effect in International Business: Strategic and Consumer Perspectives*. London : Routledge, 2023. 269 p. ISBN 978-1-032-53787-0.

Renata Čuhlová

The evolving landscape of international business, marked by increased globalisation, complex supply chains, and geopolitical events, underscores the critical role of country-of-origin, country-of-origin image, and country-of-origin effect in shaping consumer perceptions and brand success. As perceived quality, credibility, and likability of a product or service is dependent on the consumer's perception of the country-of-origin, leveraging its effect represents a challenge to businesses and their communication towards customers. Businesses navigating these trends must adopt a dynamic approach to managing their brands' origins and strategically addressing the multifaceted dimensions of country-of-origin in the global marketplace.

Grudecka and Witek-Hajduk's book is a collection of contributions that examines the country-of-origin effect from various angles and aims to cover the national origin of products and brands by a number of research streams. It is the first edition of this book and is a part of the Routledge Studies in Marketing series. This comprehensive monograph consists of three sections and is structured into 12 chapters.

The introduction chapter provides an outline for research streams focusing on the origin of companies, products, and brands. It nicely presents the concept of country-of-origin along with its dimensions, including country-of-origin image and country-of-origin effect and many associated terms and concepts with relevance to international business, international management, marketing and branding, and international tourism. This chapter introduces key theoretical frameworks to the readers and provides a very informative basis for understanding the complex issues and further discussion.

The first part of this monograph is focused on country-of-origin in international business from a strategic perspective. It starts with a discussion on the key challenges related to country-of-origin with reference to international business, taking the strategic perspective of companies from both emerging/developing markets and developed countries. The authors claim that the novelty of the book lies in these perspectives. Next, the issue of managing the country-of-origin effect through public/private cooperation is discussed through the analysis of diverse country brand models and best practice case studies. The next chapter connects the country-of-origin with the relatively novel perspective of corporate responsibility and sustainability. The methodology approach is by a systematic literature review and a bibliometric analysis of publications, followed by a content analysis. A literature review is a key approach also in the chapter focusing on rebranding in the context of country-of-origin.

The second part explores the economic and legal aspects. The communication of country-of-origin in advertising is addressed in the first part. The author uses examples of visual advertisements and discusses how semiotic persuasion allows the polysensory engagement of the consumers. Associations, traditional or stereotypical, are viewed as product quality guarantors. The next chapter explores intellectual property, specifically geographical indications, and their role in identifying not only geographical origin but also quality. Experiences of selected agri-food producers are presented. The last chapter brings focus on the European union legal perspective on the topic and discusses not only potential irregularities in determining the country-of-origin but more importantly the country-of-origin principle in EU law and its consequences.

The third part is dedicated to a consumer perspective in four chapters. The first one references

'made-in' labels and its undesirable legal situation at the EU level which puts European countries at a disadvantage relative to their main trading partners. Next, the author considers differences and similarities in the behaviour of consumers from developed countries and emerging and developing markets. It discusses consumer ethnocentrism and materialism, the socio-demographic profile, and consumers' psychographic characteristics. Next, the author shows the relevance of the country-of-origin concept to the luxury consumer. An analysis is made by the category of the luxury good and the product's place in the luxury pyramid. The very last chapter of the whole book presents the findings of two empirical experimental studies, which include shedding light on the aspect of region-of-origin.

The content is aimed primarily at the academic community in fields of international marketing, international business and consumer behaviour, including scholars, researchers, and advanced students with an interest in the subject matter. This is supported by the language as in-text citations in the Harvard style.

To compare the book to other works in the same field, we can compare it with *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice* by Keith Dinnie, also published by Routledge in 2022 as the 3rd Edition. Dinnie's book provides an overview of the concept of "nation branding" and its practical applications. These perspectives form the outline of the book. In fact, case insights of very diverse countries are designed to demonstrate that the principles of nation branding can be applied by any kind of nation. The target audience for Dinnie's book is broader than that of Grudecka and Witek-Hajduk's book. It is aimed at basically anyone interested in learning about nation branding, including students, researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and general readers. Dinnie's book uses clear language and more graphic elements and together with the number system used for referencing, it supports the readability of the text for the general audience.

Also, both books are penned by experts in their respective fields. Grudecka and Witek-Hajduk's book is a collection of articles written by various Polish authors, so more space is devoted to case examples from Poland. Both editors are from the Warsaw School of Economics. Dinnie's book is written by a single author teaching at Temple University in Japan with contributions from other scholars with diverse international backgrounds.

This monograph presents an interdisciplinary view of the country-of-origin concept where consumer and strategic perspectives are considered. It examines its numerous aspects, impact on international business, theoretical progressions, and empirical discoveries. Together with the reference lists at the end of each chapter, it provides a complex academic work.

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HORIZON 2020 Project

MEDIADELCOM: Assessing Media Risks and Opportunities

Juliána Mináriková

The MEDIADELCOM project is an ambitious initiative to develop a diagnostic tool to assess risks and opportunities in the field of media communication and social cohesion in the European context. Its title, “Critical Exploration of Media Related Risks and Opportunities for Deliberative Communication: Development Scenarios of the European Media Landscape,” clearly reflects its aim and focus. The project’s principal investigator from the Slovak team, Professor Slavomír Gálik, has described the main objectives and progress of the project in *Communication Today*, issue 1/2022, in the Reviews & Today section.

The main objective of the project is to develop a comprehensive tool to serve policy makers, educators, media critics, institutions, media experts and journalists to analyse and assess media risks and opportunities in deliberative communication. The MEDIADELCOM project collaborates with 17 European research centres from 14 European countries and is coordinated by Professor Halliki Harro-Loit from the University of Tartu, Estonia.

Since its launch in March 2021, the project has been actively engaged in the European H2020 project programme. Regular online meetings, led by the project coordinators, served to clearly define the project concept, precisely assign tasks to individual consortium members and establish a clear timeline, which was crucial for the successful progress of the project.

The consortium meeting held on 4th – 6th October 2023 in Bucharest was an important milestone for the project. During the face-to-face sessions, the national teams discussed in detail topics related to the final project deliverables. The meeting also addressed the validity of the conclusions, narrative scenarios and agent-based models. Two supporting publications underwent in-depth critical analysis. In addition, issues related to the dissemination of information on the project results were addressed. Some partial research results have already been made available or at least partially presented in the Mediadelcom podcasts. During the meeting, the researchers also focused on the preparation of the final report and planning for the upcoming final meeting in Brussels in February 2024. In addition, a workshop was held to improve communication skills and presentations.

The project team for the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava was represented by Prof. PhDr. Slavomír Gálik, PhD., Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Ľudmila Čábyová, PhD., Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Ján Višňovský, PhD., Mgr. Andrej Brník, PhD., and Mgr. Juliána Mináriková, PhD.

The MEDIADELCOM project represents a significant contribution to scientific research in the field of media communication and social cohesion in the European context. Its implementation and the active participation of FMK UCM in the meetings confirm the importance of this faculty in the international scientific space and its commitment to address current issues of media communication in Europe. The MEDIADELCOM project deserves recognition for its contribution to the development of science and international cooperation in the field of media communication.

