



Teaching Television Business. Binding Theory to Practice and Practice to Theory

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Abstract

The course is taught to students in their final year of bachelor study and aims for them to:

- 1. Acquire theoretical knowledge of the contemporary television industry in Bulgaria and understand the role of digital technologies and intellectual property in its development and for achieving digital competitiveness.*
- 2. Acquire skills for solving practical cases.*
- 3. Have media literacy regarding the recognition and use of official sources to obtain reliable information in practical cases.*
- 4. Acquire and develop systemic learning, presentation and teamwork skills*

Some of the activities involved in the learning process to achieve the above goals are:

- 1. Each topic of the course ends with the presentation of specific practical cases, that help students to get to know the practice and to be able to apply the lessons learned during the lecture in solving the cases.*
- 2. As additional extracurricular work, students select relevant topics and practical cases for discussion at the beginning of the next lecture.*
- 3. Attention is paid to the development of digital technologies for the creation and distribution of television products.*
- 4. At the end of the course, students have an exam testing their theoretical knowledge on the subject matters.*
- 5. In addition to the television industry, students also study disciplines regarding other creative industries. At one of the last lectures in Television business, when they have acquired theoretical knowledge in those other disciplines as well, students are divided into groups of 5 to 10 students. Each team works in a group activity: identifying the inter-industrial connections of the television industry with one of the following industries: music, film, publishing, telecommunications, software. The groups present their findings during the last class activity.*

During the training the teacher monitors each student - the acquired and demonstrated knowledge, teamwork, presentation of ideas, cases and other project activities. On this basis, an assessment is formed, which enables the students who perform best during the semester to be exempted from the discipline exam with a high grade.

Keywords: Television industry, intellectual property, digital technologies, new business models, digital competitiveness, teaching

1. Introduction

The course 'Television Business' is thought to students in their final semester of bachelor degree on specialty 'Creative Industries and Business'. So far the students have learned the fundamentals in intellectual property system and its objects; copyright and related rights, creative industries, and now have the opportunity to cultivate theoretical and most important – relevant practical knowledge of intellectual property management in different creative industries and the interrelationships between the participants of those industries. These relations arise in regards to the use and management of intellectual property rights in the processes of creating and distributing creative products. Television industry is one of the most dynamically developing ones in Bulgaria and is directly dependent on the processes of digitalization, as a result of which many new business models emerge both in the creation and distribution and consumption of television products.

Therefore, in addition to theoretical knowledge, the priority of the television business course is to provide students with an opportunity to learn on specific practical cases from business in Bulgaria. By considering and working on such cases, students have the opportunity to acquire specific practical knowledge of how theory can actually be put into practice.



2. Achieving the Necessary Theoretical Basis

Before proceeding with the introduction of concrete practical cases and the analysis of such cases, it is necessary that students acquire basic theoretical knowledge about the nature and characteristics of the television industry and the role of intellectual property in it. Following the method from general to private, students' theoretical preparation begins with the identification of the different types of creative industries in Bulgaria and the presentation of their characteristics. Then the course continues specifically to the positioning of the television industry in the creative economy of the country and identifies the main structural units of the television industry, incl. individuals with and without creative contributions, small, medium and large enterprises, Bulgarian National Television, regulatory bodies, collective rights management organizations, various associations and others. The roles they all play in the television industry are determined. In parallel, the main national regulations defining and regulating the activity of these structural units are identified.

An important place in students' theoretical preparation is a thorough examination of the role of intellectual property - on the one hand as a resource for the television industry's activity and, on the other, as a means of protecting the products resulting from that activity. It is important for students to be able to identify the manifestations of the relationships that the television industry maintains with other creative industries, in particular the music, film and publishing industries. It explores which of the structural units previously identified in the television industry have intellectual property rights on television products or other works included therein, and examines the content of those rights. Students acquire knowledge of the television industry's utility chain, and of the various types of television products.

In Bulgarian television industry, in recent years, active processes of forming business concentrations have been observed - not only between enterprises in the creative sector, but also with the participation of telecommunications ones. Students learn that this is both the result of active digital technology development processes, but also a cause for the emergence of new business models for the distribution of television products in digital environments. Television companies or business concentrations that implement digital distribution strategies for their products, provide consumers with the opportunity to consume television products at their chosen time and place, ie. in a non-linear way, which, in the face of ever-increasing competition, helps them gain competitive advantage. The acquisition of digital distribution rights for television products and for the intellectual property objects included in them, as well as the investments by television companies in means of digital distribution of television products or partnerships with other organizations that have already established such infrastructure and means, are factors for the acquisition of digital competitiveness by these enterprises.

The theoretical knowledge achieved by every student is tested with an exam at the end of the course. Crucial part for the preparation of students for being specialists in the subject matter of business with intellectual property in the television industry is the practical part of the course which is not concentrated at the end of the course but mandatory presents in every part of it. That is why the exam on theoretical aspects of the course is not enough for successfully finishing the course.

3. Practical Part of the Course

In addition to the theory that students learn during the course, there are practical activities during the whole course. The following approaches apply each of which builds on the previous one.

1. Presenting relevant practical cases by the lecturer.

Students are presented with relevant cases from the Bulgarian television industry after each topic of the course. In this way it is easier for the students to master the theoretical material that has been taught and see its concrete manifestation in practice.

2. Presenting relevant practical cases by the students.

As additional extracurricular work after each lecture some of the students are asked to find other practical cases (connected to the relevant topic) which they find interesting and which they will present at the beginning of next lecture. They are encouraged to choose alone the means for the presentation – traditional PowerPoint presentation, Google Slide, Prezi or any other program by which they can present their findings on the case. Giving them the opportunity to choose both the case and the way of presenting it, aims at stimulating student's personal interest on the particular topic as well as in forming personal approach to presenting it.

It is important to state here that being a part of the media industry, television industry is also affected by the existence of fake news or news from unreliable sources that has not been checked but which are yet being disseminated among the audience. When working on a particular case to present during



the lecture, students must be able to find information on it that is true, reliable and checked, and that comes from official sources. This is observed by the lecturer during the presentation of cases by the students and if information of such sort is presented during the presentation, its unreliability or falseness is communicated with the students. In this way students obtain media literacy as well.

3. Work in groups

One of the ways for students to work in groups is the opportunity for them to present the case they have chosen together with a colleague of their choice. However, one of the characteristics of the television industries is that creating products is on a project bases where you do not always have the opportunity to choose the people you work with. During their last year of study, students learn disciplines related to creative industries other than the television one. That is why at the very end of the course, it is possible to group the students randomly in teams of 5 to 10 students. Each team has to identify the inter-industrial connections of the television industry with one of the following industries: music, film, publishing, telecommunications, software. Which team will present which connections is also determined randomly. The teams present their findings during the last class activity.

4. Conclusion

An important stimulus for students in the discipline's learning process is the teacher's constant monitoring of students' participation, presentation and progress. Students know that, in addition to the result of the theoretical exam, their presentation in the practical part of the course is important in forming their final grade, and with excellent systematic performance they are able to be exempt from the exam. For those who are looking for a career as an intellectual property specialists in the television industry, a good performance in this course is very important, and this, as well as a recommendation from their lecturer, serves as a good reference when applying for a job in the sector.

References

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