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MEDIA AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: THE RADIO SHOW "DIGITAL ICONS"

Abstract. This paper   presents and summarizes a media contribution of radio show Digital Icons, Radio Belgrade 2 and author Tamara Vučenović to the representation, analyzing and critical thinking of digital technologies, digitization processes and diverse challenges that we face in digitally growing surrounding. The paper points out to important role of Digital Icons radio show in developing information society in Serbia and continuous promotion and representation of the possibilities that internet and new technologies offer in terms of presenting, preserving and nurturing of our tradition, science and culture.

Keywords: Media, Radio, Digitization, Digital Technologies, Digital icons, Radio show

Radio show "Digital Icons", dedicated to digitization and information and communications technology, this year of 2020. celebrates its 18th birthday. Up to now, this radio show runs every Tuesday from 9 to 10 am on Radio Belgrade Channel 2 (97,6 MHz). The show broadcasting talks and news about digitization, IT, science, and digital perspective of social, cultural and scientific events. In addition to the content, the show is unique in that the author of the concept and the creator of the show, Tamara Vučenović, is at the same time the host from the very beginning of the broadcast until today. Considering that the author and (so far the only) host of the show is at the same time the writer of this text, the text itself can be viewed as a kind of "autobiography" of the show itself.

This educational show is unique for its content and concept in Serbian media sphere where those issues usually don't get covered and discussed in such depth and yet in communicative tone. This radio show has been dealing with critical interpretations and analyses of various digital age and science phenomena. Having competent experts as guests, this show covered topics in the following areas: computer science, natural sciences and new technologies, development of information society, ecology and electronic waste, digital gap and protection of the poorest segments of the population, advantages and abuse of social networks, educational and scientific possibilities in the digital era, etc. Scrutinizing the issues of digital world and science and the use of IT, with competent guests as well as with "ordinary" people whose everyday life has been radically changed, this radio show thus continuously works on raising social and scientific awareness of the audience in digital age.[1]

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[1]Peric, V., Reccomendation for the nomination for the Best European Journalist, Prix Europa, 2017, Berlin.

So, since September 2002 Radio Belgrade 2 in this renown programme has been broadcasting talks and news about digitization, latest IT trends and challenges. During this period the show has hosted a large number of competent interlocutors and experts who have dealt with critical interpretation and analysis of various phenomena of the digital age. A large number of different topics were discussed, among which the most important are development of information society in Serbia and globally, Internet and pedophilia, ecology and electronic waste, piracy and copyright, digital gap and protection of the poorest segments of population, new technologies and European integration, digitization of cultural heritage, advantages and abuse of social networks, educational possibilities in the digital era, laws and the internet "sky" in Serbia and their comparison with EU legislation, etc.

This educational show is unique for its content and concept in Serbian media sphere[2] and that is the reason, in addition to quality, it won numerous awards – IT Globe for best IT journalist, Diskobolos acknowledgment, best radio-television accomplishment in ICT field, special acknowledgment from Society of Information Specialists of Serbia for media contribution to the value of ICT in Serbia. However, as the author once said, the biggest award are numerous devoted listeners… Numerous articles dedicated to the show itself, as well as interviews given by the author and host to various media over a number of years, speak about the show itself, its influence as well as the influence of the author and host of the show on the development and dissemination of information related to the digital age.

- "Launched six years after internet reached Serbia, the show was dedicated to the first steps towards the virtual world – first websites, first centers and institutions that had certain terms in their names – internet, new media, ICT..", says Tamara Vučenovic, author and editor of the show.[3]
- "Today, the show Digital Icons broadcasts in a radically changed, hypertextual, technology environment. Ten years ago I was able to name most of my associates by heart – Center for studying information technologies (BOS), Center for new media,the National Center for Digitization, Center for internet development, Seecult.com portal for culture, Rastko Project, Information Society of Serbia etc Today, it is impossible. Back in 2002 I would often write and speak about European news and conferences due to the lack of ICT events in Serbia. It is different today. In 2012 on some occasions there were two to three IT conferences in Serbia in the same day. Of course, that doesn't mean that we live in an information society that has reached high level of development. Even after launching the Facebook in 2004 and constantly increasing usage of social networks I believe it is still important to inform the public about these phenomena on time, critically and objectively. We should present and promote, but also try to analyze the digital world carefully. Digital technologies today, more than ever, influence our everyday life, shape it and change it, and that is why it is important to understand it....

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[2]*Digital icon is the world without world*, Periodical LINK, Novi Sad, br.110 - 112, September, 2015.
[3]The article about the radio show Digital Icons, on the occasion of the jubilee, 10 years of the broadcasting, Portal for the Culture of Southeast Europe http://www.seecult.org/vest/10-godina-digitalnih-ikona, Accessed on 12.12. 2020.

- Now I understand how most of my guests feel when I ask them to look back at their work in the past. I expect from them to make a choice that makes sense, choose key events and people who were significant during certain period in their careers. I will never ask them that again…Following guests and topics represented my attempt to look back at the past 10 years: Yevgeny Kaspersky, Richard Stallman, special edition that was named "Nikola Tesla: Intimation of high technologies", 50 years of digital computers in Serbia, shift from YU to RS domain, net artist Vuk Ćosić and many others.

Figure 1. Francisco García Morán, Special IT Advisor at European Commission, and Tamara Vučenović, INFOFEST 2013.

During last 18 years, some of the regular segments and topics have become obsolete as well as technologies, so the structure of the show had to change as well as the ways of communicating to the audience. Also, changes experienced and show logo - from the original (Figure 2) to the redesigned (Figure 3) to mark 15 years of broadcasting. The birth of social media and especially the podcast brought numerous new possibilities for greater availability, visibility and presence in online environment. „The term podcast signifies files which consists of audio recording distributed online available for other users to download, listen or share. The purpose of podcasts are various and those files can be used for entertainment or information, for education and improvement of digital and media literacy, etc."[4] Due to taking part in various European conferences, scientific and expert meetings

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[4]Vučenovic, T., Library as the bearer of the participatory practices in culture in the context of information society, PhD thesis , 2016., Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade.

dedicated to digitization and information and communications technology as well as numerous interviews with experts in this area, Digital Icons radio show also builds its reputation out of the local context. Yet, especially due to social media and podcast, we bring in more listeners and admirers living far from Serbia.
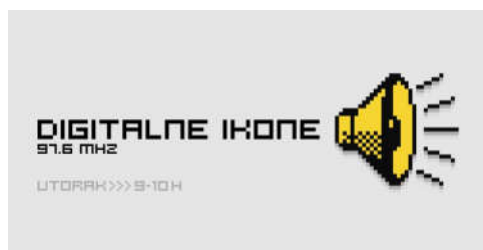

Figure 2. Logotype of Digital Icons show – designer and architect AleksandarMaćašev, 2003.

Figure 3. Redesigned logotype of Digital Icons show made on 15th anniversary – designer and architect AleksandarMaćašev, 2017.

"There wouldn't have been a podcast market if it wasn't for a **radio** which created a momentum, creative encouragement and space, to be more specific if it wasn't for the authors who bridge provocation, invention and engagement of quality radio programme with possibilities of internet and digital technologies"[5].

What doesn't change during almost two decades of Digital Icons radio show is the intention to present digital technologies and their use in different areas in a simple way to wider audience, to make visible all the efforts in digitization of culture and heritage, science and education and finally to critically examine the phenomena and challenges following the increased technology development. One example is a scientific and expert conference "New Technologies and Standards: Digitization of National Heritage" taking part in Faculty Mathematics, University of Belgrade, organized by National Centre for Digitization since 2002.

NCD (National Center for Digitization) has many important projects - Electronic Catalogue of immovable cultural monuments, Digitizing and presentation of the medieval Serbian monasteries, a project supported by UNESCO and the Virtual Library that you can easily reach across the front pages of the site of the Faculty of Mathematics, University of Belgrade. In the Virtual library the digitized Serbian dictionary is set entirely, a copy of the library SANU - KARADŽIC, Vuk Stefanović (1787-1864), [Serbian dictionary / collected and released by Vuk Stefanović Karadzić. - In Vienna: gedrucktbei den P. P. Armeniern, 1818]).

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[5]Martinoli, A., First 15 years of Podcasting in Serbia -from experiment to sustainable business model, Belgrade, Faculty of Dramatic Arts, University of Arts, 2020.

Figure 4. The digitized Serbian dictionary (1818), Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, The Virtual Library, the Faculty of Mathematics, University of Belgrade[6]

So, this is an old and rare book that is also valuable due to the presence of sentences and comments on the pages added by Vuk's hand. These rare specimens of valuable Serbian books are no longer possible to be read in libraries. But it is possible to do it on the internet. And that's one of the most important achievements of this medium for the 21st century man. We made available and accessible the oldest part of our past[7].

Mapping the process of digitization and identifying the examples of good practice in this area, such as the previously mentioned examples, besides educational purposes has its objective in active taking part in this processes as well as attracting the audience to the rich resources digitized and available online.

Conclusion

This paper gives a brief overview of a media contribution of the radio show "Digital Icons", Radio Belgrade 2 in the presentation, analysis and critical reflection of digital technologies, digitization processes and numerous diverse challenges that we face in digitally growing surrounding. Given the content it has covered and currently covers, as well as the length of broadcasting, the show "Digital Icons" has a significant role in the development of the information society in Serbia and many years of promotion and presentation of possibilities

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[6]http://elibrary.matf.bg.ac.rs/

[7]Vučenovic, T. Serbian Dictionary (Srpski rječnik), Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1818) on the internet, Преглед НЦД 24 (2014), 43–49.

that internet and new technologies offer in terms of presenting, preserving and nurturing of our tradition, science and culture. The first part of the paper exposed the concept of the show and briefly introduces its distinctive representation and influence from 2002. when the show had started till 2020. The second part of the paper (to be published in next issue) will cover the key issues, guest experts, institutions and individuals that marked the last 18 years.

References

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Links

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