MASS MEDIA MODULE OF THE ONLINE PLATFORM DEDICATED TO SPIRITUAL INSTITUTIONS

Silvan-Samuel-Cristian COVACI[1]

Abstract: *After the pandemic caused by the Covid-19 virus, both religious organizations and other actors involved in religious and spiritual activity, such as training centers, theological schools, migrated to the virtual space. Online platforms have become a safe and easy to use environment. This has led to a very large number of platforms and sources, which has led to an avalanche of news, many of them fake news coming from illegitimate sources that have led to misinformation but also to religious fanaticism. This article presents the main module, a media portal, of a platform that will interconnect religious institutions.*

Keywords: *mass communication, social media, religious studies, generation Z, database, spiritual organizations, religiosity, cultural communication, online platform.*

Introduction

The online platform will be a project that will include a number of 12 modules designed to cover the main needs of organizations in the spiritual and religious field. These modules have been created to facilitate and provide a common database and easy-to-access space that will facilitate communication between religious institutions, training centers, media institutions, NGOs and government institutions.

The main module is the media portal. This module will gather the news launched in the public space in a single information system. At European level, the largest number of believers are: Roman Catholics with 41%, Eastern Orthodox 10%, Protestantism with 9% and Islam 2%. The system will take over the news launched by the most important media institutions, religious organizations, spiritual leaders and religious influencers, in a single media portal. The purpose of this portal is to provide the target audience with quality and legitimate religious information. With the outbreak of the pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus, but also before, fake news and religious fanaticism reached alarming levels. The portal will be available through the use of multilingual translation systems and available on social networks.

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[1] Corresponding author, PhD Doctoral School - Communication Sciences - National School of Political and Administrative Studies – SNSPA, 30A Expozitiei Blvd., district 1, Bucharest, covcontact@gmail.com.

1. Description of the main project

The need for a religious spiritual media portal, started from the need to organize a communication platform structured on several modules. In this article we will present the portal dedicated to religious institutions. This portal will contain several modules. Below we will present the main modules of the portal. Different modules can be added to the specific needs of the users. Religious institutions have begun to carry out pastoral-missionary and socio-cultural activities in the online environment. The modules presented below are a summary of the main activities of these institutions. The media corner module will allow, using specific software, to integrate the news of the main press agencies of religious institutions. Each actor, whether we refer to a local parish or a international institution, can be found using a plug-in, on a specific list or on a digital map. As in the case of sports institutions, religious institutions had encountered problems in accessing funding. The module dedicated to funding will interconnect religious institutions with specialists in the financial field. Both NGOs and government organizations will have access to the platform. They will use the platform as a database but also to post and share specific documentation. In the area of universities, study programs will be available and easily accessible. The modules offered by the platform will be the following:

Modules (many are interconnected modules) such as Private Public Partnerships

1. **Media corner**
   1.1. Social media
   1.2 Live Videos
   1.3 Spiritual and Religious Documentaries
   1.4. News from all religious institutions
2. **Churches and religious monuments**
   2.1 Churches by map
3. **Founding**
   3.1 Documents
   3.2 Public Private Partnerships
   3.3 Online consulting
4. **Dropbox for shared know how and projects**
5. **Administrative zone**
   4.1. Documents
   4.2. Data Base
6. **Government Organizations**
   6.1 Documents and regulations
   6.2 Programs
   6.3 Public Private partnerships
7. **NGOs**
   7.1 Public Private partnerships
   7.2 Civic Engagement

8. Clergy Zone
    8.1   Training programs
    8.2   Data Base
9. Seminars, Conferences, Meetings and Online conferences
10. University Zone
    10.1. Erasmus +
    11.2. Religious High schools, Colleges and Universities offers
11. Religious Camps
12. Social programs and AID

The first module, presented in this article, which will launch the platform, will be the media portal module that will connect, as a pilot project, all of the mass media portals belonging to the media institutions of the Orthodox organizations, the 15 existing Orthodox Churches worldwide, and as well, as phase 2, with all the media institutions of other European institutions that promotes spiritual values.

This module will include a website - media portal, which will contain information and attitudes resonating with the spiritual and religious space, online courses and conferences, publishing positions from spiritual leaders and specialists, motivational texts from a spiritual and religious point of view, articles of spiritual, religious and general interest, an audio-book with recordings / interviews / music, thus offering the perspective of outlining a brand, which could later be capitalized even commercially by printing thematic almanacs (based on collections of articles published during a year, two years etc)
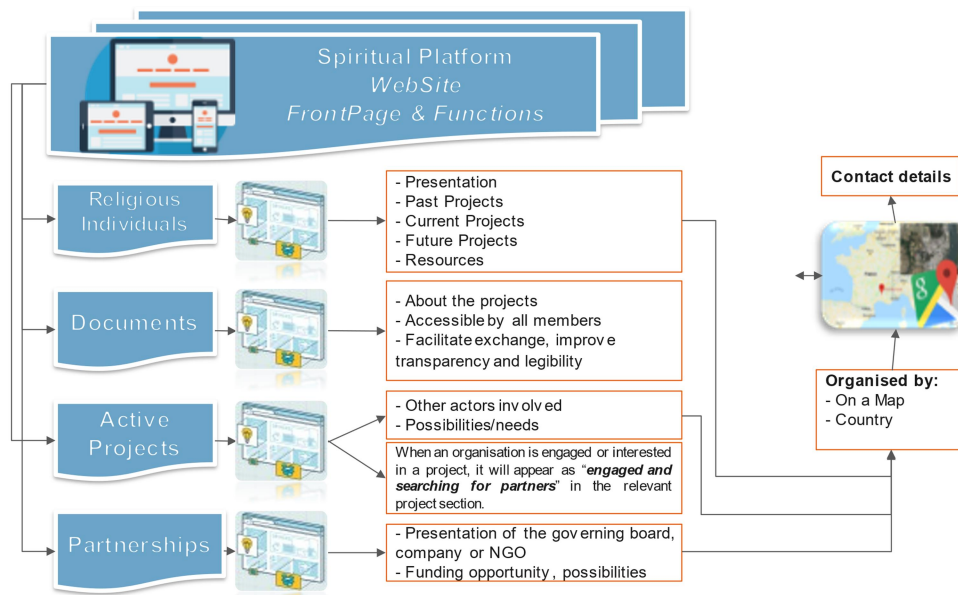

Fig 1 – Front page and functions

1.Religious Organizations	2. Documents	3. Active Projects
Organized by: - Country - On a Map	The platform will provide a space to upload documents - about the projects of the organization for instance -. They will be accessible by all members. This will facilitate exchange and improve transparency and legibility.	Organized by: - Country - On a Map
Presentation of the individual or institution		Members involved
Past Projects		Possibilities/needs
Current Projects		When an organization is engaged or interested in a project, it will appear as "engaged and searching for partners" in the relevant project section
Future Projects		
Resources and Co-Funding		
Contact details		

Fig 2 - Platform sections

2. Media portal

The media module will be the first module. This module was created as during the pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus, there was an exponential increase in religious news in the online environment. Religious services were broadcast on social networks, often with technical problems. There has been a huge increase in fake news and misinformation, with many illegitimate users taking advantage of this forced migration into the online environment. This module will provide quality news, will collect all news from the Christian world and will ensure an increasing visibility of religious institutions in the virtual space. Below we will present the main functions of this module.

The proposed media portal and adjacent missionary materials aim to:

- collect all news from the Christian world;
- act as a mutual data base for spiritual and religious institutions;
- prevent fake news and religious fanatism;
- ensuring an increasing visibility of religious institutions in the virtual space;
- creating a young people friendly virtual space with easy access for religious and spiritual news;
- ensuring a pole of attitudes, messages with religious and spiritual themes in the virtual space for the legitimation, credibility and dissemination of official messages transmitted by spiritual training centers and religious institutions;
- providing a space for missionary expression for the Christian laity who wishes to take positions;
- providing a virtual missionary space dedicated to young people (sections dedicated to non-theological students) who do not know enough about the message of the Church and who do not have a direct Christian-Orthodox religious experience;
- ensuring a missionary space and dialogue between the public who want to find out more information about religious and spiritual life and able people to provide publishable answers but also religious, psychological and spiritual support;
- ensuring a space for archiving the missionary material necessary for the competent persons and the directly interested public (thematic posters, missionary leaflets-leaflets, sermon links, etc.).
- from a technical point of view, the module aims to represent a reference communication node for church communication in social networks;

3. Who will join the platform

- Religious organizations;
- Psychologists;
-Training centers;
- Mass-media organizations;
- NGO's;
- Government organizations;
- Companies and individual specialist who offers spiritual support;
- Universities;
- Learning centers;

4. Users and the Target group of the media portal

Within the media portal within the platform is defined the target group consisting of:
- young adolescents (12-17 years old) and young adults (18-35 years old) who are present on the internet and who find poor quality information in the existing spiritual and religious portals;

- young people (25-40 years old) active in multicultural and economic fields (corporations, travel, freelancers, entrepreneurs, activity at European level);
- believers who need good quality catechetical information;
- active users of social networks;
- public looking for information about a healthy lifestyle (ideas, culture, diet, lifestyle, way of thinking);
- public seeking cultural and spiritual information.
- specialized people in the psychological, religious and spiritual field.
- religious institutions.

5. Multi-annual plan:

The objectives set out below are part of the three-year plan (Years I-III), corresponding to:
- the initiation of the project;
- project launch (launch conference and mass promotion policies on social networks in the first 6-12 months);
- finalizing the editorial profile of the portal and the magazine,
- organizing and finalizing the editorial team and selecting and retaining collaborators.
- organizing and finalizing the technical team (technical editors, IT specialists, SEO manager),
- creation and dissemination of the online magazine, creation of the magazine brand;
- making, printing and distributing the yearbook, creating a positive reference point for the brand.
- initiating a radio media experience and capitalizing on it for the portal (web space).
- the integration of the media portals of the other partner, spiritual and religious organizations and the installation of software for the translation of news in Romanian and English.

The objectives set out below are part of the six-year plan (Years IV-VI), corresponding to:
- the development of a physical community of readers and followers, able to take over en masse attitudes expressed in the portal;
- the development of a large newsroom, to ensure the fluidity of the information posted on the portal, at national and international level (English, French, new Greek, Russian);

6. The team of the media portal

The project team will consist, in the debut phase: project director, IT specialist, editor-in-chief, column editors, editors, Web & SEO Manager, art director, graphic designer, audio editor and others collaborators.

It is possible to develop a wide collaboration with a team of volunteers, possible students, specialists in communication, advertising and press, who want to dedicate themselves to a missionary online media portal project. This team can be made up of volunteers who can take over the above tasks and an IT specialist, graphic coordinator, editor, technical editor, other collaborators.

7. Portal structure

The portal will be structured in sections, containing articles, teaching and catechetical materials, synthetic texts.

The thematically organized headings are:
People: Editorial (secular and clerical personalities, portal editorialists);
Points of view: Interviews;
Diaspora (editorial, comments, descriptions);
Words:
Book presentation (reviews, presentations);
Conferences;
Facts;
Campaigns;
Events (workshops, conferences, symposiums, workshops)
Social aid (missionary, social, humanitarian campaigns, how can you help?)
Thematic articles (presentations of social centers, missionaries, etc.)

Spirituality:
In the beginning was the Word (fragments from books considered holy. (Fragments from the Old and New Testaments, fragments from the Gospels)

Spiritual practices:
 (missionary articles for each topic)

Culture:
Culture and sacred art
Music
Theater
Poetry and Christian literary art
Architecture

Life Style:
Deco: *The altar of the house (*thematic articles, richly illustrated for each field)
Family and children (kindergartens, cartoon file, coloring books, stickers, stickers, teaching materials for working with children)
Calm and rest (free time, holidays, pilgrimages)
Clothing fashions and trends
Gadgets (technology and / or tradition)
Addictions and healing

Biblical and modern cuisine (fasting recipes, sweet recipes, etc.)
Radio and video sections
The headings will be indexed thematically according to the widest possible SEO representation, because [the SEO process is described]

8. Editorial policy

The editorial policy of the portal will be summarized in the following principles:
- accessible vocabulary, non-dogmatical, non-specialized or theological;
- broad synonymous language to help the SEO process;
- short, concentrated articles, maximum 700 signs;
- comprehensive imaging, taken from: Database [name and description];
- photographic database of the project
- new photographic material;
- encouraging volunteering for the team and contributors (by creating a large team with many collaborators, so that the workload is accessible to a lay contributor employed in society on different levels or clergy);

9. Dissemination of social networks

Like any community, the projects need to turn to social media.
The establishment of a group and a Facebook community that would then generate a human capital to address the issues that really matter in the equation of the social moment is one of the objectives of the portal. Linking the topics on the site and adding comments will be the starting points of this approach.
SEO - Search engine optimization involves:
 - site traffic optimization
 - post management
  - optimization of site indexing in search engines
 - promoting the portal in Google Ads
 - promoting the portal on Facebook and on other social media platforms;

Conclusion

Humanity went through the pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus, that is still present globally today, but after this period, the virtual space is and will remain the main space for communication. Whether we refer to e-commerce, online banking, e-dating, online seminars, social networks, gaming, e-sports, the virtual space has become the *modern agora*, the most public and crowded space. The spiritual life slowly entered this virtual space. The conservatism of some religions, the misconceptions, the lack of the presence of religious leaders but also of some active religious influencers in the virtual environment, made the virtual space to be populated by few subjects from the spiritual life. On the other hand, the lack of spiritual institutions in the virtual space made the possibility for many illegitimate institutions and people to launch fake news and misinformation, without being able

to be combated. The leaders of the Catholic world, protestants from USA and oriental spiritual leaders were pioneers in the use of social media. On the other hand, leaders and influencers of the Orthodox religions have found it harder to use these networks. Even though monasteries with severe limitations and rules such as those on Mount Athos are active in the virtual space, the main leaders of the largest Orthodox Churches still do not have social media accounts and are not so visible in the virtual space. At religious institutional level, social media communication is still an incipient field. The pandemic caused by the COVID 19 virus has changed things a little, causing an increase in the use of these networks but also in the presence in the virtual space.

The news portal will allow ease access for religious news, will decrease the flow of fake news and religious fanatism and will allow transparency in projects established by religious institutions. This will allow large public, including younger users to have access to many religions and spirituals teachings.

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