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FORMATION OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION MODELS OF INTERNATIONAL CORPORATIONS: THEORETICAL DISCOURSE

The article investigates the theoretical and applied foundations for the formation and evolution of corporate communication models of international corporations in the context of global challenges. It analyzes the development of the press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical models as classical frameworks, as well as contemporary integrated digital communication approaches. Special attention is paid to their implementation in international environments, taking into account intercultural differences and stakeholder structures. The conclusions propose directions for enhancing communication strategies, strengthening reputational risk management, and advancing ESG communications. The study also outlines prospects for further research on adapting corporate communication models to digitalization processes and the expanding use of artificial intelligence technologies.

Keywords: models, communications, corporate communications, international corporations, crisis communications, global challenges, reputational resilience.

JEL classification: M14, F23.

ФОРМУВАННЯ МОДЕЛЕЙ КОРПОРАТИВНИХ КОМУНІКАЦІЙ МІЖНАРОДНИХ КОРПОРАЦІЙ: ТЕОРЕТИЧНИЙ ДИСКУРС

У статті досліджено теоретичні та прикладні засади формування і розвитку моделі корпоративних комунікацій міжнародних корпорацій в умовах глобальних викликів. Авторами відповідно проведено огляд літературних джерел щодо наукового, теоретико-методологічного підґрунтя і розуміння корпоративних комунікацій міжнародних корпорацій; визначено сутність та їх роль у системі стратегічного управління забезпечення стійкості, репутаційної безпеки і конкурентоспроможності міжнародних компаній у сучасному глобалізованому середовищі; узагальнено наукові підходи щодо трактування корпоративних комунікацій, окреслено їх місце в системі управління міжнародної економічної діяльності в умовах зростаючої взаємозалежності світових ринків. Проаналізовано еволюцію основних моделей корпоративних комунікацій, зокрема прес-агентську, публічної інформації, двосторонню асиметричну та двосторонню симетричну моделі, тобто «класичні моделі», які заклали основу для розуміння того, як компанії взаємодіють з суспільством, наведено порівняльну таблицю цих моделей корпоративних комунікацій, а також інтегровані цифрові комунікаційні підходи; окреслено особливості їх застосування в міжнародному середовищі з урахуванням міжкультурних відмінностей і структури стейкхолдерів. Особливо увагу приділено моделі ситуаційної кризової комунікації (SCCT) як ключової теорії, що описує поведінку корпорації у контексті кризових комунікацій та слугує не тільки засобом швидкого реагування, але й критичним елементом формування довіри, стійкості та стратегічної репутації міжнародних корпорацій, запобіганню ризиків дезінформації і грінвошингу, а також зростанню ролі ESG-комунікацій; визначені регуляторні вимоги до корпоративних комунікацій у сфері персональних даних, нефінансової звітності та управління ризиками; обґрунтовано напрями вдосконалення моделей корпоративних комунікацій з метою підвищення прозорості і довіри з

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боку зацікавлених сторін. Зроблені відповідні висновки щодо діяльності міжнародних корпорацій та підприємств, що здійснюють міжнародну економічну діяльність з метою розгляду пропозицій удосконалення комунікаційних стратегій, управління репутаційними ризиками та розвитку ESG-комунікацій у наступній авторській статті.

Ключові слова: моделі, комунікації, корпоративні комунікації, міжнародні корпорації, кризові комунікації, глобальні виклики, репутаційна стійкість.

Problem statement. International corporations operate in conditions of increasing global instability manifested in intensified economic, political, social, and technological challenges. Globalization processes, digital transformation, pandemic and military crises, climate threats, and rising societal demands for transparency and corporate social responsibility significantly transform approaches to managing international economic activity. Under such conditions, corporate communications gain particular importance, increasingly viewed not merely as an informational tool but as a strategic resource for ensuring stability, trust, and competitiveness of international corporations.

Despite substantial scholarly contributions, the rapid transformation of the global landscape creates new gaps that require further research. The works of prominent scholars address the theoretical foundations of corporate communications, models of public relations, integrated marketing communications, and crisis and reputational strategies. Significant contributions to the development of corporate communication theory have been made by J. Grunig, T. Hunt, J. Cornelissen, C. van Riel, C. Fombrun, and other researchers. At the same time, the transformation of corporate communication models of international corporations in the context of global challenges—particularly considering digitalization, greenwashing risks, and emerging regulatory requirements—requires further generalization and systematic analysis, which determines the relevance of this study. A separate and substantial challenge for corporate communications of international corporations is the rapid implementation of artificial intelligence technologies, which, on the one hand, expands opportunities for analyzing and managing information flows, and on the other hand intensifies issues of ethics, content reliability, the spread of deepfakes, and responsibility for automated communication messages.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Corporate communications constitute one of the key components of the managerial activity of international corporations and an important means of building their strategic potential; they determine an organization's ability to ensure stability, maintain a reliable reputation, and remain competitive in the era of globalization, digital transformation, and the growing interdependence of world markets.

In scholarly discourse, the definition of corporate communications encompasses not only the process of information exchange but also the management of corporate culture, brand, reputation, social responsibility, and engagement with stakeholders.

The classical studies by J. Grunig and T. Hunt define corporate communications as a comprehensive system for creating mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its audiences [1] and as a coordinating center that aligns a company's values and actions with the

expectations of the market and society [2]. According to P. Argenti, effective communication helps build trust among stakeholders, increases a company's investment attractiveness, and facilitates adaptation to crisis situations [3]; it is of particular importance for international corporations, which must reconcile global strategy with local cultural characteristics [4].

The main functions of corporate communications, as noted by C. Fombrun and M. Shonley, provide a comprehensive range of activities related to internal and external communications, stakeholder engagement, crisis and digital communications, marketing communications, and the management of corporate culture and reputation, helping organizations more rapidly adopt innovations and adapt to new business models [5].

As a result, corporate communications serve as a fundamental instrument of strategic management for international corporations, ensuring the integration of internal and external communicative processes. They therefore cover a wide range of activities, including reputation management, internal communications, crisis and digital processes, stakeholder engagement, and marketing activities, which confirms their systemic and integrated nature [6] and contributes to faster adaptation to global challenges and innovation [7].

Thus, corporate communications are not merely an auxiliary tool but a strategic resource that determines managerial effectiveness, competitiveness, and the long-term success of international corporations in a globalized economy.

Despite the significant body of scholarly research on corporate communications, there remains insufficient systematization of how classical corporate communication models of international corporations are transformed under the combined influence of global challenges, digitalization processes, the spread of artificial intelligence technologies, and growing ESG-related reputational risks, which necessitates further theoretical generalization.

The research aim of the study is to provide a theoretical generalization of the evolution of corporate communication models of international corporations and to identify the key organizational and communicative patterns of their transformation under the influence of global challenges, digitalization, crisis risks, and the growing importance of ESG communications.

Research methods. The research is based on the application of a set of interconnected theoretical methods aimed at achieving the stated research aim. The method of theoretical analysis was used to examine classical and contemporary scholarly approaches to corporate communications, public relations models, and crisis communication theories, including Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT). The comparative method enabled the identification of key differences and common features of press

agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical communication models, as well as the assessment of their applicability in the activities of international corporations. The method of systematization was applied to structure existing concepts of integrated, digital, and ESG-oriented corporate communications into a coherent analytical framework reflecting current global trends. Elements of modeling were used to generalize the evolution of corporate communication models in response to global challenges, digital transformation, and reputational risk factors. In addition, the method of generalization supported the formulation of theoretical conclusions and the identification of prospective directions for further research.

Presentation of the main research results. Theoretical models of corporate communications are not merely tools for transmitting information—they reflect a company's management doctrine, its views on building trust, its approaches to responding to threats, and its mechanisms of interaction with stakeholders.

Research by J. Cornelissen indicates that communication methods evolve in accordance with stages of societal development, the growing importance of information technologies, and the globalization of the economy [8].

The first comprehensive systematic classification of corporate communication models was historically presented by J. Grunig and T. Hunt in their book *Managing Public Relations* [2], which became the foundation for subsequent theoretical and practical developments. This classification includes four main models: press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical communication, and two-way symmetrical communication. They are often referred to as «classical models», as they laid the groundwork for understanding how companies interact with society.

The first model—the press agency model—assumes one-way communication aimed at generating public interest, maximizing attention, and enhancing the company's image. It is based on emotional influence and may sometimes include manipulative elements. This model was characteristic of the early stage of corporate communication development in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century, when the primary goal was attracting attention rather than providing information. It is also noted that contemporary international corporations rarely use this model in its pure form, although its components remain relevant in advertising strategies, media relations, and the organization of high-profile PR events [9].

The public information model, which emerged later, focuses on one-way but truthful dissemination of information. Its primary function is to ensure openness and stability in communications. This model is widely used by government institutions, large international corporations, and organizations seeking to maintain trust through official statements, press releases, and regular informational reports. Scholars emphasize that the public information model is particularly important during crises, when companies are required to inform the public quickly, accurately, and responsibly [10].

More contemporary and strategic are the two-way communication models. The two-way asymmetrical model

assumes the use of public opinion research to shape the desired behavior of target audiences. Communication within this framework occurs in two directions; however, its main objective is persuasion. It is widely applied in marketing campaigns, political consulting, and corporate lobbying. In international practice, prominent examples of this approach include the activities of Meta and Coca-Cola, which actively use big data analytics to build targeted advertising messages and shape consumer preferences. In particular, Meta systematically tests the reactions of different audiences to communication messages, adjusting content to achieve maximum impact, while Coca-Cola adapts advertising campaigns based on behavioral research aimed at stimulating specific purchasing patterns. International corporations, especially in the pharmaceutical and high-tech sectors, actively employ this model to study consumer behavior and tailor messages to market needs [11].

The fourth model—the two-way symmetrical model—is recognized as the most ethical and technologically advanced approach. It is built on dialogue, partnership, and the mutual consideration of interests. This model underlies the theory that international corporations, when interacting with diverse cultural environments, tend to prefer two-way symmetrical communication, as it fosters trust, reduces conflicts, and enhances reputational capital [12]. For example, Patagonia engages consumers and the public in discussions of social and environmental initiatives, adjusting company policies in response to feedback. Similarly, IKEA follows this approach by opening consultations with customers and communities when launching new products or sustainability initiatives.

Table 1 presented by the authors illustrates the evolution of corporate communication models from one-way to two-way approaches, demonstrating how different frameworks affect the effectiveness of audience engagement and reputation building. The press agency and public information models provide only a basic level of information dissemination and public image formation, whereas two-way models enable not only influence over audience behavior but also dialogue, partnership, and the development of long-term relationships. In particular, the use of two-way asymmetrical and symmetrical communications by international corporations indicates that the choice of model is directly linked to strategic management: it determines the integration of PR, marketing, branding, internal communications, and social responsibility, as well as the company's readiness for crisis situations and its capacity to build a sustainable reputation in a culturally diverse environment.

Despite the classical frameworks, the 2000 s–2020 s witnessed the emergence of new concepts related to integrated marketing communications (IMC), which describe in detail the method by which a company organizes all its communication tools—PR, branding, advertising, internal communication, and CSR—into a unified system [13]. This method is particularly valuable for global corporations, where it is necessary to simultaneously maintain worldwide brand consistency while ensuring local adaptation to specific national markets.

Table 1

Comparative Table of Corporate Communication Models

Communication Model	Type of communication	Degree of ethicality	Goals	Tools	Areas of application
Press agency	Unidirectional	Low	Regaining attention, shaping image	PR campaigns, press releases, advertising, public events	Early stage of communications development, advertising campaigns, media strategies
Public information model	Unidirectional	Average	Information, maintaining trust	Press releases, official statements, reports, websites	Government agencies, large corporations, crisis communications
Two-way asymmetric	Bilateral	Average	Convincing the audience, shaping behavior	Public opinion research, targeted messaging, data analytics	Marketing campaigns, political consulting, corporate lobbying (Meta, Coca-Cola)
Two-way symmetrical	Bilateral	High	Dialogue, partnership, mutual consideration of interests	Surveys, consultations, feedback, integrated communications	Strategic management communications, social and environmental initiatives (Patagonia, IKEA)

Source: compiled by the authors based on: [2, 9, 10, 11, 12].

Corporate literature places significant emphasis on digital communication schemes. C. van Riel and C. Fombrun [14] present the concept of a corporate digital environment in which a company manages relationships through multi-platform networks, social media, analytics, and online communication with stakeholders.

Increasing importance has also been attributed to a communication model in which corporations interact not only with customers but also with investors, suppliers, civil society organizations, governments, local communities, and employees. Such an approach becomes especially challenging in times of global disruptions—wars, political instability, and logistical breakdowns [15].

Thus, corporate communications today constitute a complex network that combines scholarly perspectives, hybrid instruments, and digital technologies. The use of such models demonstrates the ability of global corporations to respond to the challenges of a globalized world, remain resilient, build trust, and interact productively with diverse stakeholder groups.

In addition to classical and integrated schemes, contemporary global corporations increasingly apply intercultural communication methods that take into account differences in national values, management styles, linguistic nuances, and social norms. Studies by Hofstede [16] and Trompenaars [17] show that effective communication in an international environment is impossible without consideration of cultural differences. For example, negotiation practices in Japan differ significantly from the direct American approach, while the attitudes toward risk in German and Swedish companies substantially influence communication formats. The implementation of such models enables global corporations not only to avoid misunderstandings but also to build globally strong brands that correspond to local expectations.

Digital platforms and artificial intelligence technologies play a primary role in modern corporate

communications, making it possible not only to simplify interaction with audiences but also to predict customer responses and analyze large volumes of data for timely decision-making. For instance, Google and Microsoft actively apply AI analytics for social monitoring, identifying potential reputational threats, and enhancing personalized messages for different stakeholder groups. This creates opportunities to combine traditional frameworks with digital tools, simultaneously increasing the accuracy and speed of communication processes.

ESG communications (environmental, social, and governance responsibility) represent a response to global challenges. According to McKinsey and KPMG (2020–2022), effective ESG communication contributes to strengthening investor trust, increasing consumer loyalty, and shaping a positive image within the global community. Corporations increasingly use public reports, social media, and interactive platforms to demonstrate progress in sustainable development and social initiatives, integrating these data into their strategic corporate communications [18].

In particular, it should be emphasized that modern corporate communication frameworks must ensure readiness for crisis situations. Global challenges—pandemics, political conflicts, economic restrictions, and cyber threats—compel corporations to develop comprehensive rapid-response mechanisms by integrating classical PR approaches, digital platforms, and symmetrical interaction models. For example, after the Boeing 737 MAX tragedy, Boeing not only promptly informed regulatory authorities and airlines but also organized extensive internal and external communications with passengers and the media to restore brand trust. During the large-scale vehicle recall in 2024, Toyota actively applied two-way communication: the company did not limit itself to official statements but established direct channels for dialogue with customers, ensured transparent compensation mechanisms, and provided staff training, thereby mitigating reputational

damage and maintaining customer loyalty. During the Galaxy Note 7 crisis in 2016–2017, Samsung rapidly organized feedback with consumers, media, and regulators, combining online platforms, social media, and hotlines, which allowed it to control information flows, prevent panic, and preserve reputational capital.

Scholars R. Ulmer, T. Sellnow, and M.W. Seeger emphasize that the ability to adapt communication frameworks to a specific crisis situation is a key factor in successful reputation management and business stability at the global level [19]. It should be noted that Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) is one of the central theories describing corporate behavior in the context of crisis communications [20]. Its core principle is that the type of communication strategy should be selected according to the type of crisis and the degree of responsibility attributed to the organization. For example, crisis communication strategies differ depending on whether a crisis is caused by an ethical failure or a natural disaster.

The relevance of SCCT has increased in recent years, as contemporary crisis trends have become increasingly complex and interconnected. This is due to the fact that crises now often occur simultaneously in multiple countries, spread rapidly through technological channels, and generate strong public demand for information. International corporations rely on SCCT as a guiding framework in the initial stages of a crisis. The application of crisis communication theory enables companies to:

- quickly assess the extent of damage to reputation;
- determine what form of response is expected from a specific audience (apology, explanation, acknowledgment of responsibility, compensation, or simply an informational announcement);
- create the necessary empathy and sensitivity in texts;
- identify and maintain a balance between reactive communications (after a crisis) and preventive communications (when there is a need for crisis prevention).

Modern corporations are modernizing SCCT by employing online monitoring technologies that enable real-time tracking of audience sentiment, taking into account regional market differences and preventing communication errors in multicultural environments.

Thus, crisis communication models become not only instruments of rapid response but also critical elements in building trust, resilience, and the strategic reputation of international corporations.

The transition from press agency and public information models to two-way asymmetrical and symmetrical approaches essentially reflects a gradual shift from simple message dissemination to complex, ethical, and analytically grounded management of audience interaction processes.

The two-way asymmetrical model, based on the study of public opinion and audience behavior, provides companies with tools to actively influence consumer choices, without necessarily prioritizing mutual dialogue. For example, Meta and Coca-Cola widely use big data analytics to create targeted advertising messages and model customer behavior, adapting their communication strategies to

local market expectations. Such a strategy proves highly effective in marketing campaigns and political consulting; however, it requires particular attention to ethical boundaries, potential manipulation, and communication transparency.

In turn, the two-way symmetrical model focuses more on dialogue, partnership, and the mutual consideration of interests, making it particularly suitable for long-term reputation development and overall corporate resilience. Patagonia and IKEA serve as examples of companies that engage consumers and local communities in decision-making processes and discussions of social and environmental initiatives, adjusting their internal policies based on feedback. This approach demonstrates that symmetrical communication is an effective tool for building trust in multicultural environments.

It is important to emphasize that the choice of communication model directly affects corporate governance. By shifting toward symmetrical approaches, corporations integrate communications into strategic planning, thereby aligning PR, marketing, branding, internal communications, and CSR activities. Such a strategy enables them, on the one hand, to preserve global brand identity and, on the other, to localize messages for different cultural contexts, which is particularly important in international markets. Research shows that the effectiveness of corporate communications across countries depends on understanding national values, management styles, and social norms.

Thus, the examined models indicate that a functional system of corporate communications serves as a key instrument of strategic management, ensuring competitiveness, resilience, and reputational stability of international corporations, while possessing distinctive features that influence the effectiveness of interaction with global stakeholders.

Conclusions. The article provides a theoretical and methodological foundation for studying the transformation of corporate communication models of international corporations in the contemporary global environment. The analysis of scholarly approaches enabled the authors to generalize key perspectives on the role of corporate communications within the management system of an international corporation.

Corporate communications are considered as an integrated system of corporate interactions with internal and external stakeholders. For transnational corporations, corporate communications predominantly perform an informational function; however, they also ensure coordination, adaptation, and legitimization, aligning corporate activities across different countries and cultures.

The generalization of the development of corporate communication models demonstrates a transition from one-way informational methods to two-way dialogue and feedback-based approaches. Under current conditions, the integration of elements of traditional communication models with modern technological capabilities and stakeholder theory has become the foundation of international corporate communications.

At the same time, the theoretical analysis reveals a lack of systematization in such aspects as the adaptation of traditional corporate communication models under conditions

of total digitalization, the spread of artificial intelligence technologies, and the growth of reputational risks. These findings establish a conceptual basis for further research directions.

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