Structure and Content of Objectives of Public Relations: Context of Business Companies

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Abstract

As discussions intensively develop suggesting that objectives of public relations (hereinafter referred to as PR) are the fundament for carrying out program implementation control and assessing the performance effectiveness, efforts in this work are focused on the cognition of the structure and content of PR objectives. The article presents a hierarchical structure of PR objective and its elements. By summarizing theoretical and practical experience of experts, implementation measures and results of PR are defined more accurately. Results of the research are relevant for appropriate formulation of PR objectives and minimization of risks associated with overly expansive and difficult-to-implement objectives.

Keywords: public relations objectives, objective structure, objective content, implementation period, target audience.

Introduction

Relevance, novelty and problem of research

Study of scientific works on PR topics suggests that PR objectives define the further direction of activities, describe their functional suitability and serve as the guarantor of success of the being implemented programs. Objectives are formulated subject to the substance and nature of each program. This observation is particularly relevant to the formulation of PR objectives. Many PR programs are implemented concomitantly with company's programs in other areas: marketing, personnel development, etc, however, a risk of confusion or probability that functions and objectives of another activity will be ascribed to PR increases. Content of a suitably formulated objective describes the directions of activities and allows distinguishing one activity from others. Moreover, it limits the emergence of unreasonable expectations. Differentiation of planned PR results enables explicit definition of the directions of activities. Lindenmann et al (2003) recommend distinguishing between PR outputs, outtakes and outcomes.

Gregory (2001), Lindenmann et al (2003), Serbanica (2008), Kazokiene and Stravinskiene (2009) note that PR objectives represent a part of control pro-cess and comprise the grounds for the evaluation of PR effectiveness, when comparing the planned and obtained result. This observation is associated with the changed nature of PR effectiveness assessment, oriented to complex evaluation process from the beginning to the end of program implementation. Thus, objectives become a part of auditorial and final evaluation. In case of obscure, immeasurable or overly broad objectives, it is complicated to compare the objective with the result. The reported insights bespeak of the need for the cognition of structure and content of PR objective.

The analysis of scientific works suggests that PR objectives have been studied only sketchily. Recommendations submitted on their formulation are of general directive nature and lack the insights inherent to PR specifics. This may be one of the reasons leading to formulation of incomprehensible and broad objectives. The lack of clarity of an objective has detrimental effect on employee motivation, because they cannot understand what is expected from them (Ross, 1972); it limits the accountability of activities and reduces the trust therein (Smith, 2005).

Aim of the article: to reveal the structure of PR objective and the content of its elements.

Object of research: structure and content of PR objective.

Methods of research: comparative analysis and overview of scientific literature, analysis of expert evaluation data.

Keywords: public relations objectives, objective structure, objective content, implementation period, target audiences, PR results.

Structure and content of PR objectives: theoretical study

Scientific works accentuate the importance of PR objectives in different contexts: planning, control, and effectiveness evaluation. In the context of PR planning, objectives are denominated as the basic element defining the direction and nature of further planning stages. In particular, their impact on strategy and

tactics is emphasized. Gregory (2001), who analyzed the PR effectiveness evaluation, states that clear and integral objectives are an important pre-requisite for further work when performing program assessment. The evaluation of a PR program starts with the setting of objectives and ends with the evaluation of outcomes. Cutlip et al (2000) suggest that PR objectives represent the most important part of control process guaranteeing that actions will correspond to PR implementation plans. Hon (1997), Watson (1997) and Fairchild (2002) suggest that PR objectives are one of the means allowing distinguishing the role of PR in the company as an independent managerial function. The authors follow the belief that PR objectives are not an end in themselves and should be linked with the company's strategic objectives. Being important in different processes of activities, PR objectives stimulate the need to formulate them clearly and understandably. Seeking to reveal the structure of PR objective and the content of its elements, we invoke the insights of authors who analyzed the PR (Hon, 1997, Anderson et al, 1999; Macnamara, 1999; Cutlip et al, 2000; Stacks, 2002; Smith, 2005; Watson and Noble, 2007). After systemizing these, the following levels of PR objectives have been established: general, program, and tasks.

The general objective of PR represents the construct of corporate mission and vision. It is generally described as the desired outcome of action and is defined in general terms, while lacking measurability.

PR program objectives elaborate the general PR objective and perform a controlling function in program implementation (Cutlip et al, 2000). In case of a complex and lengthy PR program, a hierarchical approach is adopted and information objectives are defined as primary PR objectives. These are focused on changing the awareness of the target audience. On a higher hierarchical level, it is recommended to strive for motivational objectives oriented to the attitude of the target audience. The most significant PR objectives are associated with the target audience behaviour (Stacks, 2002; Smith, 2005). Macnamara (1999) substantiates the laid down order of sequence by interpreting the Hierarchy of Effects Model used in advertising, which is better known for its components – awareness, interest, desire and action – as AIDA system.

The stages of communication process are linked by **tasks.** These allow substantiating the correctness of the chosen implementation direction, systemize the prospective PR actions, control implementation and help ensure the attainment of the main objective (Hon, 1998; Watson and Noble, 2007; Serbanica, 2008).

Based on the key principles for setting the objectives, Cutlip et al, (2000), Wilcox et al, (2003), Smith (2005), Watson and Noble (2007) suggest that PR objectives should specify:
- planned change;
- target audience;
- planned measurable outcomes;
- implementation period.

The planned change is characterized by the direction of the desired outcome. Watson and Noble (2007) named the directions of enhancement, reduction, and maintenance. Hon (1997), Dinesh et al (1998), Anderson et al (1999) believe that the planned change should be expressed in measurable results. Consequently, it suffices to name the expected change in terms of measurable dimensions and direction. Clear PR objectives should define the desired outcome of communications, while specifying a) planned outcome (change) expressed in measurable dimensions and direction, b) one or several target audiences to be affected and c) program implementation period.

Results described in PR objectives define the construct of PR decisions and actions in the broad sense, and allow substantiating the meaning of PR activities while supporting the business objectives (Watson and Noble, 2007). Measurability of the planned results enables foreseeing the implementation direction of objectives and facilitates the PR implementation control and effectiveness evaluation (Ross, 1972; Kitchen, 1997; Macnamara, 1999; Wilcox et al, 2003; Daugherty 2003; Lindenmann et al, 2003). According to Lindenmann et al (2003), PR results are multipartite. The following could be distinguished: a) planned PR outputs which are generally expressed in terms of the number of events or publications; b) PR outtakes describing the response of the target audience; c) PR outcomes. With regard to the last ones, there is no opinion consensus among the scientists. It is noteworthy that a broad spectrum of functions performed by PR enables striving for diverse objectives, which, according to Noble (1999), should be of cognitive nature. Smith (2005) bases upon practical examples of successful companies and submits a classification of PR objectives describing the planned results:
- objectives oriented to the change of awareness and knowledge of public groups (i.e., the impact on attention, comprehension and retention; in scientific works these are often referred to as PR outtakes);
- acceptance objectives, i.e., public response to information. These are oriented towards the change of certain public belief, attitude and interest;
- action objectives, addressing a fulfilment of specific expectations associated with the desired model of behaviour.

Attention should be drawn to the fact that in the case of behaviour-oriented objectives, intensive scientific discussions are underway. These strive to define the capabilities of PR to model certain behaviour and explain what behavioural changes should be constructed as the result of PR. Studies confirmed that the most valuable results of PR include the change in the quality of relationships, however, many questions remain which do not have an unambiguous answer. It is noteworthy that active discussions take place regarding the nature of PR objectives: whether PR objectives can (should) directly illustrate the financial value; if the promotion of sales resulting in the increase in sales volumes is exceptionally a marketing objective.

The planned PR results are also described by another typology of objectives suggested by Smith (2005), which was developed taking into account the issue addressed by PR measures. In this case, the following groups are proposed:

• reputation management objectives (to strengthen the corporate image, prestige or leading position, etc);

• relationship management objectives (to enhance the value of the relationships (between the company and the groups of society), to maintain the acceptance at the time of social changes, etc);

• managerial performance objectives (to increase the volumes of sales, encourage to try-out the goods, etc).

It is likely that in the latter case PR capacities to support marketing objectives are being used. In this case, PR program acts concomitantly with marketing program, and separate PR and marketing objectives are not always distinguished.

Target audience is another component of PR objective. Target audience in this context is understood as a certain group of the public or companies having one or more common characteristics (geographic location, activity, etc), which is planned to be affected by PR measures adapted for that purpose. The stipulation of target audience in PR objective is based on purposive principle. This implies that PR objective should be oriented to the audience with regard to which the company is formulating its expectations. Knowledge on the characteristics of the audience comprise an essential part of persuasion, helping a communication specialist to adjust the messages, respond to anticipated needs, appropriately select the ways and means of communication and stipulate the logical sequence of PR (Wilcox et al, 2003). Smith (2005), who analyzed the PR planning process, suggests that it is necessary to distinguish employees, producers, regulative bodies (enablers and limiters), and customers. The typology of target audiences compiled by the author is not sufficiently exhaustive. It is not clear why producers and regulative bodies are distinguished, why sales and service companies have not been mentioned. It is likely that the author suggests a conditional typology of target audiences. Examples of successful PR programs analyzed by Kitchen (1997) and Seitel (2001) show that business companies pay the greatest attention to consumers, intermediaries and employees. A PR case study done by Center et al (2008) allows denominating the same main target audiences of business companies as identified by Kitchen (1997): customers, business companies (suppliers, market intermediaries) and internal target audience – employees.

The planned PR result should be stipulated for each target audience.

The third component of PR objective refers to program implementation period. It is particularly important to specify it when formulating broad, multistage objectives. The indication of time period plays the role of the landmark, informing when the program implementation assessment may be commenced.

The study of scientific works revealed a three-dimensional structure of PR objectives, the content of which is defined by planned PR results, target audience, and program implementation period. It is noteworthy that the said insights are typical to the PR objectives as a whole, regardless of individual structural components.

Empirical research design

Due to the lack of comprehensive initial information on PR objectives, expert evaluation method was applied. Expert evaluation was conducted in the form of a structured interview. The data obtained were processed using content analysis. The selection of content analysis for the processing of qualitative research data was determined by the possibility to quantify the content of the text. Given the fact that text is always multi-semantic, when generalizing the information, a hermeneutical approach was employed. It enabled more objective perception of experts' ideas.

After determining that PR objectives are also shaped by business companies as well as specialized agencies, representatives from both of them were also included in the expert group. The sample size was not defined in advance, and the data collection was continued until repetitions were observed as well as an obvious diminishing in informativeness. Research sample consisted of 20 experts, of whom 12 were representatives of business companies, and others – of specialized agencies. When carrying out the analysis of the secondary data, indicators defining the experts' competence were studied. Among those, the following are noteworthy: position within the company,

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functions performed, achievements and awards in professional area. It is also worthwhile to emphasize that more than a half of the experts had international experience in PR. Research instrument – plan of a structured interview – was constructed in line with the results of theoretical studies and the determined structure of PR objective and its components: planned results, target audiences, program implementation pe-

riod. The sequence of questions was revised when testing the interview plan (N=10).

Results of empirical research

According to the results of qualitative analysis, PR objective is explained based on its compound hierarchical structure. Hierarchical structure of PR objective comprises the general objective, tasks, target audiences, and action plan (see Fig. 1).
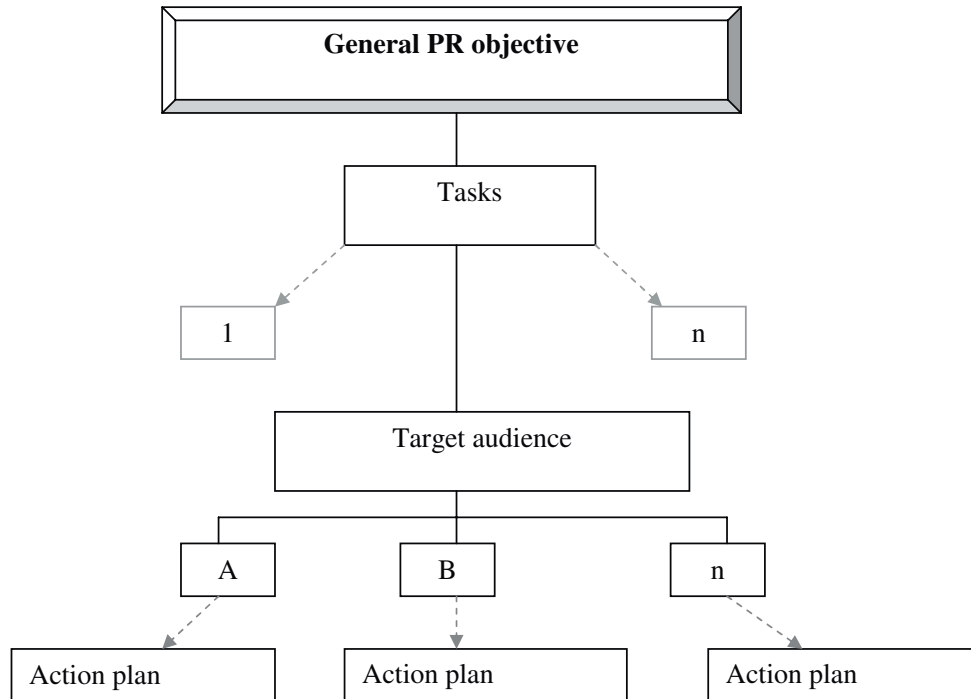

Fig. 1. Hierarchical structure of PR objective

General PR objective describes the underlying direction and provisions of activities and is not concretized; it is expressed in a general form. The entirety of decisions referred to on the highest objective level is entirely undefined; however it accumulates the set of communication functions that unfolds in the lowest chain of objective. In other words, the lower the hierarchical level of PR objective, the more it is concretized. In exceptional cases, when PR are pursued as short-term or one-off activity, the general PR objective may be expressed concretely, indicating the precise result to be striven for. Companies implementing long-term PR programs or engaging in ongoing PR activities often have several general objectives, expressing different aspirations (associated with several directions). Business companies through their PR programs mainly strive towards:

- enhancing trust;
- shaping the image;
- renewing or improving relationships;
- minimizing the employee turnover;
- winning the loyalty of internal/external customers.

By focusing PR efforts on current customers, business companies generally seek to enhance mutual relationships or increase the awareness of the company and its products. Seeking to influence potential customers, they strive to create a need and expand the market share. In terms of general objective, program implementation period is generally not established formally, and the duration is determined by company's strategic policy. According to the data obtained from the analysis of interview, in many cases the aspirations formulated in the general PR objective are long-term oriented, i.e., 5 years or an ongoing process.

The general PR objective is concretized by **tasks.** They define the main actions, which have to be carried out to attain the general objective. Results of empirical research revealed that on the task level it is necessary to indicate the planned outcomes of PR. Results of the research confirmed the conclusions formulated as a consequence of theoretical studies concerning the sequence of main PR results: first of all, educative programs are implemented, followed by programs oriented to development of certain attitu-

des and finally those oriented to behaviour modelling. Furthermore, they enabled defining the main results of PR more accurately. These include change in awareness or opinion, change in relationships and priority.

When formulating tasks, their implementation period has to be indicated. On the task level, the period may encompass 1-3 years. Lengthier period is not expedient due to the planning process becoming more complicated and insufficiently accurate. According to experts, tasks are usually set for a period of one year. This is an optimal duration when striving towards awareness change, but for opinion changes the period should exceed one year.

Next, in hierarchical structure of PR objectives, **target audiences** are specified. Their placement on a separate level is associated with:

● increasing variety of communication means and channels, allowing application of well-directed communication means;

● growing disparity of the society;

● specifics of PR activities while realizing that the searching for PR audiences is not a closed and finite process.

Results of qualitative research enabled distinguishing the following main target audiences of business companies:

● consumers – physical persons;
● business companies – consumers;
● business companies – partners;
● employees.

Compared to the mentioned audiences, PR programs are significantly less often directed towards lobbyists or representatives of media. In individual cases, target audience may even be not segmented. The entire public is addressed when communicating strategic information (in other words, information concerning all strata of the society or such that may globally affect the vital interests, life, nature or quality of living of the entire public). When analyzing target audiences of business companies, it was observed that they pay the biggest attention to the most profitable segment.

It is noteworthy that the data obtained from interviews about internal target audiences revealed a paradoxical situation. Business companies rarely focus PR programs on their staff. In other words, human resources creating added value are paid the least attention compared to other target audiences (in terms of PR program development). It is important to emphasize that limited position – seeing the financial aspect only – is more characteristic to representatives of business companies. Representatives from PR agencies, when consulting companies, tend to divert them to implementation of PR programs intended for influencing the employees. According to the observation of experts, increasingly more companies in the current economical situation tend to take a straightforward approach – they pay less attention to the shaping of corporate image and trademark, and concentrate on the increasing of sales volumes.

At the bottom of PR objective, there is **action plan**. In the opinion of experts, it might be identified with tactics. Action plan is the most formalized. It lays down the PR outputs, measures and implementation period.

The period indicated in the action plan describes the consistency of used measures and decisions. On this level, the period needs to be defined as precisely as possible, mentioning even the number of days.

In general terms, the elaboration of planned PR outputs characterizes the objectives raised to a specific individual or a specialized agency, helps to distribute the foreseen activity over time and coordinate the communication decisions with the actions in other areas, e.g., production or marketing.

Results of expert assessment allow reasonable discussion on the diversity of PR means, while emphasizing their possibilities and limitations. The main PR communication means are the following: media, social projects, social mentoring, image advocates, virtual communication and direct (eye-to-eye) communication.

Media remains attractive in PR market in Lithuania firstly due to its conventionality and lower costs compared to social projects. On the other hand, media is irreplaceable in exceptional cases when there is a need to deny rumours. Simultaneously it is admitted that the distortion of initial message and small selection of specialized publications encourage to search for more acceptable means of communication and cause the drop in media popularity. Experts envisage that implementation of *social projects* is to be considered an alternative to working with the media. This alternative may be chosen when one does not approve of the dissemination of paid information (one of the peculiarities of PR market in Lithuania). Those upholding the position that media should earn its living firstly from presentation of interesting and relevant news instead of sales of advertising area tend to choose social projects more actively. Social projects may also be preferred in cases when there are doubts about the usefulness of the media. *Social mentoring* is one of the recent communication means in Lithuania. Social mentoring is an adaptation of Swedish initiative. Mentors convey their successful personal experience to certain social groups, e.g., unemployed, children from foster homes, etc. The motto of mentoring is – the best way to help other people is not

just share one's success, but also to show them where their success lies. Data of the research revealed that besides the mentioned measures (in case of large companies in particular) communication messages may be disseminated by a concrete individual. In the case of image formation, it is popular to invoke one or even several *image advocates* who may be the company's director, public relations officer, etc. In this case the efforts are generally directed towards the planned image of the company, product or person-manager. When listing communication measures stipulated in the action plan, experts drew attention to *virtual communication* that is rapidly gaining popularity: internet pages, intranet, blogs etc. Virtual communication creates the opportunity to effectively reach specific, although small, groups of society. Alongside the mentioned measures, there is also *direct communication* (press conferences, presentations, events, public lectures). It has been noticed that it is most often selected to inform about specific, complicated, expensive or new product on the market. Implementation of this measure is more labour-consuming in terms of the number of contacts.

When describing the action plan, one of the experts mentioned the creation of a legend. A legend is construed as a part of persuasion and positioning. A legend may refer to the story how a product appeared or explanation why specific features of the product are singled out. It has been noticed that legends are particularly actively used by companies in food industry.

In summary it could be suggested that each element in the structure of PR objective has its own purpose and enables analyzing PR solution fragmentarily. The clarity of PR objective is inseparable from the cognition of its all structural elements.

Discussion and conclusions

Results of the empirical research allowed clearly defining the structure of PR objective and the content of its individual elements. PR objective comprises a quadripartite structure, the explicitness and formalization of which increases when going down to the lowest hierarchical level. Differently to theoretical insights, target audiences are presented as a separate element in the objective structure. The planned implementation period is stipulated in each part of objective structure (except target audience), while the planned PR results are broken down into tasks and action plan. It is noteworthy that in contradistinction to Lindenmann et al (2003) and Smith (2005) insights, PR objective does not include planned PR outtakes. When interpreting this observation, it can be assumed that PR outtakes are not included because any reasoned substantiation is insufficient. Considering that objectives are formulated based on situational research,

the mentioned arguments are vital to justify the increased volumes of work. It is also noteworthy that PR outtakes refer to a fast-changing PR result. This dissonance between theoretical and empirical research gives rise to the discussion about PR specifics in Lithuania and confirms that even the kind of experience that is considered to be the best cannot be transposed into specific practice without caution.

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Kazokienė L.

Ryšių su visuomene tikslų struktūra ir turinys: verslo įmonių kontekstas

Santrauka

Ryšių su visuomene (RsV) tikslo pažinimo tyrimai yra svarbūs verslo įmonių vadovams ir komunikacijos specialistams, nes leidžia tinkamai formuluoti RsV tikslus, atsižvelgiant į šios veiklos esmę ir prigimtį. RsV tikslai daugelyje šios veiklos procesų vaidina esminį vaidmenį. Itin aiškiai jis atskleidžiamas RsV efektyvumo vertinimo procese. Vertinant RsV efektyvumą, dažnai taikomi vadybos pagal tikslus principai ir lyginamas iškeltas tikslas bei gautasis rezultatas. Šiuo atveju išryškėja poreikis aiškiai ir išmatuojamai formuluoti RsV tikslus. Kita vertus, RsV efektyvumo vertinimo proceso pradžia, kaip pastebi Gregory (2001), Lindenmann ir kt. (2003), yra ne poveikio nustatymo, o įvesties etapas. Vadinasi, orientuojamasi į kompleksinį RsV efektyvumo vertinimą, kuris pradedamas nuo programos įgyvendinimo pradžios ir vykdomas iki programos pabaigos. Aiškiai suformuoti RsV tikslai leidžia atlikti kontrolinius ir galutinius pasiektų rezultatų palyginimus. Gregory (2001) išreiškia nuostatą, jog RsV tikslai yra svarbūs vadybine prasme, nes susieja RsV spendimus su bendraisiais įmonių tikslais. Šios sąsajos leidžia išryškinti RsV integralumą. Nepaisant RsV tikslų svarbos šios veiklos įgyvendinimo procesuose, jų ištyrimo lygis tebėra menkas. Dėl to neretai pasitelkiami bendrieji tikslų formavimo principai, pvz., tikslų išmatuojamumas, įgyvendinimo laikotarpio numatymas ir kt. Šie principai yra universalūs. Atsižvelgiant į tai, kad kiekviena veikla, neišimtis ir RsV, turi savas ypatybes, yra būtina siekiant išplėsti bendrines rekomendacijas. Kitaip tariant, pritariama požiūriui, jog universalūs, bendrieji tikslų formavimo principai yra pagrindas ir turi būti taikomi RsV srityje, tačiau jų taikymas konkrečioje veikloje turi būti papildytas, atsižvelgiant į tos veiklos plėtros ypatybes.

Šio straipsnio **tyrimo tikslas** – atskleisti RsV tikslo struktūrą ir jos dalių turinį.

Tyrimo **objektas** – RsV tikslo struktūra ir turinys.

RsV tikslo struktūrą ir turinį analizavo Hon (1998), Anderson ir kt. (1999), Gregory (2001), Wilcox ir kt. (2003), Lindenmann ir kt. (2003), Smith (2005), Serbânicâ (2008). Pastebima, kad RsV tikslų analizė daugeliu atvejų atlikta konkretaus proceso, pavyzdžiui, planavimo, kontekste arba fragmentiškai ir glaustai. Apibendrinus ir susisteminus mokslininkų įžvalgas RsV tikslo klausimu, nustatyta RsV tikslo struktūra ir jos turinį nusakantys elementai. Vadovaujantis mokslininkų rekomendacijomis, RsV tikslo struktūrą nusako bendrieji ir programų tikslai bei uždaviniai. RsV tikslų turinį, taikant bendruosius tikslų formavimo principus, nusako planuojami RsV rezultatai, tikslinė auditorija bei programos įgyvendinimo laikotarpis. Autoriai akcentuoja RsV rezultatų daugialypiškumą ir rekomenduoja skirti RsV produktyvumą, pasekmes bei galutinius rezultatus. RsV produktyvumas apibūdina komunikacijos specialistų darbo pastangas ir išreiškiamas renginių, publikacijų skaičiumi. RsV pasekmės apibūdina tikslinės auditorijos reakciją, todėl laikomos greitai kintančiu RsV rezultatu. Galutinių RsV rezultatų klausimu nėra pasiektas mokslininkų požiūrio konsensusas. Juos identifikuojant, remtasi konkrečių atvejų studijų rezultatais bei teikiamomis RsV siekiamybių klasifikacijomis. Nustatyta, jog dažniausiai RsV priemonėmis yra siekiama edukacinių, šviečiamųjų tikslų, nuostatų ar požiūrio formavimo tikslų bei elgsenos modeliavimo tikslų. Aukščiausiu RsV rezultatu laikomas tam tikros elgsenos modelis, tačiau nėra sutariama, kokie elgsenos pokyčiai yra laikytini RsV rezultatais. Pastebima, kad dažnai planuojami elgsenos pokyčiai numatomi neatsižvelgiant į RsV komunikacinę prigimtį. Į RsV tikslą įtraukiamos ir tikslinės auditorijos. Šis poreikis aiškinamas nuostata, kad tiksle numatomos tikslinės auditorijos palengvina komunikacinių pranešimų pritaikymą konkrečiai auditorijai ir leidžia geriau atsakyti į numanomus tos auditorijos poreikius, logiškai formuojant RsV veiksmų seką. Viena RsV programa turi būti orientuojama į vieną tikslinę auditoriją. Mokslinėje literatūroje RsV tematika, tikslinių auditorijų skiriamas skaičius nedidelis. Apsiribojama darbuotojais, vartotojais, numatomos įvairios institucijos, galinčios kontroliuoti verslo įmonių veiklą.

Kitas svarbus RsV tikslo elementas – įgyvendinimo laikotarpis. Jo numatymo svarba grindžiama atliekamu orientyro vaidmeniu bei kontrole, ypač įgyvendinant ilgalaikes daugiaetapes RsV programas. Analizuojant mokslinę literatūrą, pastebėta, jog daugelis teikiamų RsV tikslo formavimo rekomendacijų remiasi prielaidomis, stokoja empirinio pagrindimo ir labiau tinka apibūdinti bendrinę RsV tikslo išraišką. Suformuotos įžvalgos tam tikra prasme atkartoja bendrųjų tikslų formavimo principų taikymą, integruojant RsV kontekstą, tačiau nėra iki galo akcentuojama RsV specifika.

Nepakankamai išsamūs duomenys apie RsV tikslo struktūrą ir jos turinį lėmė empirinio tyrimo metodo pasirinkimą. Siekiant gauti išsamią informaciją apie RsV tikslus, pasitelktas ekspertinio vertinimo metodas. Į ekspertų grupę įtraukti verslo įmonių ir specializuotų agentūrų atstovai, kadangi jie dalyvauja formuojant RsV tikslus. Gauti

duomenys apdoroti taikant turinio analizę. Siekiant objetyviau suprasti ekspertų mintis, pasitelkta hermeneutinė prieiga.

Ekspertinio vertinimo rezultatai leido patikslinti ir išplėsti teorinių studijų įžvalgas. Remiantis jais, RsV tikslas apibūdinamas keturmate hierarchine struktūra, kurią sudaro bendrasis tikslas, uždaviniai, tikslinės auditorijos bei veiklos planas. Pastarasis gali būti tapatinamas su taktika. Pastebėtina, kad einant žemiausio tikslo hierarchinio lygmens link, jis labiau formalizuojamas. RsV tikslo struktūros elementus galima apibūdinti pagal jų paskirtį. Bendrasis RsV tikslas nurodo veiklos kryptį ir nuostatas. Identifikuotos įžvalgos bendrojo tikslo atžvilgiu atitinka teorines studijas. Išsiaiškinta, jog dažniausiai RsV priemonėmis yra siekiama didinti pasitikėjimą įmone, formuoti pasirinktą įvaizdį, gerinti santykius su tam tikromis auditorijomis ar minimizuoti darbuotojų kaitą. Tolesnė RsV tikslo struktūra yra patikslinta. Uždaviniai sąlygiškai atitinka teorinėse studijose įvardytus RsV programų tikslus. Jie turi apibūdinti pagrindinius veiksmus siekiant bendrojo tikslo ir numatyti galutinius RsV rezultatus bei jų pasiekimo laikotarpį. Galutiniais RsV rezultatais įvardijama tikslinės auditorijos žinių, nuomonės pokytis, santykių kokybės pokytis bei teikiamas prioritetiškumas. Siekiant šių rezultatų, būtina atsižvelgti į eiliškumą, kurį nusako reklamoje naudojamos AIDA sistemos interpretacija. Atsižvelgiant į didėjančią komunikacijos priemonių ir kanalų įvairovę, auditorijų paieškos proceso tęstinumą, rekomenduojama tikslines auditorijas skirti atskiru stuktūriniu lygmeniu. Daugiausia dėmesio verslo įmonės skiria pelningiausiu laikomam segmentui. Komunikuojant strateginę informaciją, tikslinę auditoriją išskirti nėra būtina. Žemiausiame RsV tikslo struktūriniame lygmenyje – veiksmų plane – numatomas RsV produktyvumas, priemonės ir konkrečių priemonių įgyvendinimo laikotarpis.

Pastebėta, kad žiniasklaida ir toliau lieka viena pagrindinių RsV priemonių. Tai sąlygoja pasirinkimo alternatyvų nebuvimas specifinėse situacijose (pvz., paneigiant gandus), tradicijos ir žemesnės sąnaudos, lyginant su kitomis priemonėmis. Pastebėta, kad be žiniasklaidos priemonių verslo įmonės vis aktyviau įgyvendina socialinius projektus. Šios priemonės šalininkais visų pirma yra tie, kurie žiniasklaidos atžvilgiu turi susiformavę nepalankią nuomonę. Stambios įmonės dažnai pasitelkia įvaizdžio advokatus, kuriais gali būti vienas ar keli įmonėje dirbantys asmenys. Dažniausiai įvaizdžio advokato vaidmuo atitienka įmonės vadovams ir atstovams spaudai. Ši priemonė aktyviai naudojama įmonės įvaizdžio, prekės ar vadovo įvaizdžio formavimo atveju. Palyginti su kitomis priemonėmis, nauja yra socialinė mentorystė. Įmonės skatina mentorius pasidalyti savo sėkminga asmenine patirtimi su tam tikromis visuomenės grupėmis. Siekiant paveikti specifines, tačiau nelabai dideles visuomenės grupes, pasitelkiama virtuali komunikacija: interneto tinklalapiai, interneto dienoraščiai ir kt. Pristatant rinkos požiūriu naujas ar sudėtingas, brangias prekes, neišsiverčiama be tiesioginės komunikacijos. Ji laikoma gana brangia kontaktų skaičiaus požiūriu.

Lyginant teorinės studijos ir empirinio tyrimo rezultatus, pastebėta, kad tiksle RsV rezultatai diferencijuojami siauriau, iš anksto nėra numatomos RsV pasekmės. Tai leidžia diskutuoti apie Lietuvos rinkos RsV specifiką.