

Computer games and online journalism

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Abstract

The paper discusses the impact of computer games on journalism, the concept of gaming; its positive and negative aspects were noted for journalism and the educational process; Examples of games are given, problems of using games in practice in journalism are described.

The relevance of the study is due to the appearance in the young generation of new information multimedia devices, the emergence of information space and the circumstance that modern computer technologies gradually fill a huge space around us, including journalism.

In this regard, this article is aimed at identifying and uncovering new trends in the use of information technology in journalism, because gaming is, of course, making the information presentation process brighter and more accessible, making it possible to acquire knowledge in a more simple and understandable way for the younger generation, and in Journalism raises the degree of involvement of all participants of the information society in the problems of modern life.

The main approaches and methods to investigating this problem are questions of the use of gaming as a journalist tool, which has obvious advantages. First of all, this is the availability and fascination of new information. In journalism, it is the attraction of the public's attention with the help of non-traditional game technologies.

Different variants of gaming technologies are presented in the article, specific features of each of the presented are revealed, application possibilities for various online editions are revealed, which allows to consider comprehensively the application in the information space of those or other popular computer games for young people.

The materials of the article are of practical value for journalists, teachers and managers of educational programs, as well as top-managers of online newspapers and magazines wishing to increase interest in information and draw youth's attention to the most modern news and events built on the use of modern gaming technologies, as well as opportunities Information community.

Computer games have become an integral part of the life of young people, so journalists try to keep up with their readers and use them in the process of presenting information to attract public attention.

Keywords: computer games, gaming, online journalism, information technologies, computer technologies, information society, modern education.

Introduction

Even at the beginning of the twentieth century, the idea of using gaming mechanics in education began to develop actively. The first game simulator was developed in 1936. Game models of training were mainly used in the military context. But this practice is just a learning process based on games. Geomification is an educational game, which is specially created for the educational program [10]. In journalism began to appear news games, which are also aimed at attracting the attention of readers with the help of unusual technologies.

Media gamification: news games.

At the Y-generation, who grew up on all sorts of computer games, the need to obtain rewards and bonuses for performing certain actions pushed the limits of the player space. Over the last decade, a wave of adaptation of game-play to real life conditions has swept across the world and affected almost all spheres of life (from school to shopping)[1]. The title line of Herman's aria from the Tchaikovsky's opera "What is our life? It's a game!" has sounded so actually never before.

This social trend is called "gamification". In simple terms, gamification is the use of game elements in

non-gaming situations, which means receiving a predetermined reward for achieving the result [2].

The introduction of game mechanics and game-like thinking in all spheres of our everyday life is becoming an increasingly popular idea. To assess the extent, it is enough to note that at the moment Gsummits - major international forums devoted to gamification - are being held.

Games are part of the news publications for more than one hundred years, since the first crossword puzzle appeared on December 21, 1913, in the daily American newspaper "The New York Times".

The prerequisites for the penetration of the game mechanisms (in their contemporary sense) in the media were formed as a result of the widespread implementation of Internet technologies. When the length of linear reading decreased, we had to replace long analytical articles with short and capacious notes, accompanied by visual and sound means of information transfer. When the broadcast paradigm was replaced by the involving paradigm, newsmakers had to focus the reader's attention not on the content of news, but on its presentation and distribution methods [3].

First of all, on the pages of the Internet media a variety of "lazy authorship" services began to appear, which can be hardly called games. But they were the first step on the way of involving the reader in the process of creating news. One of the most resonant projects in this series the "MPs' expenses" of the daily British newspaper "The Guardian" became. As a part of the experiment, the editorial staff posted copies of receipts and other documents about the expenses of members of Parliament and invited readers to become co-authors of the political sensation. Thus, the newspaper received both involvement, and viral effect, and unique content.

In Russia, attempts of creative collaboration of editorial and readership have also been made, but it should be noted that the entertainment component in them suppresses the content. For example, "The Moscow news" have offered its readers the "Legislator" - a service, which you can use to offer your draft law and immediately publish it online [4].

The next level of involvement is to provide the reader the opportunity to virtually participate in key events that appear in the news of the leading media. This became possible, thanks to the creation of a

fundamentally new way of presenting relevant and socially significant information – news games.

The term "news games" has been used since the beginning of 2000s and means digital games used in a journalistic context for its comprehension, by immersing themselves in a real situation, which is symbolically translated by the game. You can interact with games, so they often explain complex relationships better than the usual journalistic texts [5].

Six months after the start of the war in Iraq, the news game "September 12" (2003) was released, the directness and novelty of which were second only to its relevance.

"The Middle East. Among women and children moving along the streets of the city, there is a recognizable caricature figure dressed in black with an AK-47 automatic weapon in his hands. You control a guided missile attack with your mouse. The destruct zone is big enough, and people are moving fast, hurrying about their business. When you have isolated your target and struck a blow, do not expect a triumphant fanfare. The object suddenly begins to move, and a woman, two children and a dog appear in its place ...

Finally, the missile hits the market. The smoke settles from under the rubble. People passing by the victims under fire, are falling to their knees and crying. Automatically on the screen the inscription "A new terrorist was born" appears".

"Violence gives rise to even greater violence" – is the main thesis, embedded in the game scenario. The only way to become a winner in this game is not to play it.

This original approach to reflect current events in the news source enabled to stimulate the readership to ethical reasoning without imposing conclusions, and providing the opportunity to come to them independently.

This is only one of the first attempts to apply the possibilities of news games in practice.

News games have been pacing around the world for more than a decade now. In the USA and Great Britain, experiments in this area have long reached a new level. "Cutthroat Capitalism" (2008) of the monthly magazine "Wired" can be added to the list of the most successful projects. This game exists in symbiosis with the same-name article, which is a

result of an economic analysis of the business model used by Somali pirates. "Cutthroat Capitalism" puts the user at the helm of a pirate ship. The main task is to carry out a series of raids in the Gulf of Aden, sequentially passing through 4 stages: assault, high-jacking of a ship, negotiations and obtaining a ransom.

Thus, the article abstractly considers existing pirate schemes, and the game, at the same time, offers to take part in a pirate raid, which allows to learn much faster and easier that the best strategy is a series of small ransoms with the demand of the minimum amount of ransom.

This example clearly shows that news games are a good tool for learning the material presented in traditional news formats [6].

The game "Could you be a medalist" (2012), presented by the British newspaper "The Guardian" on the eve of the XXX Summer Olympic games in London, is also worthy of mention in this list. After passing the relevant test, each user can compare his results in running, swimming and other sports with the results of outstanding athletes participating in the Olympic Games of different years. Graphics, imitating 8-bit masterpieces of the 80's, is worth mentioning [12,13].

"Moral Kombat" (2012), simulation of the debate between Obama and Romney from the "Huffington

Post", "Climate Challenge" by "BBC" in collaboration with the Oxford University Centre for the Environment, simulation of climate changes for the next hundred years, etc. are worth mentioning too[7].

In these countries, specialized forums for developers of news games are regularly held and there are some professional communities too. In France, the newspaper "Le Monde" also released several news games. But in Germany, development in recent years is almost stopped. Activity in this area is demonstrated by Brazil, where an active community of developers has already appeared. In 2007, Editora Abril and Estadão (major media concerns) began to experiment with news games. Between 2008 and 2012, they created more than 12 games. Filosofighters, in which the leading philosophers protect their beliefs with fists, has become one of the most successful Brazilian projects. In Africa, journalists also began to be actively interested in news games.

Impressive examples of domestic news games cannot be ignored. After the parliamentary elections in 2011, the "RIA Novosti" portal has published the game "Not re-elected!", which allows the user to be in place of a deputy who is very worried because of loss of his usual privileges.



Figure 1: (Source: <http://ria.ru/games/20111206/507963798.html>)

As a response to one of the most shocking events of 2012, there was the game "Don't let Pussy Riot into the temple", which was presented to the public during the festival "Orthodox FAQ". Using a Golden cross as a weapon, the user has to kill the little men in balaclava helmets running to the doors of the temple.



Figure 2: (Source: <http://www.sobaka.ru/city/city/17456>)

But time does not stand still, and soon we will see many more attempts to create a new journalism at play.

Conclusion and prospects:

Young people are more and more interested in computer technology. Currently, there are many developing computer games and, one way or another, they face practical every modern person [8,9].

Proceeding from this, it can be concluded that it is impossible to tear off modern people from the latest technical technologies. Information, presented in an original way, always attracts attention.

On the agenda is the question of modernizing the life of civil society. In this case, the assistance can be attracted to the gaming, or the gameplay of the journalistic and educational sphere. Of course, at the moment, such a system with the use of computer technology is not very developed. Very little developed special content that could be used in practice. After all, the creation of such content requires not only the knowledge of IT technologies, but also the highly qualified training of a society that will use these technologies [10,11].

Despite all this, work on creating games for journalism is underway. And we are sure, after a while, the introduction of gaming into the sphere of journalism will begin.

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