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# Big Data and Blockchain in Strategic Communication: Transforming Trust Opportunities

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Media in the second decade of the XXI century is in search of new creative and economic models, due to the emergence of new communication technologies, the spread of the Internet, the mobilization of access, and the exponential growth of digital information.

Datification - the process of presenting any phenomena in a quantitative digital format, converting data into digital information that is accessible to analytics [8] - is becoming a key trend in the world of digital information. In the 2010s the concept of big data appears - a series of approaches, tools and methods for processing structured and unstructured machine-readable data with a volume from one petabyte to get results that may be perceived by a person [7]. The big data industry today is one of the fastest growing - it doubles its volume every year and a half [5]. For information technology infrastructure and mass media, big data, according to *Gartner* research, is the second most promising direction of development after virtual reality [10].

With the spread of big data, a new trend is being formed - data journalism - structured, machine-readable data used in journalism along with traditional text [2]. This direction of journalism based on the traditions of investigative journalism, computer-assisted reporting (CAR), and precision journalism [9], and has been spread in the leading foreign mass media (2006) and appeared in a number of Russian publications (2013) [6, 10]. This phenomenon is significant for modern strategic communication.

Our research presents the main results of the study of foreign data journalism publications (n=360): specifics of information sources and the degree of autonomy of publications authors. The hypothesis is being proved that the changes associated with the emergence of the phenomenon of big data in the mid-2010s, causing new ways of searching, processing, analyzing and presenting information, are not fully reflected in data journalism publications, the use of such information sources in the leading press in 2014−2016 remains minimal - big data is not a mandatory component of these publications.

To get relevant results we decided to expand the study and additionally observe other opportunities for big data and associated with it new technologies in media and strategic communication - blockchain, an open, distributed ledger that can record transactions between two parties efficiently and in a verifiable and permanent way [3], and is resistant to modification of the data. While much has already been written about blockchain applications and prospects in the fintech industry, little research has been done to explore blockchain technology's user-centric paradigm in enabling various applications beyond banking [1]. Our research is an effort to contribute to that body of scholarship by exploring blockchain technology's potential applications their limits, in areas that intersect with social impact, including journalism and strategic communication (*Civil, AdChain* and *Po.et*).

For media organizations, the use cases of blockchain can be grouped into such key areas as: access to public data secured in blockchain-based file system, cryptocurrency-based business models and auditable database solutions for editorial and advertising [4].

With the rise of government-deployed blockchain that secure citizens' public data, distributed file systems and smart contracts that rely on rules codified in computer code to automate processes will reconfigure data access for media specialists. Cryptocurrencies can be used to reward media specialists and readers. Tokens can be used as a flexible component of their compensation package. For readers, subscriber accounts can be credited tokens for approving ads that readers wish to see or even for tipping journalists. Blockchain can serve as secure registries for important metadata, such as a time of publication, bylines and tags. Blockchain-based registries can rank and filter trusted advertisers and ad content. These database solutions may become essential in strategic communication for building trust among media organizations, between the media and the public.

Big data and blockchain technology - is the communicative environment that requires strategic communication and rapid action from the company to get success. The topic of using big data and blockchain in journalism and media communication has potential and is open to further research.

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