

## Strategic Communication in Blockchain Context: The Opportunities of Media Decentralized Autonomous Organizations

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In the 2020s, the reality of strategic communication in the media industry is undergoing significant changes. With such emerging breakthrough technologies as blockchain and smart contracts, the scope of opportunities for optimization and reorganization of the structure of media companies and as a consequence, the modification of its communication appeared.

According to the latest *Gartner* research [1], in the nearest future all digital ecosystems, web-like connections between actors (enterprises, people and things) will include decentralized autonomous organizations (DAOs), which operate independently of humans and rely on smart contracts. These digital ecosystems are constantly evolving and connecting, resulting in new products and opportunities.

The new type of media organizations, decentralized and autonomous (so-called “media DAOs”), are on the way and there is a need to understand how to build their strategic communication, how to handle internal and external communication processes. The DAOs are decentralized because it runs on a decentralized infrastructure, a public, permissionless blockchain that cannot be taken over by a third party and it is not organized hierarchically, and there is only horizontal communication between actors. The DAOs are autonomous in the sense that its rules are self-enforced, no one can stop it nor change it from the outside. In a nutshell, DAOs are organizations represented by rules encoded as a computer program that is transparent, controlled by shareholders and not influenced by a central government [2]. In the absence of a commonly agreed-upon definition, we use the following working definition for DAOs proposed by *Binance* researchers: the DAO is “an organizational form that coordinates the efforts and resources of members via an a priori binding, formalized, and transparent set of rules that are agreed upon in a multilateral fashion.”[3] Thus, the specificity of DAOs communication processes causes the appearance of the new model. Our research presents the main results of the study of three types of blockchain initiatives which can be considered essential for upgrading strategic communication. It consists of three parts:

- Firstly, we compare all well-known DAO initiatives, mainly blockchain start-ups: key systems for creating DAOs (*Aragon*, *DAOstack*, *Colony*), new initiatives for governing crypto protocols with DAOs, following that of *MakerDAO: KyberDAO (Kyber Networks)*, *PolkaDAO (Polkadot)*, *dxDAO (Gnosis)*, the creation of jurisdictions for DAOs, either as decentralized jurisdictions (*Kleros*, *Aragon Court*) or as traditional territory-based ones offering legal vehicles for DAOs (Vermont, Malta, United Kingdom, etc.). We reveal the main advantages and opportunities for media and strategic communication of using them.
- Then we take a look at the media companies, who are using or planning to use blockchain, showing how it may affect their work and benefit the industry itself. This part includes

the study of the most ambitious start-up, *Civil*, and its partners *Forbes* and *Kinzen*; and other initiatives, combining media and blockchain: *Steem*, *Po.et*, *AdChain*, *Narrative*, *Golos.io*, *PUBLIQ*, *Pressland*, etc.

- The last part of the research contains the analyses of the media companies which are examined in the second part, who are to use the DAOs in their working process and the organizational communication (for example, *SingularDTV's SINGLS DAO*, a decentralized autonomous organization designed to govern the world's first Media Distribution Protocol powered by the *Ethereum* blockchain).

The results of the research present the up-to-date complete map with a strong correlation between blockchain companies who works on infostructure for creating DAOs, media companies who are using blockchain solutions in their work, and media companies who are planning to use DAOs to improve strategic communication - the main focus of our research. Key challenges of blockchain technology are explored, as well as perspectives of how DAOs build on it can result in fundamentally new forms for strategic communication. The topic of using blockchain in media communication has potential and is open to further research.

### Источники и литература

- 1) Gartner Hype Cycle for Emerging Technologies (2020) Available at: <https://www.gartner.com/en/webinars/43051/gartner-hype-cycle-for-emerging-technologies>
- 2) Prusty, N. (2017). Building Blockchain Projects. Birmingham, UK: Packt. p. 9.
- 3) Theory and praxis of DAOs (2019) Binance Research. Available at: <https://research.binance.com/analysis/dao-theory>