



# Reputation Management of Ukrainian Political Opinion Leaders on Social Media in Times of War (the Serhiy Prytula Case)

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## Abstract

The main objective of this study is to ask how the reputation of personalities on social media is established during times of war, what its components are, and what factors influence it during the rapidly changing context of wartime. Among the factors that influence public image, one can speak about the values and cultural characteristics of the target audience, the duration of reputation, social cohesion and solidarity with active groups in society to fight against the aggressor, co-experiencing the trauma caused by war, and co-writing a history stored in the collective memory of the people, the lexical colouring of the text used, and orientation towards traditional values. The case selected for the study is Serhiy Prytula, a famous Ukrainian media person, public activist and founder of the Serhiy Prytula Charity Foundation. Serhiy Prytula’s posts on social platforms (Telegram, Facebook, and Instagram) in the period of Ukraine’s announced counter-offensive in June

2023 were chosen for the research. Employing a methodology based on thematic and content analysis of social media posts, the authors identify the components and factors influencing reputation. The picture of the Ukrainian society in wartime built by opinion leaders across social networks shows a changing society, where volunteering is a positive trend but resentment is an alarming tendency – the desire to take revenge and blame other people for one’s problems, which contributes to justifying Russia’s military aggression.

**KEYWORDS:** *online reputation, opinion leader, social media, war, Ukraine*

**SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:** *reputacja online, lider opinii, media społecznościowe, wojna, Ukraina*

## 1. Introduction

In wartime, a unique role in the information component of hybrid warfare is played by communication between authoritative opinion leaders and an audience interested in receiving clear, vital and relevant information, balanced assessments, and the most accurate forecasts. The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown in 2020–21 further contributed to the rapid development of social networks, where the number of users in the first quarter of 2021 doubled compared with Autumn 2020. The annual growth between 2020 and 2021 was almost twice as rapid as it had been in the previous twelve months, and continued at a double-digital rate between 2021 and 2022. However, the increase slowed dramatically in 2023, and the worldwide growth figure hit the lowest ever (Digital 2023: Global Overview Report).

Over the pandemic time, social media provided an important place to socialise and navigate lifestyle trends. The beginning of the military aggression on the territory of Ukraine opened a new stage in the popularity of social media and individual accounts of opinion leaders were promoted as sources of up-to-date information about the war. “The most popular social media platforms used during the war include Telegram, Facebook, Instagram, etc.” (Interfaks-Ukrajina. 2021). “As of July 2022, about 76.6% of Ukrainians use social media, the most popular social media: YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, etc.” (Zhyla 2022). So, the number of social media users in Ukraine increased over the last year – from 60% of the population in 2021 to 76.6% in July 2022. Among 76.6% of citizens, 66% choose Telegram, 61% use YouTube, and 58% use Facebook. GlobalLogic research shows that by the beginning of 2021, Ukrainian social media users had increased by seven million people.



Since 2019, the number of Ukrainians on Instagram has grown by 22% and on Facebook by 7%. 14 and 16 million Ukrainians now use these social networks, respectively. “Over the past year, the new social network TikTok reached 16% of Ukrainians – a growth of 500%” (Businessofapps 2024).

In wartime more citizens started to pay attention to political news. Thus, according to the polls, “29.9 percent were interested in politics in December 2022, compared with only 9.4 percent in November 2021” (Razumkov 2023a). “In 2023, social media had become the main news acquisition source: 77.9% of respondents preferred it” (Detektor media 2023). The trend of “keeping things in check” and keeping up with the news has persisted since the beginning of war and into 2024, according to Gradus Research (Pravda.com.ua 2024).

Digital media can be used in three ways: “relaying” information about the emergency from central command to the public and “pulling in” information using one’s network. Social media can provide insight into what is happening, the extent of the damage, and what people can do to stay safe. A third use of social media is monitoring the overall situation through “crowdsourcing,” engaging the worldwide Internet community, and observing what other people say. In a crisis or disaster, information management provides accurate data that managers rely on in decision-making: An effective information management system is a crucial factor in the quality and effectiveness of the overall response (Costa et al. 2020).

“Social media have a significant impact on organizations in areas such as enhancing brand reputation, increasing brand value, relationships, image promotion, and equity” (Kim and Ko 2012); “digital advertising and promotion; addressing customer service issues, finding innovative ideas; and building customer relationships” (Solis 2010). Organisations need to train their crisis response team to mitigate any issue that may escalate into a crisis; also, in today’s society, it is crucial to integrate digital media into the toolkit to develop an overall reputation management strategy and, based on theory and practice, guide them according to a plan.

“It should be emphasized that, while in the past, one of the main functions of social networks was the function of infotainment” (Ševčuk 2021, 18), now, in Ukraine, the situation has changed. GlobalLogic research shows that during wartime, “users perceive social networks primarily as a source of information and then as a way of promotion, branding, PR, etc.” (Interfaks-Ukraina 2021, 18). At the same time, the motivation of the general public for such communication can be considered within the framework of the cultural and sociological theory of the society of experiences/impressions



by Gerhard Schütze (Schütze 2005), where social behaviour is formed based on the internal experiences and feelings of an individual. The new version of social behaviour is associated with a different vision of rationality regulating human behaviour; now, it aims to understand experience as a consumption process. In wartime, the transformation of individual and social values also shifts from rationality, characteristic of the stable period of society development, to emotional perception and choice, which accelerates and enhances the euphoria of consumption.

In sociology the dramaturgical approach introduced in the 1950s by Erving Goffman can be rendered as a precursor of the theory of imagination by Schulze (2005). Goffman's dramaturgical approach focuses on social interactions as performances, where individuals play different roles in managing impressions. Schulze's theory of imagination builds upon this idea by emphasising the role of imagination in shaping social reality and understanding human behaviour. While they are not directly linked as a linear progression, there are similarities in their emphasis on the symbolic nature of social interactions and the importance of understanding the subjective experiences of individuals in society.

Thus, "modern man is oriented in real life in a multifaceted and profound way, finding joy in his activities, communication with others, impressions, emotions, and feelings" (Nussbaum 2003). In the society of experience, we focus on our own emotions, impressions, people, things, and events; so, people perceive life as more exciting and fuller and this can become art, a reflection of the fragments seen in social networks. People in this society prefer to go along with internal orientations, inner impressions, and experiences.

Arlie Hochschild introduces the term "emotional work" – the management of feelings, public persona image, and bodily demonstration (1979). Schulze notes that the post-war period can be viewed as one where the emotional component of consumption becomes an essential factor instead of traditional functionality and status. Concerning wartime society, Jevhen Golovakha introduces the term "resentment" to depict the society in a state of war: "An angry feeling that someone is to blame for your problems" (Golovakha 2022). However, "reputation presents a dynamic phenomenon, and its maintenance and strengthening require active accumulation of successes in persons' or companies' activities and dissemination of knowledge about its achievements among stakeholders" (Derevianko 2018, 133).

According to Pierre-Marie Chauvin (2013, 132), the term "reputation" is "a conditional, provisional, and localized social representation associated



with a name resulting from more or less weighted and formalized social evaluations.” One can stress that the work with reputation is based on building trust in the general public, and groups of people with whom the leader wishes to interact. Depending on such groups, managers and leaders focus on the specific components and tools that ensure trust. Namely, this serves as the basis for successful reputation management. The effectiveness of the information and communication process directly depends on the “quality” of the speaker, the opinion leader – on how trustworthy the information and opinions are, as well as on his “weight,” or the importance of his social capital in society. Today, ordinary people, such as network users, read and listen to a blogger/speaker/opinion leader if they trust him/her. “Trust” is the basis of reputation, within which reputation management operates.

Social network users seek new impressions, deeper emotions, and exciting events shared by opinion leaders. With the development of ICT, an essential factor of social communication is the speed of the communication process. In war, this becomes even more important, so social networks as a tool of interaction provide a more significant communication channel than traditional media in society, both locally and globally.

One might mention that some research on digital communication in wartime was conducted by Gregory Asmolov (2022), Ash Bird (2022), Olga Boichak and Andrew Hoskins (2022). Reputation management, especially in peacetime, has also been investigated fairly well. However, there is practically no research on reputation management in the context of the Ukrainian-Russian war conflict.

## 2. Analysis

In Ukrainian political communication, one can speak about a new trend – “the power of digitalization” (Zosan 2020), particularly concerning the presidential elections in Ukraine in 2019. Interactivity and multimedia became necessary tools for candidates who then effectively used digital technologies in social media, and political PR in election campaigns. “Politicians’ popularity began to be measured not so much by ratings but by the number of likes to their posts and subscribers to their accounts, etc.” (Hocur 2021).

The authors suggest that content analysis data from the most popular social platforms in Ukraine regarding opinion leader’s social network accounts help to discover the distinctive components of reputation building, to collect information on reputation building in wartime, and to establish what factors influence reputation management in wartime.



The content analysis method helps to qualitatively and quantitatively (quantity of likes) measure or identify specific features and facts in the study. A single separate word is chosen as the unit of analysis. A sentence is rendered as a contextual unit. The thematic analysis shows the semantic content of the data, and identifies patterns or themes in the sample.

Posts from 4.06 to 18.06.2023 were selected for the research as it covers the beginning of the counter-offensive of The Armed Forces of Ukraine (abbr. AFU) designated by the experts of the American Institute for the Study of War as one of the most intense war periods (Marson and Tucker 2023). Due to the increasing importance of social and political news in that time, trust in speakers – opinion leaders and stakeholders of the country’s public discourse – is also growing. According to the poll results, at the beginning of the war, “the trust and rating of the country’s president – Volodymyr Zelenskyy, was 17% in 2021 (Razumkov 2022) and in 2023 it got 81% (Razumkov 2023b)”.

The survey data about the opinion leaders in socio-political life in Ukraine in wartime conducted by Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (abbr. KIIS) and Razumkov Centre show the following top-5 leaders (see Table 1).

**Table 1:** The Rating of Opinion Leaders in Socio-political Life in Ukraine.

Sources: <https://razumkov.org.ua>, [Oporaua.org](https://oporaua.org).

№	Opinion Leader Survey Data KIIS (July, 2022)	Survey data on the names of influential politicians <a href="https://razumkov.org.ua">razumkov.org.ua</a> (from 21.12.2022 to 3.03.2023)
1	Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine – 29%	Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine – 59%
2	Alexey Arestovych, advisor to the Office of the President of Ukraine – 14%	Valerii Zaluzhnyi, Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – 10%
3	Oleg Zhdanov, military expert – 12%	Alexey Arestovych, advisor to the Office of the President of Ukraine – 2%
4	Valerii Zaluzhnyi, Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – 9%	Petro Poroshenko, former President of Ukraine – 2%
5	Serhiy Prytula, founder of Serhiy Prytula Charitable Foundation, showman – 9%	Dmytro Kuleba, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine – 2%
6	Vitaliy Kim, Head of Mykolaiv Regional State Administration – 4% and Oleksii Reznikov, Minister of Defence of Ukraine – 4%	Mykhailo Podolyak, Advisor to the Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine – 1%, Serhiy Prytula, founder of Serhiy Prytula Charitable Foundation, showman – 1%

Source: authors’ own work.



According to both polls, most citizens perceived Volodymyr Zelenskyy (President of Ukraine) “as the leading politician of 2022 and opinion leader”: 59% – Razumkov Centre, 29% – KIIS. The social media accounts of the top 3 opinion leaders for 2022–3 are selected for the research – namely accounts by Valeriy Zaluzhny, Aleksei Arestovich and Serhiy Pritula, but Serhiy Pritula’s account was chosen for this article as Pritula still continues to play an active role in Ukrainian public life, unlike V. Zaluzhny (who resigned from the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine) and O. Arestovich (who left the country). Following the example by Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and impressed by his success, Pritula started also participating actively in social and political life. Thus, in 2020, he took part in the Kyiv local government election and then in the election to the Verkhovna Rada. That is namely Serhiy Pritula being an opinion leader, social and political activist, volunteer, actor, and TV presenter founded the Serhiy Pritula Charity Foundation in 2020 that is famous by its charity in Ukraine and abroad. According to KIIS data, 10.02.2024, 61% of Ukrainian citizens trust volunteer Serhiy Pritula (<https://suspilne.media>, 2024). An analysis of Pritula’s profiles on social networks Facebook, Instagram, and Telegram reveals the following (see Table 2).

**Table 2:** An Analysis of Pritula’s Profiles on Social Networks

	<b>Facebook</b> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/serhiyprytula">https://www.facebook.com/serhiyprytula</a>	<b>Instagram</b> <b>siriy_ua</b> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/siriy_ua/">https://www.instagram.com/siriy_ua/</a>	<b>Telegram</b> <b>Serhiy Pritula</b> <a href="https://t.me/s/serhiyprytula">https://t.me/s/serhiyprytula</a>
Number of subscribers August 2023 vs, December, 11, 2023	1,400,000 vs. 1,400,000	2,000,000 vs. 2,000,000	165,312 vs. 161,582
Intensity of communication	2 publications/day	1–2 publications/day	1–2 publications/day
Language and communication style	Ukrainian, businesslike in form but informal in style	Ukrainian, more lively communication, with lots of video content	Ukrainian, lots of photos to complement textual content, lots of quantitative reporting metrics
Stakeholders	Citizens of the country, socio-political institutions of the country	Citizens of the country, socio-political institutions of the country	Citizens of the country, socio-political institutions of the country





Context	Facts about the foundation's work, supervision of the foundation's work, all-Ukrainian news related to military operations and life of the country in wartime, reports of the foundation	Facts about the foundation's work, supervision of the foundation's work, life of the country in wartime, with video content	Lots of photos to support the textual material
Interaction with stakeholders	Direct, with lots of likes, from 10–19k, lots of comments, with an average of 400–5.6k comments under each post	The number of likes from 45–90 thousand under the post, the number of comments from 600–10,000	2–4,000 likes – reactions

Source: authors' own work.

The content of the social networks of the opinion leaders, posted during wartime, helps to cater to social media users actual experiences and impressions. That is why among the selected opinion leaders at the top in wartime is Prytula, a famous showman who was officially involved in military operations through the activities of his charitable foundation, whose work is entirely focused on charity and volunteer work.

It should be emphasised that initially, Prytula was perceived as a showman and had nothing to do with military, social, and political spheres, but his active social work, since 2020, and connection with ordinary people helped him to make his mark in the socio-political life of the country, to attract people and investments in his foundation, and to become a popular volunteer and opinion leader nationwide and across popular social networks such as Facebook and Instagram.

In reputation management, building and maintaining a certain reputation takes time. Speaking about the reputation of the opinion leader, it is worth noting that it is the result of the four-year work of the foundation and the team on social media, where Prytula is constantly sharing events and results of his work with his followers and supporters. During this period, with the development of his activities, Prytula's image and reputation in social networks changed from the image of a "cheerful showman" to a more restrained, responsible personality with a pronounced civic position as "one of us." He has been very active during the wartime and has constantly demonstrated loyalty to the main goal and commitments to social goodwill. His well-directed, positive reputation suggests that he is a decent guy.





The leader works in all directions to harmoniously manage his reputation and maintain the trust among his stakeholders. Still, depending on the official or unofficial status and the type of activity, the opinion leader's concepts regarding how to develop information about social responsibility and work with publicity differ.

An analysis of Prytula's accounts shows that Prytula published 51 posts, but there was a break in publications from June 3 to June 6. The primary language of the accounts is Ukrainian, but two posts dedicated to mega-raids were duplicated in English (the results are presented in Table 3).

**Table 3: Prytula's posts on social networks**

Topics of the posts	Telegram (quantity of posts)	Facebook (quantity of posts)	Instagram (quantity of posts)
• socio-political events and current affairs opinions	8	8	0
• participation in media debates	9	0	0
• humorous posts and trolling on topics of the day	3	0	0
• work and interaction with people, participation in events (announcements and reports)	24	21	17
• reports with infographics on the purchase of goods	1	1	1
• private	0	0	0
• stories of people in the military helping on the front lines	6	3	2
Total	51	33	20

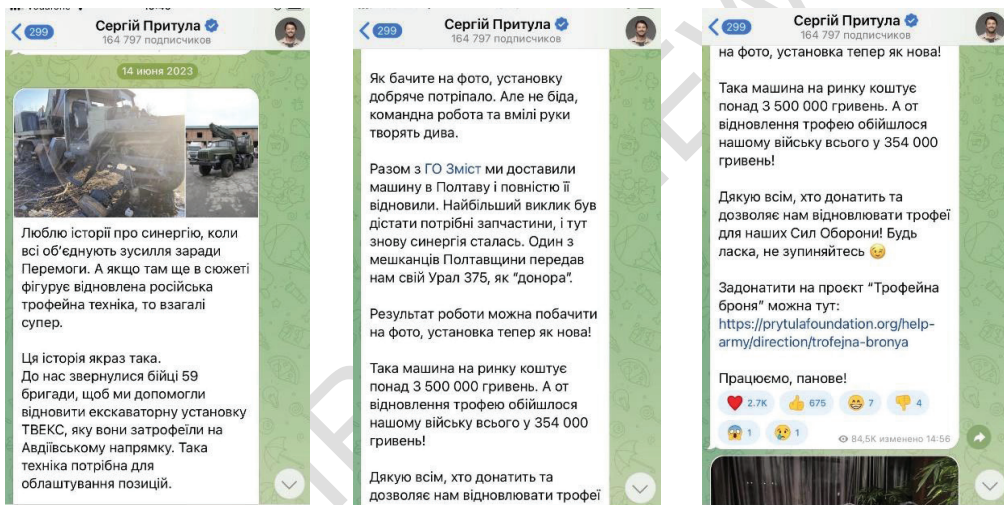
Source: authors' own work.

Most of Prytula's posts speak about the activities of the foundation; among the personal topics one can note posts about the volunteer movement in Ukraine and Prytula's work in this field, information about the beginning of fund-raising campaigns for the purchase for certain AFU needs and reports about it. Also, among the original posts, sometimes the theme of individual stories of war heroes is broached, and the opinions of ordinary people about everyday life in wartime and their work for the good of the country, with whom Prytula's Foundation communicates and co-operates, are mentioned.

For example, in Telegram, the post from 14.06.2023 with the story "about synergy, when everyone joins forces for the sake of victory," about the restoration of trophy equipment for AFU, gained more than 3,000 "super likes" (Red Heart). The text content conveys optimism (Pics 1-4) and aims to maintain a positive attitude among the audience, highlighting the potential benefits of expensive Russian equipment with minor repairs for AFU. On



Facebook, this post received positive feedback from over 5,000 followers (Pic 1). Statements such as “all unite for Victory... We have been approached by members of the brigade” speak of a common struggle. The military emphasises the cohesion and solidarity of the foundation with all citizens of the country who experience the war together. There are also slang words that link members of the foundation with the military. Striving towards a common goal strengthens the social bonds between people, affecting the current military situation. Collecting humanitarian aid involves the co-feeling and cooperation of citizens engaged in the war effort. Such a post demonstrates the organization’s co-participation and humanity, helps to manage the general public’s impression, thus strengthening the reputation of the organisation and its leader.



**Pics 1–4:** Prytula’s Posts about the Restoration of Russian Trophy Equipment (Telegram, Facebook)



The post was written in Ukrainian. English translation:

I love stories about synergy when everyone joins forces for the sake of Victory. And if the story also involves restored Russian trophy vehicles, it's even better.

This story is just like that.

The 59th Brigade approached us to help them restore a TVEX excavator they had captured in the Avdiivka sector. They need this equipment to establish their positions.

As you can see in the photo, the machine was badly damaged. But never mind, teamwork and skilled hands work wonders.

Together with the NGO Sklyad ([https://t.me/pl\\_zmist](https://t.me/pl_zmist)), we delivered the vehicle to Poltava and fully restored it. The biggest challenge was getting the necessary spare parts, and here again, synergy was at work. One Poltava resident "donated" us his Ural 375.

The result of the work can be seen in the photo, and now it's as good as new!

This machine would cost more than UAH 3,500,000 on the market. But the restoration of the trophy only cost our troops 354,000 UAH!

Thank you to everyone who donates and helps us restore trophies for our Defence Forces! Please keep it up 😊.

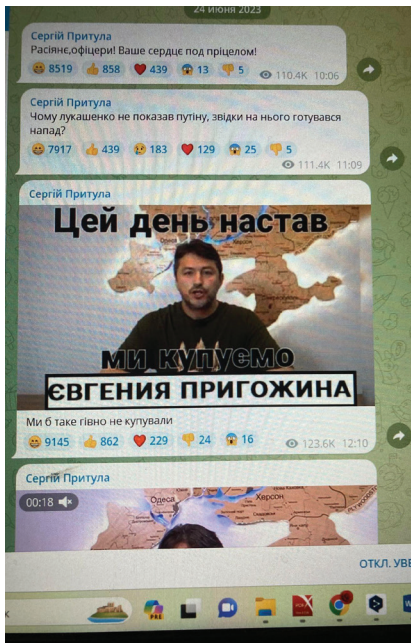
You can donate to the Trophy Armour project here:

<https://prytulafoundation.org/help-army/direction/trofejna-bronya>

Let's work, gentlemen!

The trolling technique is also used in Prytula's accounts. So in a post from 24.06.2023, when Prigozhin and his employees went to Moscow in Russia, the first post distorts the text of a famous Russian patriotic modern song into "Rasiyane, officers! Your heart is in the crosshairs!" and broke a record for this period of more than 9,000 "likes" (Pic 5). This post mocks the Russian propaganda of pride in the Russian military, which protects the country with their service, like the military of the Tsar's army, the nobility.





**Fig 5:** Prytula's Posts about Prigozhin's March with the Soldiers to Moscow (Telegram)

Post №1, English translation: Russians, officers! Your heart is in the crosshairs!

Post №2, English translation: Why didn't Lukashenko show Putin where the attack on him was coming from?

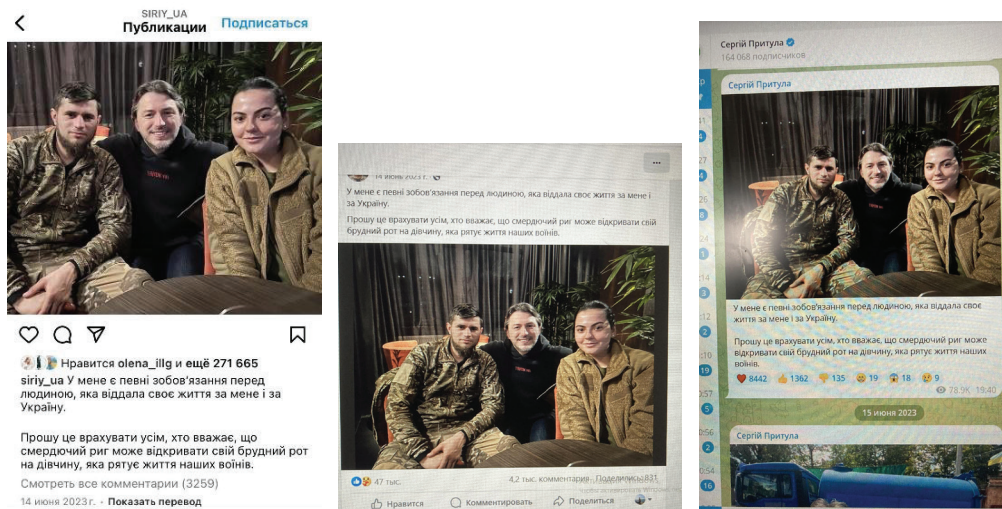
Post №3, English translation: We wouldn't buy such shit.

The smiling face emoticon mainly expresses the audience's reaction. The next post – trolling on the “evil of the day” on the same topic: “Why didn't lukashenko show putin where the attack on him was coming from?” received more than 8,000 likes or smiling faces. Surnames are written in lowercase letters. And the third post on the same topic – trolling that “we wouldn't buy such sh...” (about Prigozhin) got almost 10,000 likes or smiling faces. All these posts carry the same meaning – mocking the fact that, domestically, top managers are ready to oppose the country's leadership, who run special military units. Note the highly informal lexis like “shit” and punctuation signs – two question marks and five exclamation marks in five sentences. These two posts mock the Russian media narrative.

There is a post from 14.06.2023 with a photo of the AFU militaries and the caption, “I have specific duties to the person who gave her life for me and Ukraine” (about female soldier) (Pics. 6–8).







**Pics. 6–8:** Prytula’s Post for Support of Female Soldier (Instagram, Facebook, Telegram)

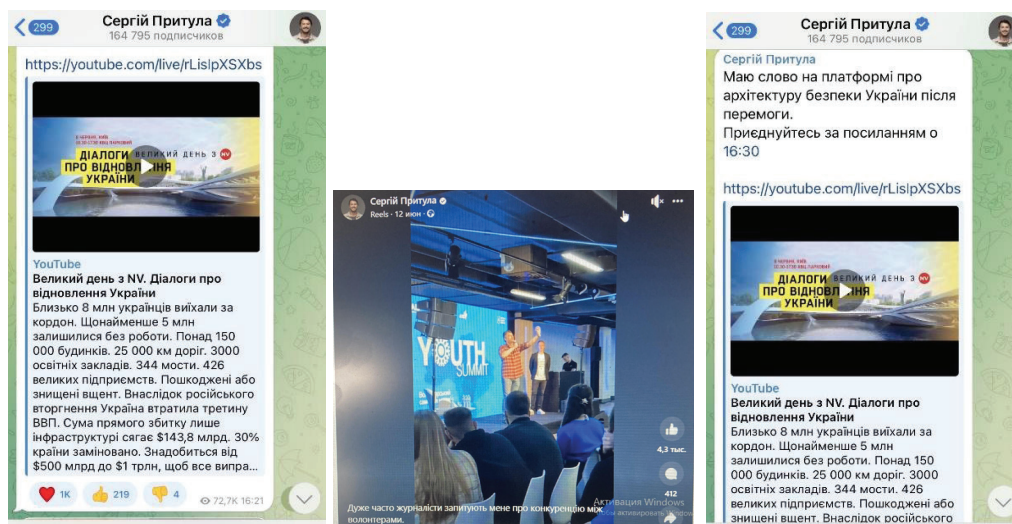
English translation: I have certain obligations to the man who gave his life for me and Ukraine.

I ask everyone who thinks that a stinking snout can open its filthy mouth on a girl who is saving the lives of our soldiers to take this into account.

This post attracted the maximum number of “likes” and red hearts – about 10,000 (6,7% of the total number of followers). The same Facebook post received the maximum number of “likes” for the study period – 47,000 (about 3,4%) and more than 271,000 (13,55%) on Instagram according to the number of Prytula followers. The text demonstrates pride, gratitude, and admiration for the woman who puts work for the public good above personal matters in wartime. Such posts emphasise the opinions and actions of Prytula as a conscious, responsible citizen who now lives for society and the country more than for himself, and who will take what is happening as his pain and problem (Pics 9–11). Such posts clearly indicate the leader’s social identity as a responsible citizen. They influence his audience’s perception, building trust among his readers as a practical component of reputation building.

The fewest “super likes” or red hearts (around 1,000) went to the 8.06.2023 video “Dialogues on the restoration of Ukraine” with the editorial staff of Media NV (New Voice) in Telegram (Pics 9 and 10):



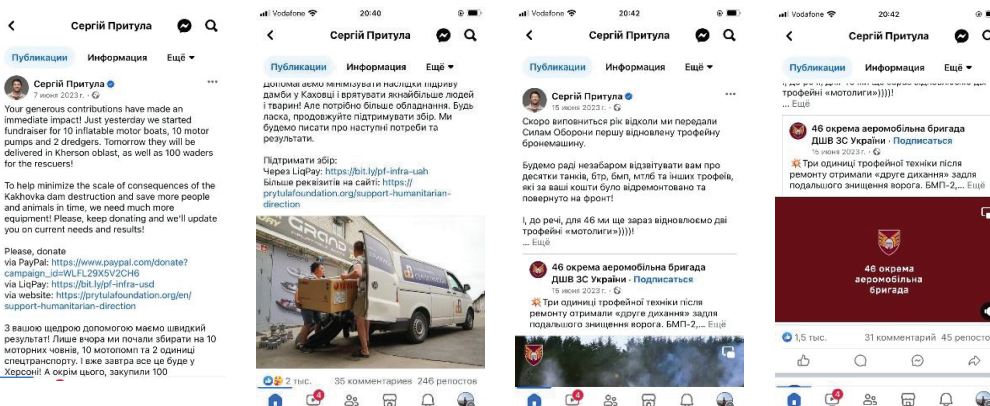


**Pics 9–11:** Prytula’s Post for Media NV “Dialogues on the restoration of Ukraine” (Telegram)

It should be noted that not all posts are duplicated on his Facebook account; there is no trolling, and in this network, a more official style of communication is used: Prytula’s opinion on military events and information about the work of the foundation. In the background of Prytula’s profile on the Facebook account features the motto “Undeclared when united.” Such a message reflects the identity of an opinion leader, emphasizing his active social role, and his constant humanitarian work for his country. It also demonstrates the sharing of collective memory and trauma caused by the war.

Additionally, one can see similar reels at an event where journalists questioned Prytula, with more than 4,000 “likes.” There were 32 publications on his Facebook account during this period. The fewest “likes” (2,000) were given to a post from 7.06.2023 with a photo in English about gratitude and the purchase of equipment for the Kherson region due to the disaster at the Kakhovka water reservoir, as well as to a post from 15.06.2023 about the restoration of trophy equipment (1,500 “likes”) (Pic 13). A small number of “likes” might reflect fatigue with monotonous, daily work and indicate that emotional instability is natural in wartime (Pics 12–15). Traditionally, defenders are rescuers, so the post about helping people affected by aggressors again emphasises the actor’s active social position, co-participation in the tragedy, and constant readiness to provide humanitarian aid.





**Pics 12–15:** Examples of Prytula’s Posts concerning the Disaster at the Kakhovka Reservoir (Facebook)

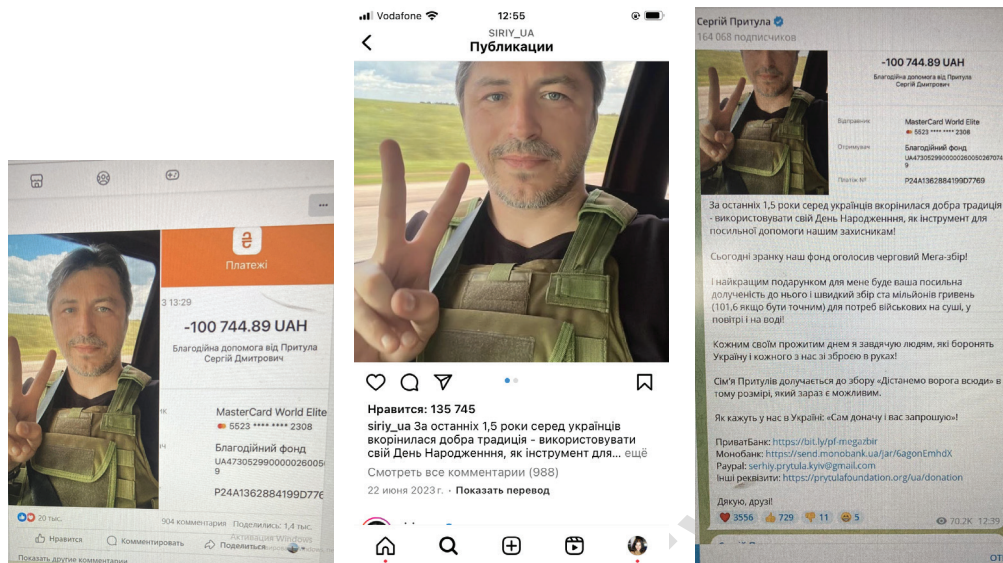
Prytula’s account on Instagram has the highest number of followers but the least number of posts during the selected period, which may indicate that Prytula’s reputation managers are less interested in this channel. A post from 22.06.2023 is examined below:

English translation: “Over the past 1.5 years, a good tradition has taken root among Ukrainians – to use their birthday as a tool to help our defenders as much as possible! This morning, our foundation announced another mega-collection! And the best gift for me will be your involvement and quick collection.”

This post got over 20,000 “likes,” more than 900 comments on Facebook, more than 135,000 “likes” on Instagram, and about 4,000 “likes-red hearts” (Pics 16–18). This post shows the opinion leader’s worldview of prioritising public interests over personal ones. The post emphasises the service to people and the country as a natural, necessary social act. It is mentioned that the leader feels his own Ukrainian identity and, under wartime laws, acts in the name of common, rather than personal interests.







**Pics 16–18:** Mega-collection for Prytula’s Birthday (Facebook, Instagram, Telegram)

This point of view is illustrated by a successful example of a man who, when communicating with his audience, finds relevant topics and acts in a way that immediately elicits a positive emotional response from his followers.

### 3. Conclusion

One could conclude that the style and details of communication and the content of posts depend on the areas in which opinion leaders and their reputation-building teams work. However, in wartime, not all leaders touch on humorous topics and use the technique of trolling. Not all of them consider it necessary or safe to write about anything “personal,” which would be interesting for the general public and represent the leader more comprehensively.

One of the most essential communication channels for Prytula and the work of the foundation is represented by his Instagram-account with the informal nickname @siriy\_ua, that has a record number of subscribers – more than 2 million. Much information from this account is also duplicated on his Facebook account. This account features the fewest posts for the research period, but it has the most significant coverage and the maximum number of ‘likes.’

It can be assumed that the lesser popularity of certain posts can be explained by the audience’s emotional overstimulation, fatigue, or more



important topics on the agenda prevailing at that time. It should be noted that even though Prytula's Instagram account has the most subscribers and feedback in the form of likes, the account is not actively maintained and does not contain diverse information about the leaders of the fund, while the accounts in Telegram and Facebook are more actively updated. On Facebook, even feedback on comments, as many as 900, is given promptly. Posting on social media helps to get feedback and engage the audience more actively in discussing positive and negative comments.

Based on the data of the content analysis, we argue that Prytula's communicative strategy of interaction with his target audience can be defined as co-participation, co-feeling, co-action, and co-experience, all of which create the image of a responsible leader for those civilians fighting in the rear. Much information about the foundation and more attention to Facebook and Telegram channels say more about social responsibility and the desire to change the role of "normal guy" to "one of us," building clearer boundaries with the audience but without fraternity. The constant informational coverage of the foundation's and Prytula's work helps to engage the audience in co-action and co-experience. So, impressions management and feeling of common identity can be distinguished as factors of reputation management.

The analysis reveals that the opinion leader emphasises values and cultural dominants when working with the audience. Prytula's posts feature his own private topics: he tends to write about the foundation's work more. He also concentrates more on voluntary work with the military in war zones. Thus, in circumstances of war, social movement and social cohesion fixed in collective memory are factors regarding effective reputation building.

It should also be noted that Prytula's accounts are about building the image of a "decent guy" who works for the community and runs social projects for the benefit of society. It is important to note how the opinion leader discusses popular topics, the so-called "evil of the day": Prytula trolls or switches the audience's attention to the work of his foundation.

Concerning the volume of information, Prytula provides more information about his work for the community, focuses on working to win, and pays little attention to gossip and news that distracts from the main affairs. Demonstration of personal qualities such as a sense of duty, selflessness, responsiveness, openness, and honesty helps form a trusting relationship with the general public. Actions towards the common goal unite, give support, and reinforce a sense of security, create a sense of co-belonging and co-creation. Concerning the communicative strategy of the opinion leader, one can state that Prytula's posts promote the ideas of public good and volunteering in



Ukrainian society. He moderates public ideas without negativity, focusing on the main idea: victory.

One can speak about main communication strategies, such as verbal, based on written communication. One might also mention empathy, the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, which holds a pivotal role as a communication tactic, as well as the strategy of clarity and simplicity, which prioritises clear and straightforward language that gives posts a logical structure.

One can mention honest and open-minded views on common social problems, an active civil engagement, constant work, and dedication to the common goals, focusing on the expected outcomes as the main constructs of successful reputation building in wartime. Thus, the leading factors of reputation building depend on the social situation and key topical issues. The dynamics are also evident as a component of effective reputation.

One can stress that the clear communication strategy used in Prytula's accounts is based on long-term reputation planning. It takes into account social, political and cultural sensitivities in order to showcase them and emphasise the leader's value in co-participation and co-creating with the general public to build trust and promote the leader's positive reputation. Thus, the public's trust is the basis of reputation. It is now formed on constant actions and dedication to the common goals that define the leader's and his team's social positioning. Characteristic components of reputation building are based on traditional values in society, the peculiarities of activities for society in wartime, and choosing "personal" topics that demonstrate the "openness" of the leader to the public. If the opinion leader is unofficial, he can use slang, jargon, and foul language to emphasise the depth of the experience and play the role of "normal guy" for his target audience, sharing similar values with his audience.

Several elements influence the promotion of a public image, including the values and cultural traits of the target audience, the longevity of the reputation, the lexical coloring of the image, and the orientation towards social values. The picture of Ukrainian society in wartime, built by opinion leaders on social networks, shows a changing society where volunteering is a positive trend. On the negative side, there is resentment – a desire to take revenge and blame other people for problems – which contributes to justifying Russia's military aggression.

Thus, by sharing posts that reflect their social behaviour, including thoughts, facts, impressions, and emotions related to wartime, opinion leaders enhance the audience's worldview. Opinion leaders, who are heroes of our time, contribute to the strengthening of Ukrainian society during times



of war. The shift in the audience's orientation from external to emotionally internal values allows us to talk about the cardinal change in cultural, social, and political aspects of Ukrainian society.

However, it should be noted that it can be challenging for individuals and society to relinquish their interests, ambitions, and directions on a regular basis. This is because it demands significant resources, rewards, and improved living conditions. Excessive service to society eventually causes a feeling of dissatisfaction, a desire to find someone outside one's group responsible for all failures and problems. Individual sentiments are echoed in the respective social groups, leading society to resentment.

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