

Researching Social Advertising in Ukraine: Methodological Challenges and the Potential of the Third Mission of Universities as a Response

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15421/1726156>**Tertyshnyk Oleksii**Ph.D. Student, <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-9497-1357>, oleksii.tertyshnyk@karazin.ua**Zaporozhchenko Ruslan**Ph.D., Assoc. Prof., <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7353-4933>, zaporozhchenko@karazin.ua**Boiko Dmytro**Ph.D., Assoc. Prof., <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3425-8555>, d.m.boiko@karazin.ua*V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (Kharkiv, Ukraine)*

Abstract.

Relevance. The article examines social advertising in Ukraine during wartime as a mechanism of strategic communication and collective identity construction. It describes the paradox of digitalization and algorithmization: social advertising remains visible in everyday life while becoming difficult to access for systematic academic research. The purpose of the study is to problematize the methodological limitations of social advertising analysis in Ukraine and to substantiate the potential of the third mission of HEIs as a response to these challenges. The study is a part of “The Third Mission of Ukrainian Universities in the International Context of Integration Processes Amid Wartime and Post-War Challenges” (No 0126U003613 is founded by NRFU, 2026-2028). Methodology. The theoretical framework combines approaches from public sphere theory, mediatization, social marketing, visual sociology, digital platform studies, and ANT.

Results. The main sources of the methodological paradox are identified: the absence of centralized archives, the instability of digital content, limited access to platform analytics, algorithmic filtering, hidden moderation mechanisms, short campaign cycles, and the hybrid nature of contemporary advertising formats. The cases study shows that HEIs can implement the third mission as archivists, social marketers, promoters of humanitarian values, and participants in collaborative projects.

Conclusions. The study argues for shifting the focus from measuring advertising effectiveness to analyzing the conditions of visibility and infrastructural dependence. It proposes a five-direction roadmap: developing a digital archive, establishing university laboratories, expanding international cooperation, integrating the third mission into educational programs, and shaping supportive public policy. These measures can strengthen the role of Ukrainian universities as actors of national resilience and international integration.

Keywords: sociology of advertising, social advertising, media analytics, digital platforms, algorithmic selection, visual communication, third mission of university

Дослідження соціальної реклами в Україні: методологічні виклики та потенціал третьої місії університетів як відповіді

Тертишник Олексій, Запорожченко Руслан, Бойко Дмитро*Харківський національний університет імені В.Н. Каразіна (Харків, Україна)*

Анотація.

Актуальність. Стаття досліджує соціальну рекламу в Україні в умовах війни як механізм стратегічної комунікації та конструювання колективної ідентичності. Описано парадокс цифровізації та алгоритмізації: соціальна реклама залишається помітною в повсякденності, проте важкодоступною для систематичного академічного дослідження. Мета статті – виявити ключові методологічні обмеження у вивченні соціальної реклами та обґрунтувати потенціал «третьої місії» університетів як інституційної відповіді. Дослідження виконане в межах проекту «Третя місія українських університетів у міжнародному вимірі інтеграційних процесів за умов воєнних та повоєнних викликів» (НДР №0126U003613 за фінансування НФДУ, 2026-2028). Методологія. Теоретична основа – комбінація теорії публічної сфери, медіатизації, соціального маркетингу, візуальної соціології, досліджень цифрових платформ та ANT.

Результати. Виявлено джерела методологічного парадоксу: відсутність централізованих архівів, нестабільність цифрового контенту, обмежений доступ до аналітики платформ, алгоритмічну фільтрацію, приховані механізми модерації, короткі цикли кампаній та гібридність сучасних рекламних форматів. Аналіз іноземних та українських кейсів показав, що ЗВО можуть реалізовувати третю місію як архівісти, соціальні маркетингологи, промоутери гуманітарних цінностей та учасники колаборативних проєктів.

Висновки. Обґрунтовано зміщення фокусу з вимірювання ефективності реклами на аналіз умов видимості та інфраструктурної залежності. Запропоновано дорожню карту з 5 напрямків: створення цифрового архіву, створення університетських лабораторій, розширення міжнародної кооперації, інтеграція третьої місії в освітні програми та формування державної політики. Ці заходи можуть посилити роль українських університетів як акторів національної стійкості та міжнародної інтеграції.

Ключові слова: соціологія реклами, соціальна реклама, медіааналітика, цифрові платформи, алгоритмічна селекція, візуальна комунікація, третя місія університету

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Introduction.

Social advertising in contemporary Ukraine is increasingly viewed not merely as a tool for informing the public about social risks, behavioral norms, or issues of public concern (Agarkov, 2013), but rather as a crucial element of broader communication processes: mobilization, the construction of collective identity, and the maintenance of social stability (Tymoshenko, 2006). In the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, it has effectively become integrated into the field of strategic communication, contributing to the formation of narratives of resistance, the visualization of national unity, and the strengthening of trust in state institutions. This functional multidimensionality significantly complicates its scholarly analysis, as it blurs the boundaries between social advertising, political communication, and information policy. At the same time, this very multidimensionality opens a wide field for the implementation of the "third mission" of Ukrainian universities – their active participation in addressing social problems, cultural development, and the reinforcement of civic resilience through research, archiving, and the creation of socially significant communications.

The research complexity of analyzing social advertising is further amplified by the transformations of the contemporary media environment. According to data from the Kyivstar Business Hub (Sukhorukova, 2025), Ukraine's advertising and communications market grew by approximately 30% in 2024 compared to the previous year, with digital segments demonstrating the highest dynamics. Under these conditions, social advertising operates within an environment of intense competition with commercial messages that possess substantially larger budgets, technological resources, and algorithmic advantages. For the researcher, this entails the necessity of critically examining the media visibility of social campaigns, their representativeness, and their actual audience reach. For higher education institutions in the implementation of their third mission, this simultaneously creates new challenges the need to develop novel monitoring methodologies and new opportunities – filling information gaps through their own research and archival projects.

In parallel, digital communications have become the dominant channel of interaction between citizens and institutions. According to the "Digital 2025: Ukraine" report (Balovsiak, 2025), the overall internet penetration rate in the country has reached 82.4% of the population, corresponding to over 31.5 million users, while the number of active social media users stands at approximately 21.6 million (about 56.4% of the population). These indicators demonstrate not merely a high level of digitalization but also the existence of a vast potential audience for social messages disseminated through online platforms. At the same time, they underscore the need for university initiatives aimed at the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of social advertising as an instrument

of influence on public consciousness – for it is precisely universities, with their research capacity and institutional independence, that are capable of becoming reliable archivists and critical analysts of this phenomenon.

These trends indicate that even under conditions of war and instability, the Ukrainian advertising market maintains stable momentum, and demand for advertising including social messages – remains high. Concurrently, intense competition among advertising formats, the dominance of commercial interests, and the significant expansion of digital and multimedia channels create a favorable backdrop, yet simultaneously complicate the task for social campaigns: they must compete for attention on par with commercial advertising, often without a resource base comparable to that of private brands.

However, it is precisely this high level of digitalization that engenders new methodological challenges, as the growth of social media activity and the expansion of digital channels lead to increased algorithmic selection, audience fragmentation, rapid content disappearance, and shifts in communication formats. Social campaigns, particularly in wartime, are embedded within a highly competitive media environment where their "visibility", interpretation, and impact are determined not only by creative and institutional factors but also by the architecture of digital platforms.

Thus, the analysis of social advertising amidst rapid media digitalization emerges not merely as a description of transformations in the advertising market or changes in media consumption, but primarily as a complex methodological problem. The dominance of digital platforms, the algorithmic mediation of communication, and audience fragmentation radically alter the conditions for researching social advertising, complicating questions of representativeness, media visibility, and the interpretation of impact. Under these circumstances, traditional approaches to analyzing advertising messages prove insufficient, as they fail to account for the specificity of platform logic, algorithmic distortions, and asymmetries in data access. This creates a series of epistemological contradictions and research pitfalls related to the definition of the research object, the operationalization of key concepts, and the validity of conclusions. In this regard, the purpose of this article is to problematize the methodological limitations of social advertising analysis in Ukraine and to substantiate the potential of the "third mission" of higher education institutions as an institutional response to these challenges.

Within the framework of this article, social advertising is examined not merely as an empirical object of analysis but also as a source of sociological knowledge, the conditions of whose production are substantially transformed in the context of war and digital platformization. The author adopts a (post)non-classical sociological perspective, within which social reality is not perceived as completely "given" or transparent to the researcher, and knowledge about it is considered

interpretative, contextual, and reflexively conditioned. This perspective aligns with an understanding of the third mission of higher education institutions as an activity that requires continuous reflection on one's own position, readiness for interdisciplinary dialogue, and openness to societal demands – particularly in wartime, when the researcher and the object of study exist within a shared emotional and political field. This means that the methodological difficulties of analyzing social advertising are connected not only to a lack of data or technical limitations but also to the transformation of the very status of sociological truth, the role of the research subject, and the boundaries of scholarly interpretation.

Degree of Scientific Elaboration of the Topic. Social advertising as an object of scholarly analysis possesses a robust theoretical tradition, primarily within the frameworks of public sphere theories (Habermas, 1991), mediatization (Hjarvard, 2013), social marketing (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971; Andreasen, 2002), and visual sociology (Harper, 2012; Rose, 2016). These approaches form a conceptual framework within which social advertising is understood as an instrument for shaping collective representations, social norms, and behavioral change. Certain studies focus on its role in the construction of identities and the maintenance of social stability (Couldry, 2012). At the same time, the rapid digitalization and algorithmization of communication processes have brought to the fore studies of digital platforms (Bucher, 2018; Gillespie, 2018) and infrastructural mediatization (Plantin et al., 2018), which reveal new mechanisms for the formation of media visibility.

In Ukrainian academic discourse, social advertising is examined primarily in the context of its impact on youth audiences (Tymoshenko, 2006), the prevention of negative social phenomena (Agarkov, 2013), and regional characteristics of its functioning. Selected publications address the linguo-axiological parameters of Ukrainian-language social advertising under martial law (Pavlova et al., 2024; Didenko, 2024), as well as its role in shaping national consciousness (Biletskyi & Kurii, 2024). At the international level, research is emerging that conceptualizes Ukrainian wartime advertising as a phenomenon of “civilian soft power”, operating through discourse, multimodal symbolism, and narrative memory (Kochkina et al., 2025).

Alongside this, the issue of the “third mission” of Ukrainian universities – their social role that extends beyond education and fundamental research – is increasingly becoming the subject of scholarly inquiry in the context of wartime and post-war challenges (Petroie & Shofolova, 2023; Nesterova, 2025). Researchers emphasize the necessity of strengthening the social role of universities through the activation of interaction with communities, particularly under martial law and during post-war reconstruction (Usyk, 2025). Certain works examine the third mission as a factor of institutional resilience, humanitarian cohesion, and the European

integration development of universities (Stoliaryk et al., 2024).

Despite considerable scholarly contributions, the intersection of these two problem areas – the study of social advertising and the implementation of the third mission of universities, remains largely unexplored. Systematic works that would examine universities as institutional actors capable of archiving, analyzing, and producing social advertising in wartime are absent. Methodological approaches to the study of social advertising that account for the platform logic, algorithmic distortions, and empirical fragmentation characteristic of the contemporary Ukrainian media environment have not been developed. This gap underlies the relevance of this article, which offers both a diagnosis of methodological pitfalls and an outline of the potential of universities as institutions of the third mission in overcoming these challenges.

Results.

Social Advertising as a Complex Communication Phenomenon. Within the frameworks of public sphere theories (Couldry, 2012; Habermas, 1991), social advertising is conceived as an instrument for shaping collective representations and social norms. It operates within a space where diverse social actors – the state, volunteer initiatives, international organizations, business, and the media – compete for audience attention and for the interpretation of social problems. In wartime, this competition intensifies, as social advertising transforms not merely into a mechanism of public education but also into an element of strategic communication, morale support, and the construction of values of resilience, solidarity, and responsibility. Social advertising is also part of “mediatized publicity” (Hjarvard, 2013), which implies its dependence on the logic of media formats and infrastructures; accordingly, the study of the content of social messages is impossible without analyzing how media transform public meanings and norms.

From the perspective of social marketing (Andreasen, 2002; Kotler & Zaltman, 1971), social advertising constitutes a targeted strategy for changing behavior and attitudes in socially significant domains. However, traditional models of planning and evaluating the effectiveness of social campaigns presuppose a stable media infrastructure, consistent communication cycles, and sustained access to audiences. In the Ukrainian context – with its high degree of digital fragmentation, migration processes, military risks, and frequent shifts in audience preferences – these models lose their predictability. Moreover, models of rational behavior change (Ajzen, 1991) adapt poorly to the conditions of traumatic wartime experience, where information perception is shaped by emotions, stress, and the context of threat. This necessitates the integration of emotion-oriented approaches (Damasio, 2000) and models that account for the role of social context, value frameworks, and symbolic structures in the interpretation of messages.

Contemporary social advertising is becoming increasingly visual, which renders approaches from visual sociology particularly relevant (Harper, 2012; Rose, 2016). These approaches can help explain how images do not merely illustrate issues but generate emotional, symbolic, and political effects that shape how audiences understand social challenges. In the Ukrainian context, the visual codes of war play a special role: the image of the defender, the symbolism of resilience, representations of trauma, collective resistance, and heroization. These images demand careful semiotic and discursive interpretation, as they influence audiences not only rationally but also emotionally. Methodologically, the analysis of visual social advertising is impossible without accounting for how “visual normativity” is constructed – that is, which images become acceptable, which are tabooed, and which emotions are considered permissible or legitimate for mobilizing society.

Also pertinent are studies of digital platforms (Bucher, 2018; Gillespie, 2018), which demonstrate that ranking algorithms and content recommendation systems have become key mediators of the visibility of social advertising. They determine who will see a message, how long it will remain “available”, and in what context audiences will perceive it. This yields several methodological consequences: the organic reach of social advertising is constrained by algorithms that

prioritize commercial and entertainment content; users receive personalized message streams, complicating representative sampling; “disappearing” content precludes classical data archiving; and digital platforms provide incomplete or distorted metrics, reducing the reliability of effectiveness assessments. Thus, the researcher must account for “infrastructural mediatization” (Plantin et al., 2018) – that is the dependence of social advertising on the architecture of digital platforms.

Methodological Paradox of Social Advertising. The methodological paradox of social advertising in contemporary Ukraine lies not merely in the contradiction between its mass presence in everyday media experience and the difficulty of empirical capture, but also in a deeper epistemological shift. Social advertising is simultaneously obvious to subjects of everyday perception yet problematic for sociological knowledge, as the mechanisms of its production, dissemination, and disappearance undermine classical conceptions of a stable research object, representative sampling, and the cumulativeness of knowledge. In this sense, the issue is not simply one of technical data collection difficulties but of the transformation of the very conditions of possibility for sociological analysis. This paradox arises from a series of structural, technological, and institutional factors (Table 1) that render social advertising simultaneously massive and elusive.

Table 1.
Structural and Technological Factors of the Methodological Paradox of Social Advertising in Ukraine

Factor	Description of the Phenomenon	Methodological Consequences for Research
Absence of centralized archives and institutional memory	Social campaigns are not preserved by state bodies, media groups, or agencies; most initiatives are local and volunteer-driven.	Impossibility of retrospective analysis; absence of historical samples; inability to track the evolution of themes and visual codes.
Fragility of digital content and “disappearing” formats	Stories, short videos, temporary banners, and posts exist for only a few hours or days; significant amounts of content are deleted automatically or upon campaign completion.	The researcher captures only fragments of the media flow; a substantial portion of empirical material disappears before it can be collected.
Closure of analytics and commercialization of digital data	Metrics (reach, impressions, algorithmic visibility, interaction patterns) are platform property and inaccessible to researchers.	Data are incomplete, indirect, or distorted; objective assessment of effectiveness is impossible; a “methodological blind spot” is formed.
Algorithmic content selection	Algorithms prioritize commercial and entertainment content; personalized feeds create different “media realities” for different user groups.	Social advertising has limited organic reach; it is impossible to reconstruct the actual media context; sampling is distorted.
Hidden moderation and regulation of visibility	Platforms remove or reduce the visibility of “risky” or sensitive content; they apply internal safety standards.	The researcher does not see the content that users actually saw; part of the materials is unavailable for analysis.
Spontaneity and short-term nature of social campaigns	Campaigns are created in response to wartime events (attacks, losses, victories) and disappear within days or weeks.	Social advertising appears fragmented and irregular; it is impossible to form a stable sample or identify patterns.
Anonymity and collectivity of authorship	Materials are often created by volunteers or unknown authors without clear identification.	Problems of attribution; inability to interview creators; difficulties in reconstructing the logic of message creation.
Hybridity of formats (memes, UGC, reactive content)	Social advertising transforms into memes, user-generated videos, and reactive visual messages.	Blurred boundaries between advertising and UGC; classification difficulties; impossibility of systematization according to classical models.

Source: created by author

One of the key reasons for the empirical “invisibility” of social advertising is the absence of centralized archives and institutional memory, as neither state structures, nor media groups, nor advertising agencies are obligated to preserve materials from social campaigns. Most initiatives are created locally, situationally, and on a volunteer basis, without long-term preservation; social videos disappear immediately after media placement ends, banners are removed, links cease to function, and a significant portion of campaigns exist exclusively in digital format, leaving no lasting trace in public registers. This precludes retrospective study of campaigns, comparison across periods, and the formation of a historical dynamic of visual codes, discursive frameworks, and thematic priorities.

A second factor is the fragility of digital content and its structural dependence on short-term formats. Unlike traditional media, where the researcher works with relatively stable archives (print materials, television broadcasts, official databases), digital platforms actively produce “disappearing” formats – for example, short videos, stories, and temporary posts that exist for only a few hours or days. In this case, the fragmentation of the research sample is determined not by analytical selection but by the very architecture of platforms, which systematically limits the possibility of fully capturing empirical material. Even those social advertising materials that formally could be preserved often become inaccessible due to the completion of advertising campaigns, algorithmic changes, or the absence of public archives. As a result, the researcher is confronted not merely with fragments of the media flow, which is typical of any sample, but with empirical “losses” that cannot be reconstructed or compensated for retrospectively. This creates a specific methodological problem: the boundaries of the sample are shaped not by research design but by the logic of platform temporality, which complicates the verifiability of results and the comparative analysis of social campaigns over time.

The situation is further exacerbated by the closure of analytics and the commercialization of data. Metrics such as reach, impressions, frequencies, algorithmic visibility, and interaction patterns are platform property and are accessible only to advertisers or for commercial purposes. The researcher has access neither to the actual reach of social campaigns, nor to algorithmic distribution patterns, nor to representative audience data. Consequently, the assessment of social advertising effectiveness becomes a methodological “blind spot”, where any conclusions are based on incomplete, indirect, or distorted data.

No less problematic is algorithmic selection, which determines what content users see and in what volume. Algorithms typically prioritize commercial, entertaining, and emotionally neutral content, while social advertising often has limited organic reach. At the same time, personalized feeds create a situation in which different

users “see” different fragments of the same campaign – or do not see it at all. Platforms subject content to hidden moderation, regulate its visibility, and automatically remove materials that violate their internal safety standards, making it impossible to reconstruct the media context in which a real audience would have perceived the social advertising.

An additional methodological complexity is associated with the spontaneous and short-term character of a significant portion of social campaigns in Ukraine. Volunteer and civic initiatives frequently create visual messages in response to specific wartime events, such as massive strikes on civilian infrastructure, humanitarian catastrophes, symbolically significant dates, or military successes. Examples of such practices include visual fundraising campaigns following attacks on energy infrastructure in the autumn and winter of 2022–2023, mass graphic messages on social media after the Olenivka tragedy or the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam, and waves of volunteer visual appeals timed to the anniversaries of the full-scale invasion.

Such campaigns typically exist for a few days or weeks and disappear alongside the decline of media attention to the event; they are not recorded in official advertising catalogs and do not appear in media market reports, which precludes their systematic accounting. Furthermore, the authorship of such messages is often collective or anonymous, and the mechanisms of dissemination are irregular and do not conform to classical advertising models. As a result, social advertising appears as a rhythmically unstable and episodic phenomenon, lacking the stable data arrays necessary for long-term comparative analysis.

Social Advertising in the Context of Implementing the Third Mission of Higher Education Institutions. The methodological challenges identified in the preceding sections – the empirical fragmentation of social advertising, its “disappearing” nature, and the closure of data – point not to a dead end but to an urgent need for new institutional solutions. It is here that the “third mission” of universities comes to the fore, extending beyond the classical functions of education and research to encompass the active participation of higher education institutions in addressing social problems, disseminating knowledge, and strengthening civil society (Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020). In both global and, increasingly, Ukrainian practice, invaluable experience has been accumulated that can serve as a foundation for a systematic response to these challenges.

Employing an inductive typology based on an empirical case-study strategy, the principal models of roles that universities assume in the implementation of the third mission through collaboration with the social advertising industry are examined below. Beginning with international experience, global universities have long leveraged their potential to influence society through the creation, archiving, and dissemination of socially

significant content. This experience offers several important models.

(1) The University as Archivist and Promoter of Social Memory. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro developed a robust social media presence for its special collections and university archives, demonstrating how historical materials can serve as a foundation for contemporary social communication (Lawrimore, 2023). According to the findings of this research, the use of digital tools – specifically Instagram Reels – by the Atlanta University Center Library to promote the Joseph Echols and Evelyn Gibson Lowery Collection on civil rights history registered a 334% increase in audience engagement, demonstrating the effectiveness of this approach (Reynolds, 2022). For Ukraine, this provides direct evidence that the creation of a university digital archive of wartime social advertising is not merely an academic necessity but also a socially demanded mission.

(2) The University as Social Marketer. International universities actively develop their own social campaigns to address pressing problems. Noteworthy is the initiative of the American University of Beirut, “AUBe Vaccinated”, which was aimed at promoting COVID-19 vaccination among students and staff using social marketing strategies (Bardus et al., 2023). Similar behavior-change campaigns (promoting healthy lifestyles) have been traditionally conducted at universities such as the University of Florida, which implemented “Get FRUVED” programs to promote healthy eating habits (Colby et al., 2015). This experience demonstrates that universities can function not merely as research centers but as influential communicators.

(3) The University as a Voice of Humanitarian Values. Particularly valuable are examples where universities use advertising to promote the values of tolerance and solidarity. Western Sydney University, in its “Unlimited” campaign, told the story of its graduate, lawyer Deng Adut (Western Sydney University, 2026), who journeyed from being a child soldier to a successful attorney. This case, directly relevant to Ukrainian realities, demonstrates the unique role of academic community creativity in addressing problems arising from humanitarian catastrophes.

In the context of the full-scale war, Ukrainian universities, often spontaneously, have begun to assume functions corresponding to the third mission, demonstrating impressive potential that requires systematic reflection and support.

First, this involves social advertising for fundraising and material support of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. For example, within the framework of the “Student Race” campaign, students from 44 Ukrainian universities raised over 3 million hryvnias (nearly €60,000) for anti-Shahed drones (Rubryka, 2026). This case demonstrates how the university community transforms into a powerful actor of national security, utilizing its communication networks to achieve specific defense objectives.

Second, this involves social advertising as a driver for the development of internal communication infrastructures. In December 2024, the KPI4U Image Center was established at Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute, tasked with developing and implementing information and advertising campaigns (KPI4U, 2024). This represents an important example of building the institutional capacity of the university itself as an effective communicator.

Third, this involves university participation in open cross-sectoral events dedicated to social advertising. Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University, for instance, participates in the All-Ukrainian Festival-Competition of Social Advertising “UKRAINE IS UNITED!” (Ilyin, 2014) and the International Festival of Social Advertising “Other View” (Inshyi Pohlyad, 2026). This indicates the existence of a certain tradition and foundation upon which to expand activities. Also indicative is the experience of Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design (KNUTD, 2024), whose students contributed to the creation of a social video aimed at drawing attention to the problems of educational institutions during wartime.

Fourth, this involves participation in international and national projects supporting the third mission. International initiatives such as the UNICOM project (Universities - Communities: strengthening cooperation) play an important role. This Erasmus+ project aims to strengthen the social role of Ukrainian universities through the development of their interaction with communities (Erasmus+ UA, 2024). A separate example is the research project “The Third Mission of Ukrainian Universities in the International Context of Integration Processes Amid Wartime and Post-War Challenges” (Project No 0126U003613 is founded by National Research Foundation of Ukraine, 2026-2028), implemented by the team of the Educational and Scientific Institute of Sociology and Media Communications at V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, of which this article is a part. However, all of these projects focus specifically on the “third mission”, while social advertising is either not considered at all or is not included in the list of its primary tools. Therefore, it seems promising to update this perspective through the fundamental theoretical and direct practical integration of social advertising into the arsenal of universities in the implementation of their third mission.

Conclusions.

The article has demonstrated that the study of social advertising in contemporary Ukraine requires a revision of established sociological conceptions of the object, data, and validity of knowledge. Under conditions of digital platformization and wartime, social advertising emerges not as a stable empirical mass but as a dynamic and structurally unstable phenomenon, formed at the intersection of algorithmic, institutional, and symbolic processes. The key problem is not so much limited access to data as the transformation of the conditions for their

sociological interpretation: empirical fragmentation, algorithmic selection, and the short-term nature of campaigns transform the very status of the social fact, rendering it temporary, situational, and dependent on platform infrastructure.

The methodological contribution of the article lies in substantiating a complex of strategies – the combination of qualitative methods, the actor-network perspective, and reflexive methodology – that shift the focus from “measuring effectiveness” to analyzing the conditions of visibility, infrastructural dependence, and the symbolic action of social messages. However, overcoming the described methodological pitfalls requires not only the improvement of research tools but also new institutional solutions. It is here that the third mission of Ukrainian universities can play a powerful role – their capacity to go beyond education and fundamental research, directly engaging in addressing social problems, preserving cultural memory, and strengthening civic resilience.

Based on the analysis of domestic and international experience, a road map of five key directions is proposed that would allow for the systematic integration of social advertising research into the framework of the third mission:

(1) The creation of an interuniversity digital archive of social advertising “War and Resilience”, which would serve as an open research resource for the systematization, preservation, and analysis of socially significant campaigns, partially compensating for their empirical fragmentation.

(2) The introduction of university laboratories for social advertising and strategic communications, which would perform a dual function – research monitoring of campaign effectiveness and educational engagement of students in the creation of actual social messages for state and public organizations.

(3) The development of international cooperation (within the frameworks of Erasmus+ Jean Monnet, Horizon Europe, etc.) for data exchange, methodologies for analyzing algorithmic selection, joint development of ethical protocols, and comparative studies of social advertising in different cultural and political contexts.

(4) The integration of the third mission into educational programs through specialized courses, micro-qualifications, and professional development programs for students, state administration employees, and local self-government officials, ensuring the direct transfer of knowledge from universities to society.

(5) Advocacy and expert support for state policy – utilizing universities' analytical potential to provide recommendations on the creation of a state register of social advertising, mechanisms for its preferential placement, and criteria for assessing its impact on public consciousness.

The practical significance of these proposals lies in the formation of an institutional foundation that would enable Ukrainian higher education institutions to become influential actors in national resilience and international integration. Overall, the study of social advertising in wartime opens broader perspectives for sociology, extending beyond the narrow topic of advertising communications. It allows for the comprehension of transformations in the public sphere, mechanisms of civic solidarity, and the role of digital infrastructures in the formation of collective representations. In this sense, social advertising appears not merely as an object of analysis but as an analytical window for understanding deep social changes in the digital and wartime era, while the implementation of the third mission of universities becomes a strategic tool for responding to these challenges.

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