

# Forming the Image of Telecommunications Companies in Lithuanian Online Media

This paper investigates the image of telecommunication companies, discusses theoretical aspects, and, using quantitative and qualitative content analysis, examines the image created by specific companies – “Telia”, “Tele2”, and “Bitė” – in the most popular Lithuanian online portals. This paper aims to determine the kinds of image of “Telia”, “Tele2”, and “Bitė” that are presented in Lithuanian online media in 2020. Research has shown that in online media, most articles are about “Telia”. “Tele2” has the most positive image in the media, whereas “Telia” has the most negative. It was found that there is a relation between advertising investment and the positive image of a brand. The findings can be helpful for telecommunications companies’ management and for other researchers who can continue this research.

**Keywords:** organisation image, online media, telecommunications companies.

Tyrime analizuojamas telekomunikacijos įmonių įvaizdis, aptariami teoriniai aspektai, pasitelkiant kiekybinę ir kokybinę turinio analizes, tiriami konkrečių įmonių – „Telia“, „Tele2“ ir „Bitė“ kuriami įvaizdžiai populiariausiuose lietuviškuose interneto portaluose. Šio tyrimo tikslas – nustatyti, koks „Telia“, „Tele2“ ir „Bitė“ įvaizdis buvo kuriamas Lietuvos interneto žiniasklaidoje 2020 metais. Tyrimas parodė, kad daugiausia straipsnių interneto žiniasklaidoje turi „Telia“. Pozityviausią įvaizdį kuria „Tele2“, negatyviausią – „Telia“. Nustatyta, kad yra sąsaja tarp reklamai išleidžiamų pinigų ir pozityvaus įmonės įvaizdžio pateikimo interneto portaluose. Gauti rezultatai gali būti naudingi telekomunikacijos bendrovių vadovybei ir kitiems tyrėjams, kurie gali pratęsti šį tyrimą.

**Raktiniai žodžiai:** organizacijos įvaizdis, interneto žiniasklaida, telekomunikacijos bendrovės.

## Introduction

The rapid emergence and development of information and communication technologies are among the most significant global phenomena of the last decade. Ever-changing consumer needs have led to improvements in technologies within the organizational environment as well. Organizations, in response to technological improvements and users’ needs, are investing more in their public image.

The fast development of digital technology has seriously impacted the business world, especially marketing (Agrawal and Gupta, 2023, as cited in Arindaputri and Santoso, 2023). The pursuit of a positive image has led organizations to collaborate with the media. Organizations seeking to reach as many users as possible are leveraging the media to form their public image. According to T. J. Holbrook and J. L. Kismore (2018), the formation of an organization’s image in the media is

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a relevant topic in today's society, where knowledge is easily accessible to every user. G. Mamuladze and N. Mamuladze (2023) state that circumstances related to image formation are one of the main issues in the business world. The authors define the image as a crucial requirement for a company to be successful and grow, as it is difficult to form and maintain a good reputation without it. It plays a crucial role in attracting customers and providing a competitive edge, which is why most companies invest a significant amount of money in creating a desirable image (Mamuladze and Mamuladze, 2023).

For organisations, it is crucial to be visible in public spaces, and the media's proposed instruments enable them to do so. The media is not only a source of information for the general public but also an opinion maker that can influence the image of an organization, regardless of its actions. The image of organisation in the media is becoming an increasingly relevant and publicly discussed topic in scientific and journalistic publications. According to L. Sanny et al. (2020), and M. C. Morra et al. (2021), the amount of research on organizations' image has been constantly growing; however, there is a lack of research oriented towards specific areas or organizations' image over a specific period. Most often, research papers about organizational image focus on an organization's image on employment, rather than the image as a whole. S. Dhir and A. Shukla (2019) analyzed the role of organizational image in employee engagement and performance in their research. S. Lee, T. Hameduddin, and G. R. Lee (2023) researched the relation between organizational image

and employee engagement. N. N. Thang and P. T. Trang (2024) examined the relationship between employer branding, an organization's image, reputation, and intention to apply. There are not many studies that mainly focus on telecommunications organizations and their image in online media. This type of research in Lithuania is limited; therefore, the Lithuanian market remains partially unexplored. As stated by R. Lavuri (2018), users are more likely to discuss topics that have been published in the media. Due to the large number of users and the need for a large amount of information, the number of media has increased. Therefore, organisations need to choose the media that are most acceptable and suitable for them if they want to form a favourable image of the organization in the eyes of their consumers. Therefore, it is possible to state **the research problem:** what type of image of telecommunications companies is formed through Lithuanian online media coverage?

**The object** of this paper is the image of telecommunications companies presented in the media. **This paper aims** to determine the kinds of image of telecommunications companies "Telia", "Tele2", and "Bitė" was formed in Lithuanian media in 2020. The main **tasks** of this research are:

1. Review theoretical organizational image concepts and features.
2. Analyse the importance of online media for an organization's image formation.
3. Conduct an empirical study of the image of companies "Telia", "Tele2", and "Bitė" in the Lithuanian online media.

Scientific literature analysis and synthesis methods are used for the literature review, while qualitative and quantitative content analysis methods are used in empirical research.

## Literature review

### Organisation's image

The problem of an organization's image is widely studied by representatives of various scientific fields; however, constantly changing user norms and extraneous image factors do not allow for solving this problem. The concept of image is examined from various perspectives; however, it is not possible to find a single universally acceptable definition. Some authors (Battistelli et al., 2021; Goetschalckx et al., 2019; Ramesh et al., 2019) view the image as a concept that connects with social-psychological concepts, which are the result of our perception and can be formed using communication sources. Other authors (Dyatmika and Firdaus, 2021; Pandey et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2017) associate the image with an emotion that affects a person at a particular time. According to J. M. Zhang et al. (2017), an image is a result of current emotion and an established attitude towards a specific service or product. L. Goetschalckx et al. (2019) state that the primary aspect of image formation, whether it occurs over a long period or is targeted at specific consumer groups, is memorability. The above mentioned authors also state that an image is the sum of an organisation's efforts to form, highlight, and publicize its works or actions

taken to reach consumers' memorability. F. Lievens (2017) defined an organization's image as a purposefully created and nurtured process that orients towards users' opinion forming in a specific space. The image of the organization must be dependent and constantly forming in relation to consumers. According to A. S. Temel and E. F. Sirin (2017), the image is the opinion of target groups about the organization. The organization's image depends solely on its users; if its consumers are not satisfied with the organization's actions, its image declines. Conversely, if the organization takes the correct actions, its image improves.

Another important aspect of an organization's image is its differentiation. M. Guze, N. Wcisło, and I. J. Józwiak (2022) describe the organizational image as various elements that enable the identification of the organisation. The mentioned authors also state that there are four types of organizational image: actual is the way people perceive the organisation, mirror is the way employers see the organisation, desirable is the way the organization desires to be seen by others, and optimal image is all of the above.

An organisation's external image is the result of the organization's communication, consumers' perception, and acceptance. Often, the external image is associated with the organisation's products and services, its quality, and characteristics. According to J. Migwi (2021), external image is a component of communication, advertising, the quality of products and services provided, employee communication, and part of managers' strategic decisions. F. Lievens (2017) states that continuous work with the organisation's

external image can create a positive consumer outlook towards the organization and encourage users to choose offered products and services. “A well-formed image will also have a good impact on achieving the goals set by individuals or organizations” (Fill and Dimopoulou, 1999; Suryati et al., 2023; Hasan and Suryana, 2019, as cited in Hermawan and Wardani, 2024). The authors also state that the organizations that have a positive image gain more profits. A. Hermawan and A. K. Wardani (2024) state that a positive image can increase public trust in an organisation’s ability to carry out its activities effectively. This is exactly what all organizations aim for – to form a great image so that their profitability will increase and grow. “The formation of a positive image of an organization is closely related to the perception, attitude, and opinion of the public towards the organization” (Ngo et al., 2013; Milenkovska et al., 2019, as cited in Hermawan and Wardani, 2024). On the other hand, if the organization’s image in the public is negative, then its profitability and growth cannot be increased (Hermawan and Wardani, 2024).

To summarise the concept of organizational image, there is no single, universally accepted definition. Different authors have various outlooks on this topic and define various characteristics of the organization’s image, including perception, logo, colours, communication, employees, and product quality. A great external image can create a positive customer outlook toward the company and its products, whereas a negative image can damage the reputation and sales.

### **The aspects of a telecommunications company’s image**

Often, the image of a telecommunications company is shaped by aspects that result from the company’s work and actions. Frequently, these aspects are not attributed to either internal or external image. However, in the context of the overall image of the telecommunications company, these aspects are important and can either improve or worsen the overall image. Different authors highlight different aspects of the telecommunications image. In this study, the main aspects of the company’s image are reputation, product, and users’ image.

Reputation is attributed to a user’s personal experience with a specific organization. P. Aula and S. Mantere (2020) state that reputation is a difficult object to define, and for users, it can be associated with factors of the organization that they have directly or indirectly encountered. M. Jumalik and I. Oktaviany (2024) state that reputation is what people believe based on their own or others’ experiences, and it relates to the way an organization manages its business. S. A. Al-Yazidi, J. Berri, and M. M. Hassan (2022) define an organization’s reputation as a valuable tool in today’s competitive world that is filled with information. The authors also state that companies aim to build their reputation and put a lot of effort into maintaining it. Telecommunication companies can have either a positive or a negative reputation. A good reputation is associated with transparency, clarity, quality of products and services, social responsibility, nurturing the organization’s internal resources, and financial and social resources. A bad reputation

is often associated with corruption, dishonesty towards employees and consumers, a lack of transparency, poor performance by employees or managers, and conflicts within and outside the organization. According to F. Lievens (2017), public relations and constant, moderate communication in the online space are tools that can demonstrate the quality of the work performed by the organization, thus speeding up the creation of a good image.

Another significant aspect of an organization's image is product image. J. Lee and Y. Lee (2018) state that product image is an inseparable part of the whole organization's image. It is associated with employees' efforts to nurture the product or service, making it as good as possible, and presenting it in public spaces. Partners, advertising, and sales promotion tools are utilised to enhance the brand's image. Often, these tools are oriented towards online media. An organization can damage its image not only by portraying unrealistic characteristics, but also by making incorrect decisions when launching a product on the market (Ramesh et al., 2019). Excessive market prices, non-relevant payment terms, a lack of warranty, and questionable design can damage the image of products or services through management decisions. As a result, telecommunication companies can lose clients.

*User's image.* This phenomenon is a composite result of the actions, decisions, and social environment of telecommunication companies and their users. The user's image refers to the favorability of a product or organization among potential or current buyers. Customers often identify an organization with themselves,

which is why communication with the target audience is essential. Frequently, users' identification with the organization is linked to social, demographic, geographic, and psychographic indicators (Prayoga, 2019).

In conclusion, it can be stated that telecommunication companies' image and its creation are complex phenomena that are composed of reputation, product, and user image. Organizations need to choose a long-term, purposeful, and responsible direction for image formation, along with innovative tools, to create a positive image for the telecommunication company.

### **The role of online media**

The State Data Agency (Statistics Lithuania) reports that 90.4% of households in Lithuania had internet access at home in 2024. People mainly used it for searching information, communicating with others, and using banking services. 86.5% of all persons aged 16–74 (97.4% of internet users in this age group) used the internet to search for information (Official Statistics Portal, 2024). These statistics show that online media can be a valuable tool to connect with a broad audience and shape an organization's image in people's eyes, as many people use the internet to search for information. Online media is a mass communication tool that serves as an instrument to translate an organization's message to the public, therefore shaping its image. Media in today's image-building context is inseparable from the daily activities of telecommunication companies. Organizations collaborate with various media channels

to broadcast their desired message and improve the organization's image.

T. J. Holbrook and J. L. Kisamore (2018) state that the importance of media for an organization's image depends on the organization's media expertise. According to the mentioned authors, any mention in the media is beneficial for organizations, which serves as a reminder and helps raise awareness among consumers. However, the significance of media for an organization's image should not always be understood directly. According to G. L. N. Rossiter (2018), the media can form an opinion about an organization even without asking. Journalistic investigations, market positioning, and activities associated with the organization can all attract the media's attention, whether it is negative or positive. Every organization strives to be portrayed positively by the media; therefore, it is essential to operate in a socially responsible and sustainable manner, maintaining a positive image in society (Bobrova et al., 2020). In conclusion, it can be stated that the functions of online media help shape and improve an organization's image in society.

### **The importance of online media tools for telecommunications companies' image**

The telecommunications industry is highly competitive, and a churn rate of 30% can have significant consequences (Luo et al., 2024, as cited in Gazi et al., 2024). The authors also state that brand image plays a huge role in helping customers decide whether or not to buy organization's products or services, and influencing their repurchase behaviour,

which increases consumer profitability (Wati et al., 2020). Online media have a substantial impact on shaping the telecommunications company's image. Commissioned articles, advertising, photos, mentions, tags in posts – part of the tools used by organizations to shape their image in the media. Before shaping an image in online media, it is not enough to only commission an article. According to H. A. Voorveld et al. (2018), to achieve a good image of the organization, a large number of tools need to be used for the consumer to see. Most often, these kinds of tools are websites, social network accounts, e-mail, or phone numbers. L. Sanny et al. (2020) state that it is crucial to ensure the smooth flow of information between all informational channels of the organization. Information assurance, identity, and comprehensibility encourage users' trust in the organization and, at the same time, enhance its image. That demonstrates that forming and maintaining a strong organizational image can help retain and attract new customers.

For a long time, the shaping of a telecommunications company's image in the media was focused on traditional media. According to M. C. Morra et al. (2021), a large number of users remain hesitant to trust information on social networks. Traditional media tools, such as radio, television, and newspapers, have been known to people for a long time, and thus, they can be more reliable. L. De Vries, S. Gensler, and P. S. Leeftang (2017) state that in order to reach an audience of older people, there is a need to invest in traditional media tools. The most common traditional or online media tools for image shaping are the same,

just in different spaces – commissioned articles and advertising.

- Commissioned articles are designed to present the organization, introduce its products or services, outline its history, and highlight its activities. Most often, these types of articles are related to current topics, which makes them more readable and focuses more on the content of the article. L. De Vries, S. Gensler, and P. S. Leeftang (2017) state that purely promotional articles should not mislead users, as this may damage the organization's image.
- Advertising, depending on the tool, can vary from the demonstration of a logo to large advertisements, which take up 30 seconds of airtime or all advertising space on a website. Ordering advertising is a common tool used by organizations to present themselves to society. However, M. C. Morra et al. (2021) state that in various media, there are numerous advertisements, which, as a result, cause users to tend to ignore them. Nevertheless, it is also noticeable that advertisements that are creative, original, and stand out can capture the attention of a larger percentage of users than ever before.

Social networks are often excluded from the mainstream media. However, in the media, there are many other tools to form an image of an organization. According to R. Lavuri (2018), the primary tool for shaping an organization's image in the media is search engines. Authors state that users tend to choose the websites that are displayed on the first search page. That is why the website of the organization or the promoted message

must align with the content that users are likely to search for. As an alternative, it is possible to invest in advertising in search engines, where the organization's website would be displayed at the top for a certain amount of money. This investment can help attract many users who search for information about various topics; however, the website must meet the expectations of users in order to establish a positive organizational image.

V. Pylypchuk, I. Kyrylov, and K. Korolkova (2020) state that to reach the target audience who do not actively search for products or services, it is recommended to invest in online advertising. Using this tool, it is possible to reach users who use a search engine less often, are more likely to visit a limited number of websites, or are less likely to use a search engine. According to I. Redondo and G. Aznar (2018), online advertising is a powerful tool for shaping the overall image as it reaches a large number of users. Other tools for online advertising are not as common; however, they can be varied, including online conferences, webinars, advertisements in podcasts, internet catalogs, or blogs.

V. Pylypchuk, I. Kyrylov, and K. Korolkova (2020), R. Lavuri (2018), and I. Redondo and G. Aznar (2018) see the clear advantages of online media tools over traditional media. According to the authors, online media channels and advertisements are more targeted, more convenient for the users, and more visible compared to traditional media. Online media tools are becoming an increasingly significant part of an organization's image-shaping process. In conclusion, online media tools are important for telecommunications companies'

image. In the area of telecommunications, various media tools – both traditional and online – are utilised to achieve the goals of image shaping. The online media's tools are most suited to reach the target audience, regardless of whether users are interested in the services provided by the organization or not.

## Methodology

This paper aims to analyse the image of telecommunications companies operating in Lithuania, “Telia”, “Tele2”, and “Bitė” in the online media in 2020. The object of this research is Lithuanian telecommunications companies' image and communication trends. The research was conducted from January 1st, 2020, until December 31st, 2020. Research sample – published articles in the two major online portals “Delfi” and “Lrytas” in which the telecommunications companies were mentioned. “Delfi” and “Lrytas” were chosen because they are the most popular online portals in Lithuania. According to “Gemius” data that was gathered in September 2021, the average number of daily users of “Delfi” was the largest and reached 569,560; meanwhile, “Lrytas” had 470,560 daily users (GEMIUS, 2021). In total, 565 published articles from “Delfi” and “Lrytas” about telecommunications companies “Telia”, “Tele2”, and “Bitė” were gathered. The quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods were chosen to conduct this research. According to the quantitative content analysis method, author B. Barelson, this method can be used when high accuracy is required in the analysis of unambiguous data, when there is a large amount

of data, and it is not possible to summarize and analyze this material without quantitative summation. This method allows us to distinguish articles characteristics, count frequencies, and analyze the content connection between articles.

Qualitative content analysis seeks to understand how individuals understand and explain the world, and how their created meanings determine their behaviour (Kardelis, 2005). Qualitative data in analysis – distinction and analysis of the main topics and significant messages that form the image. This study also uses a comparative analysis method that allows to analyze and determine the relationship between content analysis results and telecommunications companies' investment in communication and advertising.

The process of content analysis is strictly defined and has a clear sequence of actions. The research begins by determining the research sample size and selecting articles based on sources, period, and companies. The selection of data for the content analysis is carried out in the archives of selected portals over a selected period, ensuring that the maximum possible amount of data is collected. In the analysis, the relevant objects are selected – words, sentences, and topics. During the development stage of the evaluation system, the categories according to which articles will be evaluated are determined:

- Evaluation by type (positive, negative, neutral), by extracting significant words, sentences, and topics.

Positive articles are those in which it is clear that there is a positive evaluation, praise, and a description of the company's leadership. In those articles, there are words like “the best”, “great”, “first”,

and there are mentions of created innovations by the company, new products or services, sustainability, positive changes, positive changes in business results, new job places, help and support to combat the coronavirus pandemic. This category also includes expert articles, where companies' experts share advice, comment, and explain the results of their own research or share statistical information.

Negative publicity is the "non-compensated dissemination of negative information through a major medium (newspapers, radio broadcasts, or television) that can potentially damage a product, a service, business unit, or individual" (Sherrell et al., 1985, as cited in Tong, Feng and Liu, 2023). The negative publicity can be performance-related or value-related (Beldad et al., 2018; Dean, 2004; Hegner et al., 2018, as cited in Tong, Feng and Liu, 2023). Authors state that performance-related negative publicity occurs when the information is related to the organization's functional aspects, like product or service quality. In comparison, value-related negative publicity contains information regarding an organization's values, practices, social or ethical issues (Xie and Peng, 2010, as cited in Tong, Feng and Liu, 2023). Negative articles reflect a negative rating of a company; in those articles, words like "failed", "are behind", and other words are used that reflect negative opinions. These articles discuss connection problems, rising prices, conflicts, safety gaps, and companies' errors, such as sending invoices to a deceased person. This category of negative "Telia" articles includes all publications that discuss the 2020 advertisement for the "Telia" brand "Ežys", featuring basketball players brothers Darjušas

and Kšyštofas Lavrinovičius, which was halted due to criticism received by "Telia". Additionally, the publications related to "Telia" aim to interface and delay "Mezon" sale transactions from "Telecentras" to "Bitė", although "Telia" was not involved in the sale. Negative articles about "Bitė" include all publications that mention a legal dispute between "Bitė" and "CPO LT" over services for the "Ignitis grupė" company.

Neutral articles are the ones that present news or information; however, neither in the title of the article nor in its content is there a reflection of rating or opinion about the company or its actions.

- Publication genre – informational articles are those where news or information is presented, without any commentary or ratings.

The media content coding stage involves categorising content into a system. The data analysis stage involves processing the data mechanically, performing mathematical calculations, and counting the frequency of categories. The interpretation of data will enable the revelation of Lithuania's telecommunications companies – "Telia", "Tele2", and "Bitė Lietuva" – in online portals in 2020 and determine whether there is any connection between the analysis results and the telecommunications companies' advertising investments.

## Results

Out of 565 articles published in online portals "Delfi" and "Lrytas" about Lithuania's telecommunication companies "Telia", "Tele2", "Bitė", it was found that

“Telia” was mentioned in 230 articles, “Tele2” in 213, and “Bitė” in 122. The most mentioned company was “Telia”, while the least mentioned was “Bitė”.

Out of 301 articles in “Delfi”, “Telia” was mentioned in 126 of them, “Tele2” – 115, “Bitė” – 60. While out of 264 articles in “Lrytas”, “Telia” was mentioned in 104 of them, “Tele2” – 98, “Bitė” – 62. Evaluating the number of articles distributed by the online portals, it is noticeable that there were the most articles about “Telia” and “Tele2” in “Delfi”, whereas the majority of articles about “Bitė” were found in “Lrytas”. Results showed that “Delfi” and “Lrytas” mostly published articles about “Telia”.

The published articles on “Delfi” and “Lrytas” portals are categorized by the attitudes towards the company: positive, negative, and neutral (*see* Figure 1).

Most of the positive articles in the mentioned portals were about “Tele2” – 178, whereas “Bitė” had the least amount – 93. The majority of negative articles were about “Telia” – 51, whereas “Tele2” had

the least, 12. From all the articles that talk about “Telia”, almost a quarter of them were negative, thus it can be stated that there was created a negative image of the company spreading in the media, which was caused mainly by advertising by “Ežys” with brothers Darjušas and Kšyštofas Lavrinovičius, as well as a legal conflict for the “Mezon” sale deal with “Bitė”.

The articles about companies were divided into groups by publication genre. Out of 568 articles, there were 187 informative ones. The majority of informative articles were found about “Telia” – 98, whereas “Tele2” had 57 and “Bitė” – 32.

In conclusion, it was found that there were the most articles about “Telia”, whereas about “Bitė” there were the fewest publications. “Telia” and “Tele2” were most often seen in “Delfi”, “Bitė” in “Lrytas”. The most positive articles were published about “Tele2”, the least amount about “Bitė”. The most often negative articles were written about “Telia”, whereas the least were about “Tele2”. The large

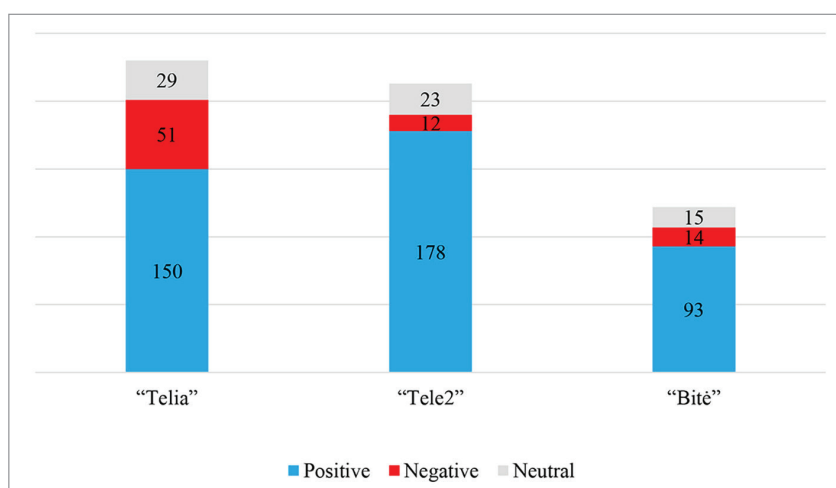


Fig. 1. Number of articles about selected telecommunications companies on online portals by their type

number of negative articles about “Telia” could be due to the mentioned “Ežys” advertisement and legal conflict with “Bitė”. The high amount of positive and low amount of negative articles about “Tele2” could be due to the fact that the company has communicated extensively about the innovations development, new products and services, sustainability, positive change in business results, care for employees, declining service prices, and help and support to combat the coronavirus pandemic. It can be stated that the most positive image in the media among the mentioned telecommunications companies is “Tele2”.

### Comparison of the research results with the amount of advertising by telecommunications companies

Continuous work with the organization’s external image can create a positive consumer attitude towards the organization and create a noticeable competitive advantage over other companies.

An organization can do this by investing in specific areas, such as advertising. Consumers tend to discuss and share advertisements of well-known and valued telecommunications companies, such as “Telia”, “Tele2”, and “Bitė”, thus promoting the positive image of the organizations even more. According to international market and media research company “Kantar” data in 2020, the third largest advertisers in Lithuania were telecommunications companies: the third largest advertiser was “Tele2”, eighth – “Telia”, thirteenth – “Bitė”.

While analysing the relation between telecommunications companies’ advertising amount and their positive image in the media, it was found that there is a relation between companies’ investments and their positive image. The advertising investments of “Telia”, “Tele2”, and “Bitė” are reflected in the distribution of companies according to the number of positive articles on the “Delfi” and “Lrytas” portals (see Figure 2).

The largest advertiser in the telecommunications segment in Lithuania,

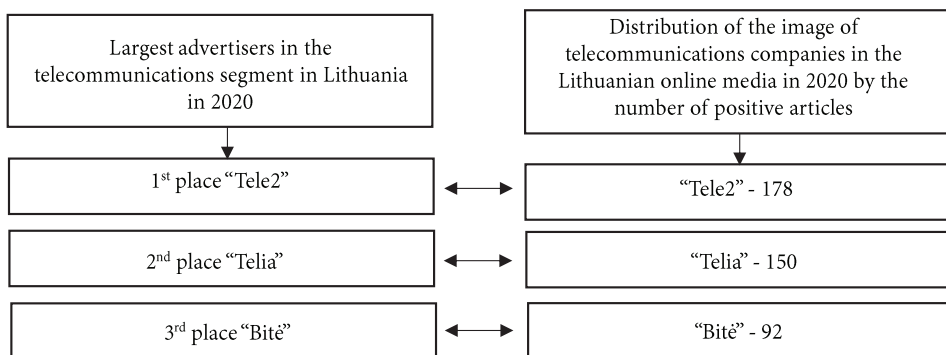


Fig. 2. The relation between telecommunications companies’ advertising and their positive image in the media

Source: compiled by the author.

“Tele2”, has the most positive image in online media. Compared with “Telia” and “Bitė”, there were 178 published positive articles about “Tele2”. There were fewer positive articles about the second largest advertiser, “Telia” – 150. The least amount of positive articles was published about “Bitė” – 92, which has the lowest advertising investment in the telecommunications segment in Lithuania.

## Conclusions

The literature analysis suggests that there is no single, universally accepted, and applicable definition of organizational image. The definition of an organization’s image is an inconsistent and evolving phenomenon related to technological and social progress, as well as society’s perception of the organization. It is agreed that the organization’s image is a crucial factor in achieving its goals.

Online media and its tools have a significant impact on an organization’s image. The media helps to spread information to consumers. Telecommunications companies, which aim to improve their image in society, utilise various online media tools, including promotional articles, sponsorships, and online advertising. It is important to choose a suitable online media and information channel for the organization. However, there is false or misleading information in the media, which harms both the media itself and the organizations mentioned.

While analysing the image of telecommunications companies operating

in Lithuania – “Telia”, “Tele2”, and “Bitė” in the media in 2020, it was found that the most often seen company was “Telia”, whereas the rarest was “Bitė”. “Tele2” had the most positive image in the media and had the highest number of positive and the lowest number of negative articles. In 2020, this company frequently communicated about innovations, products, services, sustainability, job openings, employees, pricing, assistance, and aid related to the coronavirus. Whereas “Telia” had the most negative image in online media due to “Ežys” commercial featuring basketball players Darjušas and Kšyštofas Lavrinovičius, and a legal conflict with “Bitė”. It was found that there is a relation between telecommunications companies’ advertising investments and a positive image in online media.

In conclusion, the findings reveal the image of telecommunication companies operating in Lithuania, “Telia”, “Tele2”, and “Bitė”, as formed in online media in 2020. The results can be useful for telecommunication companies’ management, which aims to improve the formation of the company image and its presentation in the online space. This study can also be helpful for other researchers, who can use the results to extend or renew the study in the following year.

Future researchers could use these findings as a background for their research in the telecommunications industry, mapping and deepening the analysis into single-company case studies. Moreover, further annual analyses of companies’ images formed in the online media could be provided.

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## TELEKOMUNIKACIJOS ĮMONIŲ ĮVAIZDŽIO FORMAVIMAS LIETUVOS INTERNETO ŽINIASKLAIDOJE

### S a n t r a u k a

Straipsnyje analizuojamas telekomunikacijų bendrovių įvaizdžio pateikimas Lietuvos interneto žiniasklaidoje. Pastaruoju metu tokio tipo tyrimų, kuriuose būtų nagrinėjamas konkrečių įmonių įvaizdis tam tikru laikotarpiu, nėra daug. Dažniausiai tokiuose darbuose susitelkiama į organizacijos kaip darbdavio įvaizdžio formavimą, jo įtaką darbuotojams, o ne bendrą reiškinį, ypač Lietuvos telekomunikacijos srityje. Tai rodo šios temos aktualumą. Šio darbo tikslas – nustatyti, koks „Telia“, „Tele2“ ir „Bitė“ įvaizdis buvo kuriamas Lietuvos interneto žiniasklaidoje 2020 metais. Pirmoje straipsnio dalyje pateikiama mokslinė literatūros analizė: analizuojamas organizacijos įvaizdžio supratimas, aptariamoms skirtingų autorių nuomonės, išskiriami konkretūs telekomunikacijos įmonių įvaizdžio aspektai – reputacija, produktas ir vartotojas. Taip pat analizuojamas skaitmeninės medijos vaidmuo tokių įmonių įvaizdžio formavimui. Nustatyta, kad nėra universalus organizacijos įvaizdžio apibrėžimo, nes skirtingi autoriai šią sampratą aiškina savaip, tačiau visi sutinka, kad tai yra svarbus veiksnys, norint pasiekti įmonės tikslų. Išsiaiškinta, kad skaitmeninė žiniasklaida ir jos įrankiai daro įtaką įvaizdžio kūrimui internete, todėl pasitelkusios tinkamus sprendimus įmonės gali pagerinti arba pabloginti savo reputaciją skaitmeninėje erdvėje. Antroje dalyje pristatomas empirinis tyrimas – analizuojamas konkrečių Lietuvos telekomunikacijos bendrovių „Telia“, „Tele2“ ir „Bitė“ įvaizdis interneto žiniasklaidoje 2020 m. Pasirinkta ištirti šių įmonių formuojamą įvaizdį „Delfi“ ir „Lrytas“ publikuojamuose straipsniuose. Tyrimui atlikti pasitelkti kokybiniai ir

kiekybiniai metodai, kurie padėjo ne tik ištirti publikacijų skaičių, bet ir nustatyti jų tematiką. Išskirti trys tipai straipsnių: pozityvūs, neutralūs ir negatyvūs. Pagal juos buvo nagrinėjama, koks konkretus įvaizdis formuojamas žiniasklaidoje. Nustatyta, kad dažniausiai matoma bendrovė buvo „Telia“, o rečiausiai – „Bitė“. Pozityviausią įvaizdį interneto žiniasklaidoje turėjo bendrovė „Tele2“ – apie ją buvo publikuota daugiausia teigiamo pobūdžio straipsnių ir mažiausiai – neigiamų. Tokį rezultatą lėmė įmonės pastangos nuolat komunikuoti apie teigiamus dalykus – inovacijų kūrimą, naujus produktus ir paslaugas, pozityvius pokyčius ir rūpinimąsi darbuotojais. Neigiamiausią įvaizdį turėjo įmonė „Telia“. Tokio įvaizdžio susiformavimo priežastys gali būti aiškinamos jos konfliktu su kita įmone ir reklamos sprendimais, kurie sukėlė visuomenės nepasitenkinimą. Analizuojant ryšį tarp telekomunikacijos bendrovių investicijų į reklamą ir teigiamo bendrovių įvaizdžio interneto žiniasklaidoje, galima teigti, kad įmonių investicijos į reklamą tiesiogiai susijusios su teigiamu bendrovių įvaizdžiu interneto žiniasklaidoje. Nustatyta, kad daugiausia pinigų reklamai išleidusi įmonė pasižymėjo teigiamiausiu įvaizdžiu. Atliktas tyrimas gali būti naudingas telekomunikacijų vadybininkams, kurie siekia gerinti įmonės įvaizdį, ir kitiems tyrėjams, kurie atlieka panašios tematikos tyrimus. Pastarieji gali panaudoti šiame tyrime gautus rezultatus platesniems telekomunikacijos industrijos tyrimams ar metinėms analizėms, kuriuose būtų aiškinamasi įmonių įvaizdžio formavimo tendencijos pagal metus.

