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Section A



ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT IN MACEDONIAN AND TURKISH FOOTBALL CLUBS IN SEASON 22/23

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Abstract

Public relations essentially represent one of the most effective ways to communicate and promote sports clubs. Two-way communication is a key element of well-organized and orderly public relations. With the emergence of social networks, due to the opportunities they offer, public relations represent an important link in the successful management of every sports club. The main goal of the research is to present the current state of public relations management on social networks among football clubs from the First Macedonian League and football clubs from the First Turkish Super League, as well as to make a comparison between the two leagues. In order for the data source to be objective, we applied the following research methods: observation method, analysis method, comparative analysis and synthesis method. After analyzing all segments that indicate the level of success of public relations management through social media, we can conclude that football clubs from the First Macedonian football league do not work enough on public relations and are far less successful compared to football clubs from the First Turkish Super League who recognized the importance of successfully managing public relations through social media for their club.

Keywords: Macedonian Football League, Super Turkish Football League, PR, Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok.

INTRODUCTION

The trend of using social platforms has not bypassed sports clubs either. They allowed clubs to have two-way communication with their fans, which was not so developed before their appearance. In this way the clubs got the opportunity to hear the wishes of the fans or the suggestions they have regarding the club. Most clubs, international and domestic, are active

through various social platforms where they have their official profiles. Football is one of the most popular sports around the world, so football clubs have their fans in different countries, not only in the countries they come from. Social platforms have proven to be an excellent medium that will satisfy the needs of fans and enable better work and functioning of the club's public relations. With the advent of the Internet, clubs are trying to create and develop their own club media, whereby traditional media may be excluded from the communication process in the future. The reason for such a change in the introduction of new media as part of the club can be sought in the enabling of direct communication with fans offered by new social media such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok and others. Hussain (2015) assesses the impact of social media communication tools within the sporting industry. The study indicates that while social media is used as a communication tool, other platforms should be included in sports organizations' communication strategies. Social media has revolutionized the way sport organizations communicate with their fans, offering new methods for engagement and fan interaction. (Filo et al. 2015) If the club's public relations department makes an effort to inform the external and internal public about the latest events and, in addition, to cultivate the reputation and build a positive image for the club, it will result in a larger number of followers and much more attention and then it can attract new fans and sponsors and thus meet its budget. Sports PR communication offers the football organization the opportunity to show the general public why it is different from others.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The digital world has changed communication within organizations and between organizations and their target groups (Cutlip, M. S., Center, H. A., Broom, M. G. 2003, 25). Public relations (PR) in sport has undergone a significant transformation with the rise of social media, changing the way sports organizations, athletes, and fans interact. Social media now plays a crucial role in shaping the image and reputation of teams, athletes, and events, offering new opportunities for engagement, brand building, and crisis management. Unlike traditional PR methods such as press releases and media interviews, social media provides a more direct, personal, and immediate way to communicate with audiences across the globe. PR in sport aims to maintain positive media coverage, build brand awareness, and increase fan engagement, while also handling public issues or crises. Social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and TikTok enable sports organizations and athletes to communicate directly with their followers, bypassing traditional media outlets. This direct engagement fosters a deeper connection with fans and helps build a loyal community around a team or athlete. Social media has become a primary communication channel between sports organizations and their fans, providing opportunities for direct interaction, content sharing, and real-time engagement” (Kim & James, 2016, p. 350). **Pedersen (2016)** focuses on the significance of social media in the globalization of sports, stating social media enables sports organizations to reach global audiences, allowing them to expand their presence and influence into new markets. This perspective highlights the global dimension of social media in sports marketing and PR. One of the most significant benefits of social media in sports PR is fan engagement. Through social media, clubs and athletes can share behind-the-scenes content, match updates, personal stories, and interactive posts, leading to greater fan loyalty and engagement. In addition to fan interaction, social media serves as a powerful tool for personal branding, where athletes can share content that promotes their careers, values, and sponsorships, which in turn attracts new endorsement deals and career opportunities. Likewise, sports organizations can use social media

to promote their image, values, and community involvement. Houshmand Sarkhoosh et al. (2023) examine the role of social media in professional sports, stating that "social media has become an integral part of our lives, serving as a significant hub for individuals and businesses to share information, communicate, and engage." They emphasize the importance of understanding user demographics and preferences to effectively utilize AI-based tools for content generation and enhancing user experiences on social media platforms. Arora et al. (2014) analyze the impact of online social media on the Indian Premier League (IPL), noting that "online social media has played a pivotal role in sharing of information and opinions on real-time events." They highlight how social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter are used to discuss events such as the IPL, influencing public perception and engagement. Crisis management has also become more efficient thanks to social media. Sports PR teams can respond in real-time to any controversies, issues, or negative incidents involving athletes or teams. Social media offers a platform to address problems promptly and prevent them from escalating, safeguarding the reputation of the involved parties. This immediacy and transparency are vital in protecting a team's or athlete's image in the face of public scrutiny. Moreover, social media has allowed sports organizations to reach a global audience. This expanded visibility has contributed to the rise in popularity of various sports, especially smaller leagues or sports that previously had limited exposure. Fans from all over the world can follow their favorite teams, share content, and interact with athletes, enhancing the sport's global footprint. Trivedi et al. (2021) explore the role of social media communications in the success of professional sports leagues, stating that "social media communications have a significant effect on sports involvement and online community engagement." They discuss how sports organizations leverage social media to enhance fan engagement and brand presence. Athletes themselves play an integral role in sports PR through their social media presence. With large followings, athletes can serve as influencers, driving marketing campaigns and connecting with new audiences. This partnership between sports teams, influencers, and athletes creates new fan segments and increases the reach of marketing efforts. Social media also offers real-time updates, such as match scores, player stats, and highlights. These live updates keep fans engaged during events and help maintain interest even between games. Interactive content like polls, live streams, and Q&A sessions enhances the overall fan experience, making it more dynamic and engaging. However, the integration of social media into sports PR also presents challenges. One of the key issues is managing negative comments and criticism. Social media can amplify any form of backlash, and PR teams must respond quickly and efficiently to protect the reputation of athletes or teams. Maintaining consistency across various platforms and ensuring a unified brand voice is another challenge, especially for larger organizations with multiple stakeholders. Inconsistent messaging can confuse fans and undermine PR efforts. Another challenge is the balance between personal and professional content. Athletes often use social media to share personal stories, which can sometimes lead to controversies if the content is misinterpreted or conflicts with their professional image. Managing this balance is crucial to maintaining a positive public image without infringing on an athlete's right to personal expression. Lastly, there are ethical considerations surrounding privacy, especially when sharing sensitive or personal information on social media. Athletes and sports organizations must be careful not to overexpose private details or violate ethical boundaries, as this can negatively impact their reputation and relationships with fans and sponsors. In conclusion, social media has revolutionized PR in sports by offering a more direct and immediate way to engage with fans, build brands, and manage crises. However, the fast-paced and global nature of social media requires careful strategy and management. PR

professionals in the sports industry must be proactive, creative, and adaptable to effectively utilize social media while addressing potential risks and challenges. Properly leveraging social media can enhance fan engagement, increase visibility, and strengthen the overall public image of sports organizations and athletes. However, many clubs and organizations still do not understand the role and importance of public relations, so they often remain insufficiently noticed, developed and recognized. (Hopwood, Skinner, Kitchin., 2010, 3)

SUBJECT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The subject of the research is the official social platforms profiles of the Macedonian First League football clubs and the Turkish First Super League football clubs.

The main goal of the research is to present the current state of public relations management on social media among football clubs from the First Macedonian League and football clubs from the First Turkish Super League, as well as to make a comparison between the two leagues.

METHODS

In order for the data source to be objective, we applied the following research methods: observation method, analysis method, comparative analysis and synthesis method. For a sample of respondents in this research, 30 football clubs are included, which compete in the First Macedonian Football League and the First Turkish Football Super League in the 2022/23 season.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results gathered from the above searches are presented in six separate tables representing the main areas of findings:

- Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Macedonian league in the 22/23 season on the Facebook;
- Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Turkish Super League in the 22/23 season on the Facebook;
- Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Macedonian league in the 22/23 season on the Instagram;
- Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Turkish Super League in the 22/23 season on the Instagram;
- Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Macedonian league in the 22/23 season on the Tik Tok;
- Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Turkish Super League in the 22/23 season on the Tik Tok;

Table 1. Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Macedonian League in the 22/23 season on Facebook; (Source: author's work, 2023)

facebook	FOLLOWERS	INFORMATION FOR NEXT MATCH	INFORMATION FOR RESULTS	VERIFICATION
 FC SHKUPI	32 K	✓	✓	×
 FC TIKVES	3,8 K	✓	✓	×
 FC SKOPJE	-	-	-	-
 FC STRUGA	10 K	✓	✓	×
 FC POBEDA	3,8 K	×	×	×
 FC BREGALNICA	6,1 K	✓	✓	×
 FC ACADEMY PANDEV	8,2 K	✓	✓	×
 FC SILEKS	3,5 K	✓	✓	×
 FK SHKENDIJA	111 K	✓	✓	✓
 FC RABITNICKI	13 K	✓	✓	×
 FC MAKEDONIJA GP	4,8 K	✓	✓	×
Total	max 111 K min 3,5 K	9	9	1

The analysis of Facebook profiles of football clubs from the First Macedonian League for the 2022/23 season highlights several key shortcomings in how these clubs manage their social media presence and communicate with their audience. The highest number of followers recorded on the Facebook profiles of Macedonian clubs was 111K (FC Shkendija), while the lowest number of followers was just 3.5K for FC Silex. This significant gap demonstrates a lack of consistency and strategic effort in attracting followers and building an engaged fan base. While FC Shkendija stands out in terms of followers, other clubs in the league struggle to maintain an active and growing digital presence. Regarding the sharing of information about upcoming matches and results, only nine clubs consistently provide this information to their followers. This irregularity in communication limits the ability of clubs to engage with fans and keep them informed, something that should be a standard practice for any club in the digital age. One of the most concerning findings is the lack of profile verification. Unlike Turkish clubs, which all have verified profiles on Facebook, only FC Shkendija has a verified profile among Macedonian clubs. This is a significant indicator of how poorly many clubs manage their digital presence and how it affects their credibility and trustworthiness with their followers. In conclusion, Macedonian football clubs lag behind in their use of Facebook for fan engagement and public relations. They need to focus on increasing their social media activity, providing regular updates on matches and results, and verifying their profiles to build credibility and trust. FC Shkendija's

higher level of engagement and verified profile should serve as a model for other clubs in the league to improve their digital presence and communication strategies.

Table 2. Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Turkish Super League in the 22/23 season on Facebook; (Source: author's work, 2023)

facebook		FOLLOWERS	INFORMATION FOR NEXT MATCH	INFORMATION FOR RESULTS	VERIFICATION
 ANTALYASPOR		71 K	✓	✓	✓
 GALATASARAY S.K.		12 M	✓	✓	✓
 ADANA DEMIRSPOR		85 K	✓	✓	✓
 ALANYASPOR		55 K	✓	✓	✓
 ANKARAGÜCÜ		83 K	✓	✓	✓
 BEŞİKTAŞ J.K.		5,5 M	✓	✓	✓
 FATİH KARAGÜMRÜK S.K.		20 K	✓	✓	✓
 GAZİANTEP F.K.	🏳️	57 K	✓	✓	✓
 GİRESUNSPOR		137 K	✓	✓	✓
 HATAYSPOR	🏳️	132 K	✓	✓	✓
 İSTANBUL BAŞAKŞEHİR F.K.		148 K	✓	✓	✓
 İSTANBULSPOR A.Ş.		16 K	✓	✓	✓
 TRABZONSPOR		1 M	✓	✓	✓
 KONYASPOR		248 K	✓	✓	✓
 KASIMPAŞA S.K.		61 K	✓	✓	✓
 FENERBAHÇE S.K.		8,6 M	✓	✓	✓
 SIVASSPOR		265 K	✓	✓	✓
 KAYSERİ S.K.		43 K	✓	✓	✓
 ÜMRANİYESPOR		32 K	✓	✓	✓
Total		max 12 M min 20 K	19	19	19

The analysis of Facebook profiles of football clubs from the First Turkish Super League for the 2022/23 season reveals a highly professional approach to managing social media presence and engaging with fans. Unlike Macedonian clubs, Turkish clubs use Facebook effectively to communicate with their audience and provide relevant information. The highest number of followers on Facebook profiles of Turkish clubs was recorded for Galatasaray (12M), while the lowest number of followers was observed for Fatih Karagümrük (20K). Despite the lower number of followers, Fatih Karagümrük still shows a considerable presence compared to Macedonian clubs. This suggests that Turkish clubs, even with fewer followers, maintain a more consistent and professional digital presence than their Macedonian counterparts. Regarding information about upcoming matches and results, all 19 clubs in the Turkish First Super League consistently provide their followers with updates. This is a notable difference when compared to Macedonian clubs, where this information is often not shared regularly. Turkish clubs prioritize keeping their fan base informed, which likely contributes to their higher engagement and trustworthiness. Verification is another significant point where Turkish clubs excel. All football clubs in the First Turkish Super League have verified Facebook profiles, indicating a professional and credible approach to their online presence. This is in stark contrast to Macedonian clubs, where verification on social media platforms is often missing, potentially reducing their credibility and fan trust. In conclusion, Turkish clubs demonstrate a highly organized and professional use of Facebook for fan engagement and public relations. Their consistent posting of relevant match information, high levels of follower engagement, and verified profiles set them apart from Macedonian clubs, which lag behind in digital communication strategies. Macedonian clubs can learn from the Turkish model by improving their activity, content quality, and profile management to increase their digital presence and fan engagement.

Table 3. Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Macedonian League in the 22/23 season on the Instagram; (Source: author's work, 2023)

Instagram		FOLLOWERS	POSTS	INFORMATION FOR NEXT MATCH	INFORMATION FOR RESULTS	VERIFICATION
	FC SHKUPI	32,9 K	2,966	✓	✓	✗
	FC TIKVES	2,138	559	✓	✓	✗
	FC SKOPJE	822	54	✓	✓	✗
	FC STRUGA	3,854	860	✓	✓	✗
	FC POBEDA	1,558	74	✓	✓	✗
	FC BREGALNICA	1,636	80	✓	✗	✗
	FC ACADEMY PANDEV	5,932	499	✓	✓	✗
	FC SILEKS	1,262	172	✓	✓	✗
	FK SHKENDIJA	33,6 K	4,435	✓	✓	✓
	FC RABITNICKI	2,207	988	✓	✓	✗
	FC MAKEDONIJA GP	10,1 K	839	✓	✓	✗
Total		max 33,6 K min 822	max 4,435 min 54	11	10	1

The analysis of Instagram profiles of football clubs from the First Macedonian League for the 2022/23 season reveals significant shortcomings in using this social network for public relations and fan engagement. Compared to Turkish clubs, which actively use Instagram and other social platforms, Macedonian clubs show low activity and poor management of their profiles. The highest number of followers on Instagram profiles of Macedonian clubs was recorded for FC Shkendija (33.6K), while the lowest number of followers (822) was observed for FC Skopje. This indicates a significant difference in popularity on the platform, which can be directly attributed to inactivity and poor profile management. The difference in follower numbers shows that creative and consistent content is key to attracting new followers, as seen with FC Shkendija, which has the most posts and followers. The number of posts is also correlated with the number of followers. FC Shkendija has a maximum of 4,435 posts, reflecting their consistency and active use of Instagram for communication with fans. In contrast, FC Skopje has only 54 posts, a very low number that points to underutilization of the platform's potential for informing and engaging the audience. In terms of sharing information about upcoming matches and results, 11 of the clubs share details about upcoming matches, while only 10 share information about the results. Although there are some posts with this information, the lack of regular and transparent communication limits the opportunity to better connect with fans and increase audience loyalty. Regarding verification, similar to Facebook, only FC Shkendija has a verified profile on Instagram, demonstrating their professional approach and seriousness in managing social media. The lack of verification on other clubs' profiles suggests a lack of credibility and trust in their accounts. In comparison with Turkish clubs, where all Super League clubs' profiles are verified, are actively used to inform the public, and have millions of followers and posts, Macedonian clubs are significantly lagging behind. The examples of Turkish clubs show how consistent activity, creativity, and transparency can lead to increased visibility and fan engagement. In conclusion, Macedonian football clubs need to recognize the importance of Instagram as a key platform for public relations and fan communication. Increased profile activity, creativity in content, and regular communication with the audience will enable them to expand their digital reach and improve their interaction with their fan base.

Table 4. Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Turkish Super League in the 22/23 season on the Instagram; (Source: author's work, 2023)

Instagram		FOLLOWERS	POSTS	INFORMATION FOR NEXT MATCH	INFORMATION FOR RESULTS	VERIFICATION
	ANTALYASPOR	121 K	11,9 K	✓	✓	✓
	GALATASARAY S.K	12,6 M	24,5 K	✓	✓	✓
	ADANA DEMIRSPOR	325 K	7,284	✓	✓	✓
	ALANYASPOR	82,5 K	5,799	✓	✓	✓
	ANKARAGÜCÜ	182 K	6,216	✓	✓	✓
	BEŞİKTAŞ J.K	5,6 M	20,1 K	✓	✓	✓
	FATİH KARAGÜMRÜK S.K	81,9 K	3,304	✓	✓	✓
	GAZİANTEP F.K	🚫 121 K	7,503	✓	✓	✓
	GİRESUNSPOR	110 K	6,512	✓	✓	✓
	HATAYSPOR	🚫 171 K	6,121	✓	✓	✓

	İSTANBUL BAŞAKŞEHİR F.K	219 K	10,2 K	✓	✓	✓
	İSTANBULSPOR A.Ş.	40,8 K	3,683	✓	✓	✓
	TRABZONSPOR	1,1 M	12,8 K	✓	✓	✓
	KONYASPOR	207 K	12,2 K	✓	✓	✓
	KASIMPAŞA S.K	62,8 K	10,7 K	✓	✓	✓
	FENERBAHÇE S.K	8,6 M	24 K	✓	✓	✓
	SIVASSPOR	175 K	15,6 K	✓	✓	✓
	KAYSERİ S.K	113 K	8,162	✓	✓	✓
	ÜMRANIYESPOR	51,9 K	3,726	✓	✓	✓
Total		max 12,6 M min 40,8 K	max 24,5 K min 3,304	19	19	19

The analysis of the Instagram profiles of football clubs from the First Turkish Super League for the 2022/23 season reveals a high level of professionalism and consistency in using this platform for public relations and fan communication. Compared to other social networks, Instagram stands out as an effective tool for reaching a wide audience and engaging with fans. The highest number of followers was observed at Galatasaray (12.6M), positioning the club at the top in terms of digital popularity. In comparison, the lowest number of followers (40.8K) was recorded for İstanbulspor, which still performs better in terms of followers than on Facebook. This suggests that Instagram, with its visual appeal and broad reach, is a more suitable platform for Turkish clubs to engage their audience. The number of posts also correlates with the number of followers. Galatasaray again leads with a maximum of 24.5K posts, reflecting their consistency and activity on the platform, while Fatih Karagümrük has the smallest number of posts (3,304). This indicates that clubs with larger followings tend to use the platform more frequently and diversely to share content. When it comes to informing the public about match results and upcoming fixtures, all Turkish clubs demonstrate excellent communication. No club was observed to neglect keeping their fans informed, showcasing the importance they place on transparency and timely sharing of information. Verification is another aspect that demonstrates the seriousness of clubs in managing their Instagram profiles. As with Facebook, all profiles of clubs in the Turkish Super League are verified, adding to their credibility and trustworthiness among followers. In comparison with Macedonian clubs, which largely overlook using Instagram as a platform for public relations, Turkish clubs provide an example of professional management and strategic use of social media. Macedonian clubs can learn from these examples,

particularly in terms of post frequency, content quality, and the importance of keeping the public informed. In conclusion, Turkish football clubs demonstrate that Instagram is a powerful tool for enhancing digital presence, building relationships with fans, and increasing club visibility. Consistent activity, creativity, and transparency are key factors contributing to their success.

Table 5. Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Macedonian League in the 22/23 season on the Tik Tok; (Source: author's work, 2023)

Tik Tok	FOLLOWERS	POSTS	INFORMATION FOR NEXT MATCH	INFORMATION FOR RESULTS	VERIFICATION	LIKES
 FC SHKUPI	-	-	-	-	-	-
 FC TIKVES	-	-	-	-	-	-
 FC SKOPJE	-	-	-	-	-	-
 FC STRUGA	1262	28	×	✓	×	11,7 K
 FC POBEDA	-	-	-	-	-	-
 FC BREGALNICA	-	-	-	-	-	-
 FC ACADEMY PANDEV	-	-	-	-	-	-
 FC SILEKS	-	-	-	-	-	-
 FK SHKENDIJA	-	-	-	-	-	-
 FC RABITNICKI	-	-	-	-	-	-
 FC MAKEDONIJA GP	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	max 1262 min /	max 28 min /	0	1	0	max 11,7 K min /

The analysis of TikTok profiles of football clubs from the First Macedonian League for the 2022/23 season reveals a significant underutilization of this social network as a tool for public relations and fan engagement. Compared to the Turkish Super League clubs, where TikTok is actively used for innovative and engaging communication, Macedonian clubs lag far behind in adopting modern digital trends. Only one club, FC Struga, has a presence on TikTok, highlighting a major gap in social media strategy among Macedonian football clubs. However,

even FC Struga's profile reflects limited activity, with only 28 posts and 1262 comments, suggesting a lack of consistent and strategic use of the platform. This contrasts sharply with Turkish clubs like Galatasaray, which actively post hundreds of videos, resulting in millions of followers and likes. The absence of key content types is another critical issue. Unlike many Turkish clubs, which balance entertaining and informative content, FC Struga does not provide updates about upcoming matches and rarely posts information about achieved results. This demonstrates a missed opportunity to connect with fans by offering valuable and timely updates. Verification, a key factor that boosts credibility and trust, is completely absent among Macedonian football clubs on TikTok. In comparison, 9 out of 11 Turkish clubs with TikTok profiles have verified accounts, reflecting their professional approach to social media management. The creativity of TikTok videos plays a vital role in engagement, as seen with smaller Turkish clubs like FC Umraniyespor, which achieve significant follower growth despite limited resources. However, FC Struga's content lacks the innovative and fan-centric approach necessary to attract and retain followers. The club's total of only 11.7 likes across all videos underscores the need for a more dynamic and creative content strategy. In conclusion, Macedonian football clubs must recognize the importance of TikTok as a modern platform for public relations and fan interaction. By studying successful examples from Turkish clubs, they can develop strategies to improve their presence, such as increasing post frequency, diversifying content to include both entertaining and informative elements, and prioritizing account verification. With better use of creativity and data-driven strategies, Macedonian clubs can leverage TikTok to enhance their visibility, strengthen fan relationships, and compete on a digital level both locally and internationally.

Table 6. Information about the profiles of football clubs from the First Turkish Super League in the 22/23 season on the Tik Tok; (Source: author's work, 2023)

Tik Tok	FOLLOWERS	POSTS	INFORMATION FOR NEXT MATCH	INFORMATION FOR RESULTS	VERIFICATION	LIKES
 ANTALYASPOR	-	-	-	-	-	-
 GALATASARAY S.K	1,5 M	440	✓	✓	✓	26,8 M
 ADANA DEMIRSPOR	-	-	-	-	-	-
 ALANYASPOR	-	-	-	-	-	-
 ANKARAGÜCÜ	8138	103	✓	✓	×	163,3 K
 BEŞİKTAŞ J.K	604,2 K	119	✓	✓	✓	7,1 M
 FATİH KARAGÖMRÜK S.K	-	-	-	-	-	-
 GAZİANTEP F.K 	-	-	-	-	-	-
 GİRESUNSPOR	2068	11	×	×	✓	7793
 HATAYSPOR 	-	-	-	-	-	-
 İSTANBUL BAŞAKŞEHİR F.K	46,1 K	28	✓	×	✓	691,5 K
 İSTANBULSPOR A.Ş.	-	-	-	-	-	-
 TRABZONSPOR	63,2 K	81	✓	✓	✓	1,0 M
 KONYASPOR	28,1 K	237	×	×	✓	369,8 K
 KASIMPAŞA S.K	-	-	-	-	-	-
 FENERBAHÇE S.K	1,1 M	250	×	×	✓	16,3 M
 SIVASSPOR	34,5 K	423	×	×	✓	426,2 K
 KAYSERİ S.K	2020	27	✓	×	×	17,4 K
 ÜMRANİYESPOR	723,8 K	270	✓	✓	✓	13,9 M
Total	max 1,5 M min 2020	max 440 min 11	7	5	9	max 26,8 M min 7793

The analysis of the TikTok profiles of football clubs from the First Turkish Super League for the 2022/23 season highlights significant variations in the way clubs utilize this social network, reflecting differences in strategy, creativity, and engagement levels. The data clearly shows that successful management of TikTok profiles can significantly enhance a club's visibility and fan engagement. Galatasaray emerges as the most prominent club on TikTok, leading in key metrics such as the number of followers (1.5M), posts (440), and likes (26.8M). This success is a result of the club's consistent efforts to create engaging and creative content,

coupled with its large fan base. In contrast, FC Kayseri and FC Giresunspor, with the lowest number of followers (2020) and likes (7793) respectively, demonstrate the challenges smaller or less active clubs face in leveraging TikTok effectively. Content strategy appears to play a critical role in audience engagement. While most clubs focus on entertaining videos such as interviews, challenges, and behind-the-scenes footage, fewer clubs provide essential information about upcoming matches (7 clubs) and results (5 clubs). This indicates a missed opportunity for some teams to balance entertainment with informative content that can further strengthen their connection with fans. Verification status is another key indicator of the clubs' commitment to managing their social media presence. Of the 11 clubs active on TikTok, 9 have verified profiles, demonstrating a professional approach to social media management. This verification not only boosts credibility but also fosters trust among followers. Interestingly, some smaller clubs, like FC Umraniyespor, showcase exceptional creativity in their content, allowing them to compete with larger clubs in terms of engagement despite their limited resources and status. This emphasizes that innovative and fan-focused content can bridge the gap between clubs of different sizes. In summary, the success of a TikTok profile depends on a club's ability to maintain a balance between creative, entertaining content and informative updates, alongside a professional approach to account management. Larger clubs like Galatasaray have the advantage of an established fan base, but smaller clubs with innovative strategies, such as FC Umraniyespor, demonstrate that effective social media management can level the playing field. For clubs like FC Kayseri and FC Giresunspor, investing in creativity and consistency could significantly enhance their digital presence and engagement.

CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the profiles of football clubs from the first leagues in Macedonia and Turkey, we can conclude that the number of followers is not random. The quality of the content offered by the Turkish clubs on their social network profiles is incomparably better than what can be seen on the profiles of the Macedonian clubs. The number of clubs where public relations work at the same level as in Turkish clubs is small, and these are actually the ones with the most followers in Macedonia. After analyzing all segments that indicate the level of success of public relations management through social networks, we can conclude that football clubs from the First Macedonian Football League do not work enough on public relations and are far less successful compared to football clubs from the first Turkish Super League who recognized the importance of successfully managing public relations through social media for their club. In summary, we can conclude that with the help of public relations through social networks, clubs achieve high results, and thanks to football, they found their place in sports and proved that they have become an essential element in the functioning of clubs and establishing communication with the public. Macedonian football clubs can adopt several strategies to improve public relations through social media, following the successful examples of Turkish clubs. First, it is essential to professionalize digital marketing and PR teams by hiring specialists in digital communications and providing training to existing staff on the latest trends in this field. Regular and interactive content posting is crucial, with the creation of diverse and creative content such as videos, interviews, and interactive polls to increase audience engagement. Sharing behind-the-scenes moments from the team will further strengthen the emotional connection with fans. Investing in data analysis tools is necessary to better understand fan interests and behavior, as well as to implement targeted campaigns that will enhance engagement. Brand-building and

loyalty campaigns, such as online and offline contests, giveaways, or meet-and-greet events with players, can significantly boost the sense of belonging. Additionally, encouraging fans to create and share content using club hashtags will further amplify their involvement. In crisis situations, it is vital to respond quickly and transparently through social media to avoid speculation and negative reactions. Localizing content, through posts in the Macedonian language and highlighting local cultural values, will help strengthen the connection with the local community. Collaborating with local influencers and sponsors through creative partnerships can expand the reach and increase the popularity of the clubs. Investing in mobile applications or digital platforms, where fans can access exclusive content, news, and tickets, will improve interaction with them. Promoting humanitarian activities and socially responsible projects through social media will help strengthen the clubs' positive image. Finally, regularly monitoring results and adapting strategies based on fan feedback and content performance is crucial for the success of these activities. Implementing these strategies can enhance the popularity and influence of Macedonian football clubs both locally and internationally.

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