

SECTION 5

DIGITAL REALITY. INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS IN THE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT; TRENDS OF IT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN BELARUS

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DIGITAL REALITY. INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ON THE INTERNET: DEVELOPMENT OF IT-TRENDS IN BELARUS

The purpose of the study is to analyze information on this topic in the Republic of Belarus, using statistical data and consideration of various sources.

The concept of digital reality is a conceptual product of the development of socio-philosophical theories of modernity and, above all, the theory of information society. One of the modern versions of the theory of the information society is undoubtedly the concept of a network society.

Digital reality is thought of as a reality that manifests itself at two levels: at the system level and at the level of the life world. Digital reality at the system level is studied using well-known means and methods of scientific research. At the level of the life world, digital reality appears as a set of updated meanings and meanings that are significant for a person and allow him to articulate his own assessments and experiences, intentions and actions. The correlation of these levels determines the digital reality that claims to be a new human habitat [1].

The use of the Internet in traditional business is gaining strategic importance not only for foreign companies, but also for Belarusian ones. This is due to the exponential growth in the number of Internet visitors and its transformation into the main sales channel for many business sectors.

In recent years, the Republic of Belarus has gained a reputation as one of the most dynamically developing IT countries in the European region. As of 2019, more than 70 thousand IT specialists and about 3,300 IT companies work in Belarus. And according to Ernst & Young, about 40 thousand more IT specialists work in sectors of the economy other than ICT. The world's leading companies have development centers in the Republic of Belarus, among them Google, Yandex, Mapbox, Rakuten, IAC, CIKLUM, IHS MagkIT, Playtika and others [4].

The IT sector has been the main driver of economic growth in recent years, it has acquired strategic importance for the economy of Belarus. The share of the IT sector in the GDP of the Republic of Belarus in 2019 amounted to 6.5%, and also provided the largest contribution to GDP growth – 0.5 percentage points.

The IT industry in Belarus is less susceptible to regular economic shocks. In this regard, there is a stable inflow of foreign investments in the IT industry. Unlike other industries, IT demonstrates a steady increase in foreign investment in 2016-2019, reaching more than USD 290 million in 2019 (according to Belstat “National Statistical

Indicators of the Development of the Digital Economy of the Republic of Belarus”), as a result, it increased more than 1.5 times during this period.

The economic impact of the US technology sector exceeds the impact of most other industries, including sectors such as retail, construction and transportation. Such a level of economic influence opens up political levers and opportunities for lobbying of their interests to large companies in the IT sector.

While the Internet enhances many aspects of the ability of headquarters to control and direct what happens in a multinational’s subsidiaries, it does not remove the need for local responsiveness, and in a perverse sense, the Internet and related technology enhance many aspects of local responsiveness – especially in building tighter, common language links to local customers and suppliers, with all the associated strengthening possibilities of face-to-face encounters, sometimes an essential prelude to effective Internet-based relationships. Companies will undoubtedly go through a variety of approaches in the course of modifying management approaches to take account of the realities and possibilities of the Internet [2].

My research has shown that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to radical changes in many industries, and the information technology industry is no exception. In addition to many negative consequences of the pandemic, it is necessary to highlight the hidden potential that it has revealed and strengthened: platforms for organizing remote work; 5th generation (5G) technologies; telemedicine.

The result of the research is an in-depth consideration of the Digital Reality sub-topic, consideration and provision of opinions on the International Business on the Internet sub-topic, analysis of statistical data on the IT Trends Development in Belarus sub-topic, the main result and conclusion – everything is interconnected, and if one of the terms I considered ceases to exist, everything the rest will automatically cease to exist.

Today, the IT industry is at a revolutionary stage of its development. This is due to the fact that the role of the IT industry has changed dramatically: it has turned from a service industry into a strategic one. According to the research consulting company IDC, the scale of the industry is increasing from year to year. Digitalization is taking place not only in the economy, production and work processes, but also in other aspects of people's lives.

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