

Regional reports and presentations of regions in the Czech Republic

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Abstract. Availability of regional information on the internet can be researched minimally in two levels: the local information resources and the nationwide information resources. The paper deals with the evaluation of the internet use in case of availability of regional information at the nationwide level. From realized inquiries it is also apparent that internet services become a decisive resource of regional information. Above all it is dealt with web services; however, an important role starts to be played also by social networks.

Key words: Information availability, region, regional news service, support of business, social networks

Introduction

Inequality of economic and social relations between towns and rural regions is generally recognized; it is caused by quite a few historical, geographical, political and economic phenomena. In the period of information society development, the use of information and communication technologies is considered as one of the crucial tools for rural development and use of its potential.

Generally, it can be stated that a contribution for the country is caused by information availability, high-quality communication, availability of services and education and so on. However, it is also necessary to state that these common phenomena without creation of mutual relations and engagement of all appropriate regional structures will not independently create required results (Fan, 2010).

A line which connects directions of rural development are information and communication technologies (often replaced by an „all-embracing“ term internet) and the contributions should be search for in more efficiently executed activities which bring economic profit (Pollone, 2006). On base of this it is possible to describe three areas in which ICT have a growth and development potential for rural areas:

- Support of business
- Business itself
- Improvement of quality of life

The essence is to make rural and remote areas attractive, to reduce their isolation, and to achieve a higher productivity within innovative use of modern technologies of

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knowledge society. It requires a systematic innovation which means concurrent activities from the viewpoint of politics, technology and social implementation. Availability of regional information is ranked in the area of business support which includes a complex of activities and processes that already take place in rural regions, but in which information and communication technologies multiply increase effectiveness, often in such a way that it is dealt with new activities and processes, non-viable earlier (Ke, 2009). As the main activities for business support we consider:

- Presentation of a region – or information about a region (regional information), one of basic marketing tools of regional development; there are many potentially presented areas, e.g.
 - Services for interest activities (leisure-time activities) – probably the most often mentioned and realized area including travelling, accommodation, sport, culture, products etc. (Ping, 2009).
 - Investment possibility – an interest of every region are investors, however, it is not possible without introductory information
 - Production and services of a region – specialties and specifics of a region
- Information availability – a contribution for development can be seen above all in their economic evaluation
- Education – a better availability of education in regions is a keystone of human resource development and use of modern technologies
- Service availability – making business and above all eGovernment, electronic banking, electronic communication, eConsultancy easier and more efficient, etc.

Material and used methods

Availability of regional information on the internet can be researched minimally in two levels: the local information resources and the nationwide information resources. Usability of local information resources for a region presentation outwardly is regarding to the general unfamiliarity with local conditions fundamentally limited by marketing visibility of this resource. At present, it is not sufficient „to be on the internet“; it is necessary the presented information to make more visible. Here, for example SEO/SEM is mentioned often, but also the interconnection into supraregional structures (Jarolímek, 2007). If it to be the contrary, this local information resource serves above all for needs of inhabitants of the given region, or more generally for those who know this region which is also very important, but it is not our investigation.

The paper deals with the evaluation of internet use in case of availability of regional information at the nationwide level (nationwide information resources). For orientation in the problems it is necessary to divide these resources according to used methods of obtaining and provision of information.

The methods of provision of regional information:

- Independent presentations of regions, information about regions are further divisions (e.g. professional)

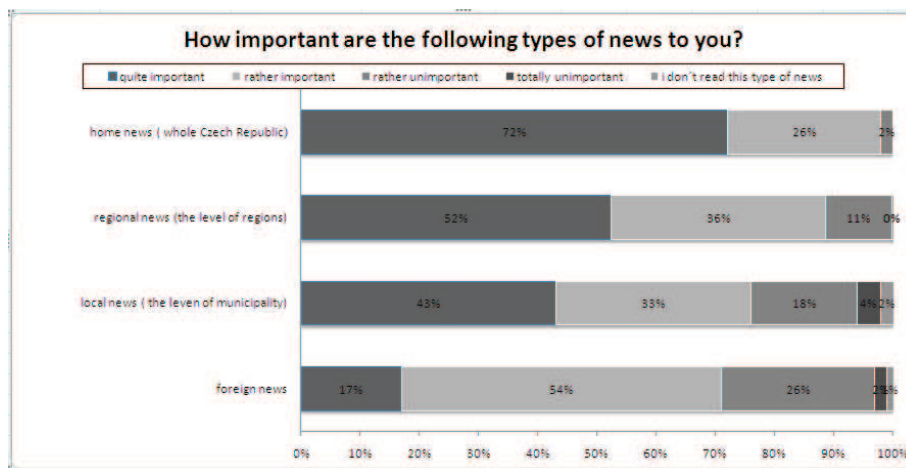
- Content classification (news service, advertising, etc.) according to regions
- Secondary product of other activities, most often of a local press

The methods of acquisition of regional information:

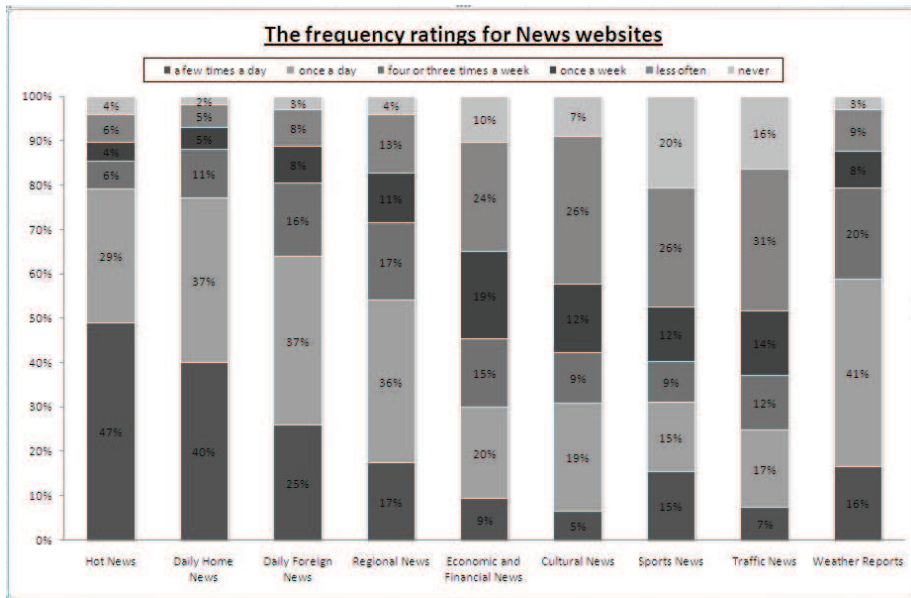
- Editorial content – information are acquired and processed by a professional team
- User content - information are acquired from readers; we can ranged also blogs there
- Commercial communication (Advertising) – publishing of information is paid in some form

Results and discussion

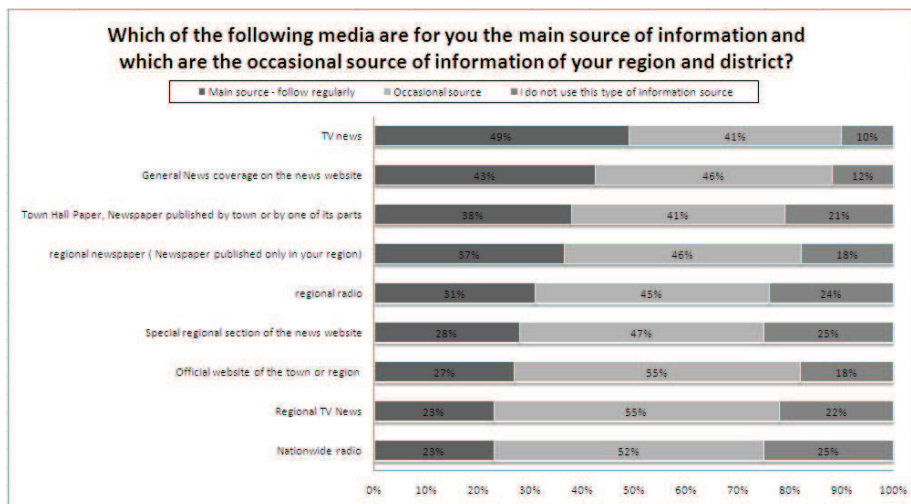
Even before a question, how available are regional information, it is necessary to answer whether regional information are needed and what are the preferred media at present. A relatively unambiguous answer is given by on each independent investigations made in regions of the Czech Republic in 2010. A firm Mediaresearch researched a representative sample of 547 internet users in the CR and the Czech University of Life Sciences a sample of 902 agricultural firms. The significance of regional news for users outweighs the foreign news service (the graph 1) and in ratings frequency in news service webs the regional news service is on the fourth place (the graph 2). From realized inquiries it is also apparent that internet services become a decisive resource of regional information (the graphs 3 and 4). Above all it is dealt with web services, however, an important role starts to be played also by social networks (Červenková, 2011). Also for example Hutchins, 2004 came to similar conclusions.



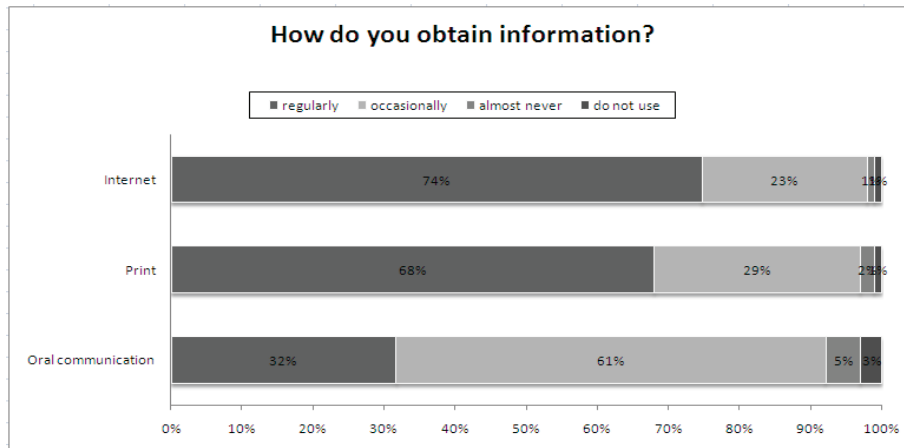
Graph 1: Significance of regional news (Mediaresearch, 2010)



Graph 2: The Frequency of news ratings (Mediaresearch, 2010)



Graph 3: Way of information acquisition (Mediaresearch, 2010)



Graph 4: Way of information acquisition (CULS, 2010)

Now we get to the evaluation of availability of regional information at the nationwide level. Regarding the dominance of internet access we deal only with this medium. It is necessary to state that the intention to publish regional information is relatively big; there are many news and branch servers which are engaged in this activity. The quality of provided information itself can be evaluated quite positively though the investigation did not deal with that. This evaluation stems from a subjective observation. However, if we compare the ways of acquisition and provision of regional information, we will find out considerable differences in approaches of particular servers. In total, 11 news and branch servers (portals) were evaluated. The selection was made on base of continuous topicality of published news. The evaluation results are presented in the table 1.

From the evaluation it results that most nationwide information resources solves regionality of news service by use of classification and filtration of standardly processed content. However, the main problem must be looked for in integrity and completeness of provided news which is obviously given by problematic availability caused by collection logistics, human resources, and last but not least also by financial claims. This is indicated by some ambitious projects of regional news service suspended because of financial reasons (Aktuálně, 2011).

The most efficient communication at the lowermost level of social relations becomes interactive social networks. A public service has to be a pioneer in use of social networks to gain a personal relation with the future generations. The news content remains the same as in the past; what changes are distribution channels, and human involvement intensifies.

It is also interesting that map bases and generally the Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) are not used at all for presentation of regional information on the researched servers.

Information resource	URL	Provision of information			Acquisition of information		
		Independent presentation	Content classification	Secondary product	Editorial content	User content	Commercial communication
News servers							
iDnes.cz	www.idnes.cz	X			X	X	X
Novinky.cz	www.novinky.cz		X			X	
iRegiony	regiony.impuls.cz	X			X		X
Sedmička	www.sedmicka.cz			X	X		
Aktualne.cz	aktualn.centrum.cz		X		X		
RTA	www.rta.cz	X			X		
Regiony24	www.regiony24.cz	X			X		
CT24	www.ct24.cz		X		X		
Branch servers							
Agris.cz	www.agris.cz		X		X		
Práce.cz	www.prace.cz		X				X
sReality	www.sreality.cz		X				X

Table 1. Information resource



Figure 1: Illustration of evaluated news and branch servers (portals), selection

Conclusion:

The interest in publishing of regional information is relatively big; there are many news and branch servers which deal with this activity. The quality of provided information itself can be evaluated quite positively.

From the evaluation it results that most nationwide information resources solves the regionality of news service by use of classification and filtration of standardly processed content. The main problem is in integrity and completeness of provided news which is obviously given by problematic availability caused by collection logistics, human resources, and last but not least also by financial claims. It is also possible to state that classification of methods of provision and publishing of regional information used in the survey is sufficient at present.

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