CROWDFUNDING AS A TOOL TO SPREAD GOOD ATTITUDES IN THE MEDIA AND SUPPORT IN SHAPING VALUES IN HUMAN LIFE ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE PRODUCTION OF THE FILM ABP LEFEBVRE – WHY?

Abstract

Goal – the research goal was to demonstrate the role of crowdfunding in the production of the analyzed film. Two theses result directly from the research goal and were formulated as follows: 1) Crowdfunding in the production of the film ABP Lefebvre – Why? is not the main source of financing; 2) The benefit of crowdfunding is the spread of good attitudes in the media and support in shaping values in human life and proclaiming the Catholic truth.

Research methodology – the study uses descriptive research, which is an important stage of cognition because it creates an objective picture. The meaning of crowdfunding was preceded by a characterization of values in human life. As a part of the research methodology, the author of the article used the following research techniques as data collection methods: desk research, case study and an individual in-depth interview conducted with the film producers as part of the Filmowe Życiorysy PL project.

Score/results – presentation of the importance of crowdfunding on the example of the production of the film ABP Lefebvre – Why? Crowdfunding can result in realizing many valuable and substantive projects, e.g. obtaining funds necessary for the production of a film, while engaging the community for which the subject of the film is important. However, crowdfunding was not the main source of financing in the case of the film ABP Lefebvre – Why?, it did not even constitute the majority share in the costs.
Originality/value – the film about the archbishop is undoubtedly entering into the center of the hottest disputes in the Church, but also an opportunity to understand them better. This topic is rarely discussed in the literature. The paper covers both advantages and benefits and disadvantages and threats of crowdfunding as a tool to spread good attitudes in the media and the support in shaping values in human life. Crowdfunding, which enables partial financing of the film production of an important biography, has the potential to become a specific tool that brings people closer to God.

Keywords: crowdfunding, economy, finance, media, film, truth, values in life, Lefebvre, Society of St. Pius X.

1. Introduction

In 1983, at Jasna Góra, during his second pilgrimage to Poland, John Paul II, speaking about freedom and emphasizing that it is given to man by God as a measure of his dignity, called for living in freedom, understood as making good use of it. From the ontological point of view, the consequence of freedom is the choice between good and evil, and with the act of choosing comes the freedom of will, which, by enabling a person to choose one of two possibilities, becomes good in itself. The existence of free will understood in this way was obvious for St. Augustine’s [Warchał, 2015]. For free will is manifested in the fact that man wants to truly worship God.

Freedom particularly refers to the choice of values in human life. Values influence a person’s functioning – his behavior and decisions he makes. If a man, using his free will, understands that religiosity is necessary for his life, and spirituality is more important than temporality, he will discover that communication with God is the most important thing in life and it is the only source of full happiness, which is related to the supernatural goal that must be achieved. Religion is unique, just as there is only one truth. Religion is a moral bond, connecting man with God. Man, having reason and free will, is obliged to seek the truth instead of adopting an attitude of indifference, characterized by unconcern about important issues. Nowadays, when cognitive skepticism dominates, i.e. the belief that it is impossible to reach the objective truth because all opinions and positions are considered to be equal, defending the rationality of the concept of the truth becomes crucial. A person who loves the
truth should also strive to convey it to others. The media in this context have an important role to play because they can support the shaping of values in human life. Without a hierarchy of values in which God is in the first place, one becomes susceptible to and submissive to all environmental influences. By striving for truth, a person shapes his personality and character and builds his hierarchy of values, which he follows in life in order to achieve the ultimate goal. The Internet and crowdfunding may be important in this process if they help finance the production of a valuable film that helps to consciously defend the faith, showing the truth that, with goodness and beauty, belongs to the transcendentals (universal properties of being) of Christian philosophy. It is not fair that everyone holds their own truth, because then there would be no objective truth, and if there is no objective truth, there is no truth at all [Strumiłowski, 2023].

Freedom also means choosing what we watch. The film *ABP Lefebvre – Why?* is intended to be inquisitive and to contribute to presenting the correct image of the Society of Saint Pius X, which was founded by Archbishop Lefebvre. The aim of the film is also to show the truth about the archbishop and to answer many difficult questions focusing on adherence to Tradition. This is a film that can change the course of Church’s history [www 1]. This study is based on a case study and IDI on the production of a film about Archbishop Lefebvre, who was considered a saint by some, even during his lifetime, as a defender of the true Church, but others considered him a rebellious fundamentalist. Marcel François Lefebvre was a French Catholic bishop who, while defending the truth, did not recognize the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, as a result of which the Catholic Church, despite Her 2000-year-old tradition, began to become more and more modernist – moving in a direction contrary to Tradition and the official Magisterium, and opposed the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ [Lefebvre, 2023].

The aim of this article is to present crowdfunding as a tool to spread good attitudes in the media and the support in shaping values in human life. Crowdfunding, which is connected to the Internet, makes it possible to finance valuable and substantive projects and that includes the film entitled *ABP Lefebvre – Why?*. The film, by showing the biography of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, is intended to show the truth about the Society of Saint Pius X, dispelling all prejudices and doubts accumulated over the years, and to answer many difficult and important questions. The film about the archbishop is undoubtedly an entry into the center
of the hottest disputes in the Church, but also an opportunity to understand them better [www 2]. The research goal is to demonstrate the importance of crowdfunding in the production of the film entitled *ABP Lefebvre – Why?* Two theses result directly from the research goal and were formulated as follows: 1) Crowdfunding in the production of the film *ABP Lefebvre – Why?* is not the main source of financing; 2) The benefit of crowdfunding is the spread of good attitudes in the media and the support in shaping values in human life and proclaiming the Catholic truth.

2. Crowdfunding – meaning, types and importance

When analyzing the role of the media as a means of interpersonal communication, special attention should be paid to the Internet, which has had a significant impact on the development and spread of crowdfunding as an alternative method of raising funds due to difficult access to traditional sources of financing [Grząba, 2019]. Crowdfunding aims to activate society to achieve a common goal.

From an etymological point of view, crowdfunding comes from the English language and consists of two words – *crowd* and *funding*. In Poland, the term „finansowanie społecznościowe” is used. There are many definitions of crowdfunding in scientific and popular science literature [Bouncken et al., 2015; Kędzierska-Szczepaniak, Szopik-Depczyńska, 2017]. Crowdfunding is used by: enterprises, non-governmental organizations and private individuals, e.g. independent creators. Crowdfunding is still a relatively new subject of research, representing a subcategory of crowdsourcing [Majewski, 2020].

Crowdfunding is an open invitation via an online platform to support a specific initiative of the originator – a project or product, cultural and social [Cunningham, 2012: 5]. The web platform can be specialized (*specialized platforms*), concern a specific industry (*activity specific platforms*) or have a general purpose (*general-purpose platforms*) [Kędzierska-Szczepaniak, Szopik-Depczyńska, 2017]. Applying for funds from the public is aimed at financing business ventures or implementing specific projects [Kowalczyk, Dudycz, 2018]. Four basic crowdfunding models are distinguished: equity and loan as capital models, and also donation and bonus non-equity based crowdfunding models [Belleflamme et al., 2014]. Equity crowdfunding means that Internet users contribute funds in ex-
change for shares in a project or company, becoming co-owners. In this way, capital is collected for start-up or business development (equity-based crowdfunding). In lending crowdfunding, investors borrow funds in exchange for a lending rate or future profits from the project (lending-based crowdfunding). In practice, the most common type is the non-equity crowdfunding, which involves offering prizes or products in exchange for supporting a project (reward-based) or is of a charitable nature, which means that contributors do not expect any reward or financial return (donation-based crowdfunding).

Non-equity crowdfunding includes the following variants:
- all-or-nothing – if the planned amount is not collected, the money is returned to the supporters;
- take it all – upon completion, the author receives the funds obtained regardless of their size, which carries the risk of not being able to implement the project;
- subscription/patronage model – based on supporters’ declaration of repeated payments of the same amount in subsequent months [www 3].

The key to implementing a given idea is to gather as many supporters of a given project as possible and encourage them to support it financially. The first example of modern crowdfunding is said to have taken place in 1997 and concerned the British music band Marillion, which, having received financial support from its fans amounting to 60,000 USD, was able to complete its tour. The boom of crowdfunding in the world occurred 8 years after this event, and in Poland crowdfunding is still an unknown concept to most Internet users, which most likely indicates the initial phase of its development [Kowalczyk, Dudycz, 2018].

The most popular crowdfunding platform in Poland, PolakPotrafi.pl, was created in 2011. The report of the Association of Financial Enterprises in Poland shows that participants of online collections are most likely to engage in typical donation (charity) campaigns. A total of 3.5 billion PLN was collected on Polish crowdfunding platforms between 2008 and 2022, of which 93% was donation crowdfunding, 4% reward-based crowdfunding and 3% patronage crowdfunding [Trzebiński, 2023: 6]. There are currently about 30 active crowdfunding platforms registered in Poland, which are donation-based (charitable), reward-based, subscription-based (patronage) or share-based. The most important of them were described in Table 1.
Table 1. Crowdfunding platforms in Poland in 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A type of online platform</th>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Model</th>
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<tr>
<td>Universal</td>
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<td>Culture</td>
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<td>reward-based</td>
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<td>Megatotal.pl</td>
<td>donation and reward-based</td>
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<td>Patronite</td>
<td>reward-based, subscription-based (patronage)</td>
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<td>Sport</td>
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<td>Fans4Club.pl</td>
<td>reward-based</td>
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<td>Citizen initiatives</td>
<td>Fundujesz.pl</td>
<td>donation and reward-based</td>
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<td>Shares in the company</td>
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Source: the author’s study based on: Malinowski, 2017; Trzebiński, 2023.
As shown by the data in Table 1, most crowdfunding platforms are related to charity. The advantage of donation crowdfunding is primarily that the process of collecting money is very simplified compared to other sources of financing. If equity crowdfunding was to be a way of financing films, the most difficult task would be to convince Internet users to support your idea in order to achieve the set financial goal, because if the venture fails, investors would lose their money irretrievably [Bryś, 2021]. However, if the film has sponsors, but only a small amount of money is lacking to finalize the project, the solution may be donation-based crowdfunding, in which the supporter does not expect any reward in return for the support, and the funds transferred to the collection account are considered as donations [www 4]. In addition to the financial aspects, crowdfunding also allows you to build a community around the project and increase its reach by using e.g. social media and that makes it possible to attract the attention of new audiences. By helping others, a supporter actually helps himself, because charity strengthens those values that are positively related to experiencing happiness and long-term life satisfaction [Zaleśkiewicz, 2019].

Additionally, the effect of supporting a crowdfunding project involves gaining new knowledge concerning the initiative, e.g. a valuable film can change the life of the supporter, and the film created thanks to the supporter's help can then change the lives of other people. Crowdfunding can thus become a tool for spreading good attitudes in the media and support in shaping values in human life. The disadvantages and threats associated with crowdfunding include the risk of project failure and the risk of intellectual property theft [www 5].

One of the crowdfunding platforms in Poland is Pomagam.pl, which was established in 2016. The platform prefers charity projects for which there is no time limit, which means that collections can last as long as the project creator requires. The total amount collected on the platform has so far amounted to 109.1 million PLN, and the number of supported projects is over 5,500 [Trzebiński, 2023, p. 8]. On Pomagam.pl, a collection is started for free and without additional fees. It is also possible to withdraw funds collected so far during the project, which is undoubtedly an additional advantage [www 6]. This platform was chosen to implement the project of producing the film *ABP Lefebvre – Why?* [www 7], which aims to spread good attitudes in the media, show the Catholic truth and support in shaping the hierarchy of values in human life.
3. Hierarchy of values in human life

The hierarchy of values allows us to understand human behaviour. Meanwhile, most social science researchers claim that all hierarchies of life values are variable and subjective, and therefore there is no one universal hierarchy of values [Brzozowski, 2005]. For example, Rokeach [1968, 1973] identified a scale of values based on two sets: eighteen ultimate values (true friendship, mature love, self-respect, happiness, inner harmony, equality, freedom, pleasure, social recognition, wisdom, salvation, family security, national security, a sense of accomplishment, a world of beauty, a world at peace, a comfortable life, an exciting life) and eighteen instrumental values (cheerfulness, ambition, love, cleanliness, self-control, capability, courage, politeness, honesty, imagination, independence, intellect, broad-mindedness, logic, obedience, helpfulness, responsibility, forgiveness), which consist of actions needed to achieve the ultimate values. When arranging values, Schwartz and Bilsky [1987] took into account: purpose, interest and type of motivation, distinguishing ten categories of values and four wedges. These values are as follows: conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, and security, and the four wedges are: self-transcendence, conservation, self-enhancement and openness to change. While indicating universal categories of values, Schwartz [2012] excluded a universal hierarchy based on subjective feelings of the importance of values, claiming that the system of values in a circular structure is governed by the rules of similarity and opposition.

However, the hierarchization of values was indicated by Scheler [1977], according to whom there are five values that are systematized, starting from the lowest, as follows: hedonistic (pleasure), utilitarian (civilization), vital, spiritual (including aesthetic values, legal order, cognitive values or faith) and religious. Moral values mean appropriate attitude to other categories of values [Brzozowski, 2005]. Scheler emphasized that modern man is governed by economic structures. Changes in the world at the end of the first quarter of the 21st century confirm our belief that a materialistic approach to life leads to crises in the value system of individuals. From the point of view of personal life values, consumerism and the accompanying constant pursuit of money, while providing only the illusion of happiness, contribute to the devastation of the value system [Zaleśkiewicz, 2019].

From Scheler comes the hierarchization of values proposed by Tischner [1982], who distinguished hedonistic values as the lowest in value, followed by vital and spiritual ones – the leading one being the truth, which enables ethi-
cal actions. Tischner also distinguished lower and higher values. The highest values are sacred values, being the source of religion, which have been divided into absolutely sacred, for those who believe in God, and “humanly” sacred, for those who do not see God. Currently, living in times of relativism, where everyone has their own narrative, and power (including power of money, environment, pressure, power), not truth, becomes the final criterion for accepting statements, it is extremely difficult to spread good attitudes in the media and shape the hierarchy of values, in which religiosity is the most important one. To sum up, a person will have a happy life only when God has the highest place in his hierarchy of values.

Nowadays, it is important to consciously defend the faith and return to old catechisms and the traditional Holy Mass, so that the principles established for hundreds of years remain principles. For unambiguity and clarity are features of the Catholic truth. In terms of the subject of this study, the question arises: Can the Internet become a tool that brings people closer to this truth and to God?

4. The role of crowdfunding in spreading good attitudes and supporting the development of life values – a case study and IDI

4.1. Research methodology

Research is based on a case study and in-depth individual interviews. Case study is a research method which, through the description of a given phenomenon and qualitative research, aims to analyze and evaluate it in-depth. In this article, the case study refers to the production of the film *ABP Lefebvre – Why?*, which is about a deep attachment to Tradition.

In-depth individual interviews (IDI) are one of the basic qualitative research techniques. This research technique involves a conversation between the researcher and the respondent in order to obtain detailed information and opinions and to get to the root of the matter that would be difficult to reach using other methods (e.g. a survey). This method is particularly important when dealing with controversial topics. In this article, in-depth individual interviews were conducted with the producers of the film *ABP Lefebvre – Why?*, who operate as part of the Filmowe Życiorysy PL project [www 8]. The questions focused on the subject of what is the role of crowdfunding in financing the production of the film *ABP Lefebvre – Why?* Having extensive experience in film production, the producers
decided to make a film that would show how right Archbishop Lefebvre was (Stehlin, 2001). Today, it is increasingly visible that the history of post-conciliar changes in the Church admits Archbishop Lefebvre was right [www 9]. The film’s producers have made films on historical, patriotic and religious themes, and they additionally show people with passion. Their films are broadcast on TV TRWAM. Last year, 140 reruns were broadcast. The producers of Filmowe Życiorysy PL project support valuable attitudes that deserve to be appreciated. Through the crowdfunding platform Pomagam.pl, funds are collected for the production and assembly stages, the so-called post-production of the film ABP Lefebvre – Why? As the producers write on the fundraising page, the film, despite many opposing voices, is being made on a larger scale than originally expected, because the topic is worth it. The goal of the crowdfunding campaign is to collect 36,000 PLN. At the time of writing this article (16.10.2023), 323 people donated to the fundraiser, and the collected amount was 30,500 PLN, constituting 84.72% of the target crowdfunding amount [www 7].

4.2. The importance of crowdfunding in financing film production

When producing the film ABP Lefebvre – Why?, the producers decided to use crowdfunding because this type of fundraising gives them freedom and makes them independent. The producers found that it is quite popular and it is the simplest form of raising money for various types of projects, including films, and that is why they decided to use it. In the case of films that raise money in the same way or other projects based on collections, you can notice that these are usually small amounts, e.g. 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 PLN, sometimes more.

When it comes to the production of a film with information having a large range, it reaches a larger group of interested recipients and even with small amounts, when there are a lot of people paying, a considerable amount can be collected, even in a short time. However, information about the film ABP Lefebvre – Why? does not have such a large range, which is why these payments are not able to complete the entire budget in a short time. Usually, when raising funds in this manner, it is also a good practice to try to obtain some of the funds from private individuals, not just rely on the Internet.

Crowdfunding, in the opinion of the producers of the film ABP Lefebvre – Why?, also has its disadvantages. Building a community to redirect it to a collection takes quite a long time. Looking at other collections, it is clear that this model is built on emotions. Collections are organized for various purposes, for
example: to help the sick, to support war victims, for animals, for school, for an apartment, for bills, etc. It can be noticed that many people do not necessarily choose a noble or proven cause, but sometimes through emotions they engage in even the strangest collections, spending money on things that are not necessary, or even can be considered luxuries.

When it comes to the financial possibilities and generosity of potential donors, the film’s producers note that it varies. Even if the initiative is in the range of interest of the supporters, they do not necessarily want to share the money and support the project. The producers also drew attention to the fact that there are people who support the initiative and have disproportionate demands regarding the production of the film, and the producers have also encountered such supporters. Regardless of the adversities the film producers encounter when using crowdfunding to partially finance the project, they want to make the film reliably, dynamically and modernly, seeking the answer to the question contained in the film’s title, that is: why? In the works of biography films producers one can find a film that may change the course of the history of the Catholic Church in 2024. This is a film that both sides of the argument are waiting for. This is a film that will explain that Archbishop Lefebvre was a man who remained unwaveringly certain about who God was, and by founding in 1969 the seminary and the Society of Saint Pius X (FSSPX, also called Lefebvrist) [www 10], he strongly faced a liturgic revolution. This important and necessary film was partially financed by crowdfunding.

5. Conclusion

Crowdfunding is becoming an increasingly popular form of raising money to implement new projects. Thanks to crowdfunding, one can fulfil many valuable and substantive projects, e.g. obtain funds necessary for the production of a film, while engaging the community for which the subject of the film is important. The topic of searching for true religion is undoubtedly one of them.

Man, having reason and free will, is obliged to search for true religion, because it is the only source of happiness. Without set life values, people are susceptible to negative influences from the environment, including untrue ones reported in the media, and as a result, they may get lost in life. The modern medium – the Internet, apart from its negative aspects, also has advantages because it can be a tool for spreading good attitudes and can support shaping life
values, in the hierarchy of which God is the most important. This is possible, among others, thanks to the production of important films that can help many people arrange a hierarchy of life values or even re-evaluate their lives. The analyzed film *ABP Lefebvre – Why?* is a story about deep attachment to Tradition, which helps to consolidate the system of values in human life, so that God is in the first place.

Crowdfunding was not the main source of financing in the case of the film *ABP Lefebvre – Why?*, it did not even constitute the majority share in the costs. The financial meaning of crowdfunding in film production can therefore be described as small, which confirms the first thesis. The more important the role of crowdfunding was to spread good attitudes. Promotion on the Internet has become an important channel for the flow of knowledge about Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and the Society of Saint Pius X. Many people have become interested in topics about which they did not know or knew very little before. This knowledge, combined with free will, can expand the group of people who will become interested in the Tradition. After the film is produced, the number of such people may further increase. Man, having reason and free will, is obliged to seek the truth instead of adopting an attitude of indifference. Since the benefit resulting from crowdfunding of the analyzed film concerns the spread of good attitudes and supports the formation of values in human life and the proclamation of Catholic truth, the second thesis is also confirmed. Crowdfunding, which enables partial financing of the film production of an important biography, has the potential to become a specific tool that brings people closer to God.

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