MOBILE APPLICATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

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Abstract

The paper defines specific aspects of mobile applications with a religious or spiritual focus with specific addressing on the apps that are available in the Slovak language. It focuses on the analysis of the characteristics of these mobile applications in the context of new forms of evangelization which, in addition to internet communication, also use the specific characteristics of mobile devices. In addition to obtaining information, playing games or shopping, mobile applications are increasingly also used to spread religious messages. One of the objectives of the research study was to find how effectively this potential is used and if mobile applications are primarily focused on practising believers or if they try to reach the people with no religion or belonging to any of the Churches. A systematic review framework was applied to the search, screening, and assessment of apps. Then we selected those applications that meet the criteria that they are religiously or spiritually oriented. These applications subsequently underwent quantitative and partly qualitative and content analysis. In our final survey sample we included 36 mobile applications, of which 24 were for Android and 12 were for iOS. We categorized the final corpus into six thematic categories. Within the quantitative content analysis we observed the presence of the following five functional properties that have the potential to increase the efficiency of applications in the process of new evangelization. The study results showed that all Slovak mobile applications with a religious or spiritual focus are primarily designed for so-called active believers. Neither of the applications had a direct evangelistic character, e.g. not specifically created with the purpose of reaching and attracting people with no religion or with an indifferent relationship to the spiritual life or the spiritual values.

Keywords: spirituality, new evangelization, social means, communication, mobile applications

1. Introduction

New technologies are integrated into all areas of life and gradually penetrate into the life of Churches, religious communities and individual believers. External and internal communication of religious organizations now routinely includes internet and mobile phones. People working and living in this

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environment communicate using online technologies with each other, but also increasingly outwards, thus with the public. It has an easy and comfortable access to information in which it is interested and it is focused on the life of the respective Church or religious community. Also, the internet and mobile phones bring an unusually large capacity to access spiritually-oriented content - e.g. collections of prayers, complete editions of the Bible, various spiritual reflections and a number of other types of content that can deepen spiritual life.

1.1. The spirituality of evangelization

Proclamation of the Gospel to all people is the essential and natural task and mission of Christian churches worldwide. As the evangelization was needed in the early stages of building the Church itself, it has not lost its necessity even in the third millennium. The role of Christianity is not merely proclamation of the Gospel to people, but also to convey their personal encounter with Jesus and all it has to offer. Pope Paul VI in the Apostolic Exhortation 'Evangelii Nuntiandi' stated that evangelism can be defined as the preaching of Christ to those who do not know him yet, or as preaching, catechesis, the granting of baptism, and the other sacraments. For the Church to evangelize means to bring glad tidings to all mankind, to transform people internally and to create one new humanity from them [Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi Apostolic Exhortation of His Holiness Pope Paul VI*, http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi.html].

Pope Paul VI drew attention to the fact that no definition can capture the complexity and dynamism of evangelization. He stressed that it is impossible to speak of a genuine evangelization if in fact not reporting about Jesus Christ and his kingdom. He understood evangelization as the recovery of humanity and social strata to a depth that should seep through the whole life of man. Encyclical Evangeline - the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world by Pope Paul VI - prepared ground for the roots of the 'new evangelization' movement in the Catholic Church.

1.2. The new evangelization

The term 'new evangelization' was used for the first time by Pope John Paul II in his homily in Nová Huta in June 1979 during his apostolic trip to Poland. In his homily he said this: "The towering cross is a sign that there has arrived the good news of salvation of man by love. A new wooden cross was placed near here just for the celebration of a millennium of Christianity. We received a sign that at the threshold of the new millennium - in these new times, with these new conditions of life - the Gospel is back in order to be proclaimed again. New evangelization has begun, like another proclamation, when in fact it's still the same proclamation of the Gospel." [1].

The second time this term was used was during the 19th General Meeting of CELAM (Latin American Episcopal Council) in Port-au-Prince, where it pointed to the Church in Latin America. He referred to the new evangelization as a means of gaining new energy for the new missionary and evangelistic fervour in this part of the world. The Pope emphasized that it is not a re-evangelization, but a new evangelization, whose novelty lies in the fervour, new methods and new expressions. The essence is not a condemnation of the previous evangelization, nor its repetition, but the courage "to embark on a new path with the changed conditions in which the Church should experience proclamation of the Gospel today" [2].

John Paul II in his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* - about the permanent validity of the missionary vocation - stated that "the Church must be issued to new shores, whether in the initial mission *ad gentes* or in a new evangelization of peoples who have already accepted the message of Christ. Today, all Christians from local churches and the universal Church are required to have the same courage that led missionaries of the past and the same courage to listen to the voice of the Spirit." [I. Paulus II, *Redemptoris Missio. On the permanent validity of the Church's missionary mandate*, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-miss io.html]

The Holy Father said that the new evangelization should to be carried out with the courage and strength of the early Christians, the first missionaries. He points to the missionary dynamism of the Church influenced by the 'spirit of globalization', which in practice means that the Christian communities must seek for connection, unity, share resources and jointly proclaim and live the Gospel. Creating this unity is determined by mutual need - i.e. young Churches need the force of older Churches (the experience and support of the Christian tradition) and the older ones need the witness and enthusiasm of the younger, so as to enrich each other [I. Paulus II, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Christifidelis Laici*, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_ exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici.html]. The new evangelization was subsequently the topic of several continental synods, which participated in the preparation of the Church for the Great Jubilee of 2000. Pope John Paul II in this period recalled that the whole Earth and its peoples, in which religion and Christian life once thrived and managed to create believing communities, are overcoming harsh trials and are even significantly marked by the spread of indifference, secularism and atheism [3].

French bishop Monsignor Dominique Rey of the diocese of Fréjus-Toulon, known for his enthusiasm for the new evangelization, says for the Church to carry out the new evangelization it must first determine the 'gateways' to the proclamation of the faith, and then prompt the Church to pastoral conversion. He adds that the reason for the new evangelization is a double challenge. The 'external' challenge is based on the urgent need to proclaim the faith anew in the context of secularism, relativism and in a situation when the Christian memory of mankind is being lost. The 'internal' challenge is

the requirement for the Church to constantly look for its missionary identity and structure. [A. Cañizares Llovera, *Definícia novej evanjelizácie a jej výzvy.* http://www.smn.sk/index.php?cislo=1307&sekcia=clanky&smn=20120107.htm]

1.3. The new evangelization and the means of social communication

Pope John Paul II was not the last head of the Church dedicated to the topic and to the importance of the new evangelization. His follower Pope Benedict XVI during his pontificate gathered the 13th Ordinary plenary meeting of the Synod of Bishops focused on the new evangelization. The meeting of the Synod of Bishops mentioned above – the Synod about the new evangelization for the transmission of the Christian faith - was held between the 7th and 28th October 2012 in Rome based on the topic 'New evangelization for the transmission of the Christian faith' [Synod of Bishops, *XIII Ordinary General Assembly. The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith,* http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20120619_ instrumentum-xiii_en.html].

The outputs of the Synod were prepared in an unofficial draft, published in the Bulletin of the Press Office of the Holy See entitled the Synodus Episcoporum Bulletin. This report has 58 points divided into six main parts [*Synodus Episcoporum Bulletin*, XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, 7-28 October 2012, http://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/ sinodo/documents/bollettino_25_xiii-ordinaria-2012/02_inglese/b04_02.html]. Propositions by the Synod of Bishops were crucial in preparing the present Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis called *Evangelii Gaudium*, which was published in November 2013 [The Holy Father Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium,* http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_ exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii- gaudium.html].

The Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization for the transmission of the Christian faith and the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* inspired by it indicate how the issue of the new evangelization can systematically deal with specific outputs for daily practice in the environment where one lives, develops and is open to service to those who need one.

In today's technological era the point 18 of 58 points of the report was dedicated to a very current topic - The new evangelization and the means of social communication. This proposition describes the important role of social communication tools to spread the Gospel to all people. "In this area, and especially in the world of electronic communication, it is essential that there will be shaped convinced Christians who are ready and able to reliably transmit content of faith and Christian morality. They should have good communication skills and tools that are used in a globalized world. The most effective form of transmission of the faith, however, is still to continue to share a common witness of life, without which no media effort results in the efficient transmission of the Gospel. Education for wise and constructive use of mass media is an important

tool of the new evangelization." [http://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/sinodo/documents/bollettino_25_xiii-ordinaria-2012/02_inglese/b04_02.html]

Perhaps in no area of social life is it possible to work without the use of technology, mass media and the media itself. And each Church, including the Christian one, is aware of the irreplaceable status and significance of communication channels, technical equipments and the Internet in the dissemination of their teachings and ideas. Active use of the possibilities offered by technical achievements also allows the Christian Church worldwide to streamline and promote the spread of the Gospel and Christ's teachings. Otherwise, it would not be in Slovakia. "The role of the mass media is to bring people together and enrich their lives, not divide and take advantage of them. Such formation should take into consideration technical skills, but it should be mainly ethical and moral formation, formation pertaining to our inner life. Only people formed in such way are capable of creating a new culture, a culture that respects human being and his dignity, a culture that respects life, a culture of solidarity, love and peace." [4]

A very popular and used means for disseminating Christian content and promoting evangelization itself is nowadays the mobile phone and the associated use of mobile applications.

1.4. The potential use of mobile applications in the process of evangelization

The arrival of intelligent phones, so-called smartphones, completely changed the view of the use of mobile devices. To maximize the potential of smartphones, which have a power comparable to a computer, you need to develop new and increasingly sophisticated applications. Mobile applications are special programs that the user can download from the Internet and install onto their mobile phone. The potential uses of applications are constantly expanding and restrictions represent only the specific features of mobile devices. In addition to playing games, users use applications for, such as, purchasing products, obtaining various information and for communication.

For the year 2016 in Slovakia this accounted for 1.25 active SIM-cards per one inhabitant. Compared to 2015, the penetration increased by 3.46%. Telecommunication service providers registered in Slovakia 6.772 million active SIM cards. Therefore, we can assume that almost every citizen of Slovakia owns a mobile phone. Data on the penetration of mobile services is calculated on the basis of comparable methodologies by which active customers are considered as customers when they have made at least one active operation with their SIM card in the past three months, including those customers using a flat rate service. The basis for the calculation of the penetration is the number of citizens of the Slovak Republic at the level of 5.4 million.

The potential use of mobile applications in the Church is clear. If we take into account only the two largest markets for mobile applications in the world, then, through Google Play, which offers mobile applications for users of the Operational Programme Android on their mobile phones and tablets, users had a

choice among 2.2 million mobile applications in 2016. Secondly, the Apple App Store, offering mobile applications for users of devices running iOS, offered around two million mobile applications.

There are many categories which distribute mobile applications based on their content, or possibility of use. Mobile applications with spiritual content do not fall far from the most numerous, but are getting to the forefront and awareness of mobile phone users. Slovakia is a country with a solid Christian tradition and therefore, in the mobile applications market we will find several dozen of mobile applications with religious content in the two most widely used providers of mobile apps, Google Play and Apple App Store.

2. Methodology

The main objective of this research study is a detailed structural analysis of mobile applications with a religious or spiritual focus, with specific focus on the apps that are available in the Slovak language. A systematic review framework was applied to the search, screening, and assessment of apps. Search terms to identify apps were derived through a preliminary search of the Google Play and iOS app stores. This study began with a full-text search on six keywords: religion, faith, prayers, Bible, Christianity and spirituality. Relevant synonyms to the identified terms were determined and also included in the search. For each keyword and its synonyms, we downloaded those apps whose description in the Google Play or iOS app stores indicated that they might be relevant and focused on the subject of our research. Then we selected those applications that meet the criteria that they are religiously or spiritually oriented. These applications subsequently underwent quantitative and partly qualitative and content analysis. The downloading of applications was performed during the last week of February in 2017.

In the first phase we identified the basic details of each application, which we acquired from the description that is available in the respective apps store. We paid attention to the issue of the priority thematic focus of each application, its number of downloads, as well as whether the application was available for free or for a fee. In our final survey sample we included 36 mobile applications, of which 24 were for Android and 12 were for iOS.

We categorized the final corpus into six thematic categories (Table 1). The first thematic category includes mobile applications containing biblical texts. The choice included a complete release containing the Old and New Testament, as well as applications containing the Old or New Testament as applications with only a selection of some parts of the Bible. The second thematic category includes applications containing a collection of various prayers, liturgical texts, breviary, rosaries, and so on. Applications may also contain selected text from Holy Scriptures, from songbooks, meditations or other sources. Applications in this thematic category are primarily focused on prayer itself.

Table 1. The thematic categorization of mobile applications with a religious and spiritual focus.

Category ID	Thematic category	Description of thematic category
1.	Bible	This thematic category includes mobile applications containing biblical texts.
2.	Prayers	This thematic category includes applications containing collections of various prayers, liturgical texts, breviaries, rosaries, and so on.
3.	Songbooks of religious songs	This thematic category includes collections of the texts of religious songs that are sung during worship, as well as other religious ceremonies and occasions.
4.	Contemplations	These applications provide users a reflection on God's word, text of homilies and other types of reflection-oriented texts.
5.	Informative applications	This thematic category includes mobile applications that provide various types of information services or advice.
6.	Theological applications	These are specialized applications designed especially for priests, monks and nuns, but also for laypersons who have a deeper interest in studying catechism, canon law, liturgy, and so on.

The third thematic category includes collections of the texts of religious songs that are sung during worship, as well as at other religious ceremonies and occasions. Part of the songbooks of religious songs may also be other types of texts - such as prayers, passages from the Bible, etc. Applications in this thematic category are primarily focused on religious songs.

The fourth thematic category includes meditations. These are apps that provide users reflection on God's word, text homilies and other types of reflection-oriented texts. Part of these applications can also be a variety of prayers, texts of religious songs, excerpts from spiritual literature, etc. In this thematic category, the biggest representations are contemplations, encouragement and meditations.

The fifth thematic category includes mobile applications that provide various types of information services or advice. They allow the search for practical information - e.g. the schedule of worship in various parishes, liturgical calendars, news from the life of the various Churches and Church communities. The last category is for specialized applications designed especially for priests, monks and nuns, but also for laypersons who have a deeper interest in studying catechism, canon law, liturgy, and so on. This category also includes educational apps that have a theological nature.

In implementing the qualitative content analysis, we took into account the four key features of quality mobile applications which deal with religion or spirituality. The first feature is Expediency. The essence of this feature is that the mobile application meets the basic purpose for which it was created. It

should therefore have features and functions that enable the user to effectively meet their current needs or solve a problem. If it is, for example, an application that contains prayers, it should mainly contain just such content and no information that is not directly related to the topic.

The second feature that we took into account in the analysis is whether the application is User Friendly. An application that is user friendly is designed so that its operation does not require any specific technical skills. A user-friendly application is easy to navigate, the information is appropriately structured, integrated into logical blocks or categories. The mobile application developer should avoid using elements that reduce clarity and user comfort.

The third feature, the presence of which we were looking for in applications, was Adaptability. This feature means that the application allows modular and variable access. This can be used if the user is interested. The option to customize an application according to the individual needs of the user may relate to the design or functionality of displayed elements. For example, the user can change the size, colour, font or colour of the screen, use the privacy settings, filter information and mainly show content that is interesting for them.

The final feature on which we focused in our analysis was Intuitiveness and Simplicity. A well-designed mobile application has an easy and intuitive user interface. The user should, in the shortest possible time and with the least amount of effort, master the basic user functions. Every useless element that reduces intuitive controls should be eliminated. This feature is very important because if the application confuses the user, it is likely possible they will not return to it later.

Within the quantitative content analysis, we quantified the presence of the following five key features related to the functionality of the application.

2.1. Personalisation options

The user can customize the application according to their own preferences - e.g. mark a favourite prayer, Bible text or other content to which they can return later without having to tediously search for it. Personalization may also consist in the possibility to customize font size, to choose which parts of the application's content should be displayed and which should not (e.g. comments on biblical texts).

2.2. Search options

A keyword search is an appropriate solution for fast and efficient navigation in an application. It is a sensible solution in the case of applications containing a large amount of textual information in which it is relatively difficult to navigate. Search options are useful even if the user is interested in all the texts in which the specific keyword appears.

2.3. Content categorisation

Transparent categorization of content of applications is an important element that facilitates the user to navigate and find the information that they are currently interested in. Applications that do not contain clearly structured content are of little interest and user orientation within the application is more difficult (especially if it contains a lot of textual, visual or audiovisual information).

2.4. Feedback

Quality mobile applications allow the user to provide feedback for the creators of the application. This can take the form of a contact form in which candidates write their comments, observations or other references for the app's creators. Feedback can be solved through the publishing of an email address to which the user can write if necessary. Feedback may also take the form of ratings and reviews.

2.5. Social media integration

The integration of social media means that part of the mobile application is also linked to social networks - e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc. Such a connection between the mobile application and social networks has the advantage that the user who finds the content of the application interesting can share it with their friends on social networks. This includes, for example, a specific prayer, a quote from the Bible, the challenge to participate in a prayer chain, and so on. Social media integration is also advantageous for the owner of the mobile application, since it allows them to reach even new users.

3. Analysis and interpretation of data

In the empirical part of our research study we investigated the representation of the various thematic categories of mobile applications with a religious and spiritual focus (Table 2). The research sample consisted of 36 mobile applications that met our selection criteria and were, at the time of collecting research data, available in a Slovak language version. Of the total number of applications, 24 applications were on Android (66.67%) and 12 applications were on iOS (33.33%). By a detailed content analysis of each application, we found that the most represented were mobile applications included in the thematic category of Prayers (27.78%). The second most numerous category was the Bible, with 25% of the analysed applications. The third most frequent category was Songbooks, meaning collections of the texts of religious songs that are sung during worship, as well as other church ceremonies and occasions (this category comprised 16.67% of the total number of analysed applications). In the Slovak mobile application stores, we found that the least

represented were information applications (8.33%) and specialized theological applications (8.33%).

Table 2. The number of analysed applications mobile applications with a religious and spiritual focus.

N = 36	The total number of applications	Android applications	iOS applications
Bible	9	7	2
Prayers	10	5	5
Songbooks of religious songs	6	4	2
Contemplations	5	3	2
Informative applications	3	2	1
Theological applications	3	3	0
TOTAL	36	24	12

Table 3. The presence of the key features related to the functionality of the applications with a religious and spiritual focus.

	Personalisation options		Search options		Content categorisation		Feedback		Social media integration	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bible	6	66.67	3	33.33	8	88.89	4	44.44	4	44.44
Prayers	3	30.00	1	10.00	9	90.00	6	60.00	5	50.00
Songbooks of religious songs	3	50.00	5	83.33	3	50.00	2	33.33	0	0.00
Contemplations	2	40.00	0	0.00	3	60.00	2	40.00	0	0.00
Informative applications	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	33.33	2	66.67	0	0.00
Theological applications	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	66.67	0	0.00	3	100.00

Within the quantitative content analysis of the applications we observed the presence of five key features related to application functionality (Table 3). These are the qualities that can fundamentally affect user comfort and contribute to the greater frequency of regular use of mobile applications. The first feature which we quantified in applications is the personalization possibility. This is manifested in a variety of options for the user to customize the appearance and other characteristics of the application according to their personal needs and requirements. Of the 36 applications analysed, personalization options were seen in 14 applications (38.89%). Nine of those were for the Android operating system and 5 were for iOS. Personalization options are the most widespread in applications in the Bible category (66.67%) and the category Songbooks (50.00%). Applications focused on meditation had personalization features in one third of analysed cases. Interestingly, the smallest representation was in personalization options for applications containing prayers (30%). Informational and theological applications had no options to customize the design or functionality. We did not find even a single application that would meet the analytical criteria either in the Android OS or iOS.

The second feature which we analysed in the applications followed was the search option. In particular, the ability to search directly inside the application based on selected keywords. Such a possibility was featured in 22.2% of the applications built with the Android OS and 8.33% of applications for iOS. Of the 36 analysed applications, this represents 30.56% of applications that allow you to search for information directly in the app's content. Interestingly, the largest representation of the search options was in the categories Songbooks (83.33%), Information applications (66.67%) and the Bible (33.33%). Also interesting, the search possibilities were almost completely absent in applications designated as Prayer (we found only one such application) and, in general, this feature does not occur in applications from the category Theology applications nor Meditation.

An important feature that enhances user comfort of the applications is the categorization of content. A good categorization provides clearly structured content, which is particularly important if the application contains a large amount of text or other content. Categorization was employed in 72.22% of applications (18 applications with OS Android and 8 applications with iOS) from the 36 analysed applications. The largest representation was categorized in applications containing a large number of texts (Prayers - 90.00% of applications; Bible - 88.89% of applications; Theological applications - 66.67%; Meditations - 60.00% of applications). Information applications had the lowest representation of categorization elements (content categorization appeared in only one application).

The possibility of giving feedback was another feature of applications that we analysed. It means that the user of such applications can comment on content, post a message to the creator of the application via a contact form, if necessary, or otherwise express an opinion, attitude or question. From the total number of 36 analysed applications only 16 (44.44%) contained these elements, while 11 applications were with Android OS and 5 with iOS. Most applications enabling feedback were in the categories of Informational applications (66.67%), Prayers (60.00%), the Bible (44.44%) and Meditations (40.00%). The possibility of giving feedback was not represented in any application from the category of Theological applications.

An important feature in religious and spiritually oriented applications is also the ability to share feelings, impressions and information with other people. This feature is for websites and mobile applications which enable integration via a functional link with social networks. Integration of a link to Facebook or Twitter provides useful functionality to the user, but it is also advantageous for the owner of the application as it allows the content to be spread also in the social networks environment. Despite these advantages, we found within our content analysis that social network integration was used in only 33.33% of the total 36 applications. More of them are represented in the applications made with the operating system Android (19.44%) than with iOS (13.89%). The largest representation of such applications we found in the categories of Prayers (5 applications), Bible (4 applications) and Theological applications (3

applications). Options for sharing content on social networks in general were not present in applications from the categories of Songbooks, Meditations or Informative applications. This finding is interesting because it is precisely in informative applications where there is a need to share content with other users or members of very large communities. It is therefore surprising that none of the applications counted with such options.

4. Conclusions

The digital environment is not only the parallel and virtual world, but it is also a part of the daily reality of many people, especially the young ones [5]. After content analysis of mobile applications with a religious or spiritual focus, we found that the Slovak application stores have the largest representation of applications focused on prayers. These are collections of various spiritual texts used mostly by the believers from Christian churches. This finding was expected, since the majority of the believers in Slovakia are committed to the Roman Catholic Church. The second most represented category of applications was those containing the Catholic Bible (the complete edition in electronic form or some selected parts of the Bible.) Informative and Theological applications have the lowest representation within the Slovak applications. Most applications (66.67%) are available for the Android OS, while applications created for IOS have a smaller representation (33.33%).

Through qualitative content analysis of mobile applications with a religious and spiritual focus and by sorting them into different thematic categories, we found that most were designed especially for so-called active believers. These are the people belonging to a Church or religious community who regularly or irregularly attend worship, devote some time to personal prayer, read Holy Scriptures or other spiritually oriented literature.

Mobile applications basically just mediated online content for active religious believers [6]. None of the applications had a direct evangelistic character specifically created with the purpose of reaching and attracting people with no religion or having an indifferent relationship to the spiritual life and spiritual values. We consider these findings which emerged from the content analysis of mobile applications important, as modern communication tools could be very innovative and creative tools of the new evangelization.

According to classical theories of communication, the formation of public discourse and public opinion is shaped primarily by the media, opinion leaders and interpretive micro-communities [7]. When analysing the technological properties of mobile applications, we found that quite a few applications with a religious or spiritual orientation use a variety of functionalities that can contribute to increasing the user comfort of application users. The most frequently used functionality was the categorization of content within the application. This feature improves clarity and enables easier navigation through content. 26 of the 36 analysed applications use some form of categorization. We consider the low degree of social media integration a serious fact that may have

an impact on new forms of evangelization. The creators of mobile applications with a religious or spiritual focus do not use their full potential to spread their content via social networks. On the one hand, this limits the number of users of the applications to only those who already knew or accidentally heard about them from other members of their religious community or on another occasion. This finding shows the key recommendation for applications of this kind. If they have to penetrate beyond the circle of believing users, creators should actively use the tools of content marketing on social networks and integrate applications with different types of functional links to social networks.

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