

Key aspects of crowdfunding workers motivation

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Abstract — The article describes the possibilities of crowd workers' motivation when implementing projects in Russian conditions. The aim of the work is to describe the Turkers' motivation practice of crowdsourcing and crowd project organizers, highlighting the difficulties of implementing crowd projects, formulating possible ways to overcome them. In the framework of this study, general theoretical methods were used to process and systematize theoretical sources related to the issue under study, a survey method that allows obtaining information about the subject of the study from crowd project participants (organizers and performers). The application of these methods allowed us to analyze the practice of using crowdsourcing technology in Russian practice, to formulate the main problems faced by crowd workers in this area and draw conclusions about the current crowdsourcing problems at the present stage, which is the main result of this work.

Keywords — *crowdsourcing, crowd projects, organizer, executor, motivation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Currently, there is high interest in crowdsourcing in the world.

The communication and activities of performers are carried out thanks to information technology, often at no cost. For customer companies, this is an opportunity to attract “fresh meat”, because many people participate in the assignment. Volunteers, acting as performers, get a chance to realize their idea, replenish the portfolio and increase work experience. As a result, only the selected final product is important, but work experience, education and qualifications of performers are not so important. All rights to the resulting product belong to the customer company, which has the right, at its discretion, to sell this product at a bargain price.

Although crowd sourcing is just a form of outsourcing, it has its own characteristic

differences: the absence of legal contracts between the executors and the customer, the performance of the work for free or at a low price, in the presence of a large project, its fragmentation into microtasks, which are then formed into separate projects [1].

Competitive platforms are one of the types of crowd sourcing platforms. Here the customer creates a competition by posting a specific task. Performers send their options for solving the task, while commenting and evaluating each other's work. Thus, one or more of the best works is selected. A winning job brings a reward to its creator.

According to researchers, at present, there are approximately 380 crowdsourcing resources in Russia, implementing approximately 40,000 crowd projects annually. The most attractive areas for crowd projects in our country are IT-technologies, medicine, state and municipal government, business start-ups.

But despite the relatively high rates, crowdfunding sites in Russia are not so popular with either companies or Turkers.

Moreover, without understanding the participants' motivation and their behavior, unsystematic attempts to use the wisdom of the crowd can have the opposite effect and lead to unplanned, undesirable consequences.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study of issues of motivation for Turkers was carried out on the basis of content analysis, using methods of systematizing and structuring the publications of Russian and foreign researchers on this issue.

Statistics of Turkers working on Russian sites was compiled based on the information content of leading Russian crowd platforms posted on the Internet [2], research by Russian authors covering theoretical aspects and describing the motivation factors for Turkers and the practice of implementing crowd projects in companies [3-7].

To clarify the factors of motivation, when implementing crowd projects in Russian practice, a study was conducted of the organizers and executors of crowd projects with experience in organizing / participating in at least two crowd projects. The survey was conducted in June 2019.

III. RESULTS

At the beginning of the study, the main reasons that motivate crowd workers to participate in crowdsourcing projects, as well as possible mechanisms to increase the degree of motivation of a Turker to participate in a particular project and at the same time try to do more and better, were analyzed.

As the studies of a number of authors have shown [8–11], the motivation to participate in crowdsourcing activities differs little from the motivation to participate in various activities within the participatory culture of Web 2.0.

Studies of the motivation of the crowd workers themselves [12–14] showed, firstly, that intrinsic motivation plays a more important role in encouraging a Turker to participate in a crowdsourcing project, and secondly, that intrinsic motivation, compared to external, provides a higher quality of work for crowd members.

It can be noted the importance of accounting for understanding the psychological component of the motivation of Turkers as the source of motivation itself (from within the person or from the external environment), and the way in which the internal need is satisfied (rational, based on the norm, emotional).

So, the motivation of crowd workers as a whole is slightly different from the motivation of a typical representative of a participatory culture. Members of any participatory culture believe that their contribution is significant, and also feel to some extent a connection with each other.

Surveys and studies of representatives of participatory culture [15–17] show that they value first of all not only the opportunity to express themselves but also the situation in which they feel that their self-expression is accepted by others. Such people are much more willing to create this or that content and share it on the World Wide Web if they feel that other users not only consume this content but also evaluate it.

In most studies of participatory culture, fun, pleasure, connectedness, feedback from other users are always among the most significant motivators. As for crowdsourcing, it is worth noting that there is no one motivator that would invariably play a major role in all types of crowdsourcing activities.

Various factors can motivate Turkers: it can be earnings, the development of creative abilities, socialization, networking with other people, creating a portfolio, testing your own abilities, pastime, etc.

To clarify the factors of motivation, when implementing crowd projects in Russian practice, a study was conducted of the organizers and executors of crowd projects with experience in organizing / participating in at least two crowd projects.

The survey was conducted online, a Google form was sent to the survey participants, a total of 68 people took part in the survey (26 of which were crowdsourcers and 42 people were Turkers). Among the respondents, 76% were men and 24% women.

The questionnaire proposed to the respondents included the following questions:

1. What factors of motivation are basic when organizing a crowd project with the organizers of crowd projects?
2. What motivational factors are key when deciding on the execution of a crowd project?

If, in our opinion, everything is relatively simple with external motivation, it is necessary for Turkers to develop an adequate remuneration system in one form or another, then using internal motivation is more difficult.

Let us further consider ways to use the intrinsic motivation of Turkers to increase the effectiveness of crowd sourcing activities.

In 2016, American researchers Ivan Fedorenko, Pierre Burton, and Tamara Rabinovich [18] published a study where, from the standpoint of psychology, they tried to understand how it would be possible to make participating in a project as valuable as possible for crowdfunders using different cases.

Based on the position of psychology that a person has three facets of his own personality, three self-identifications (I / My / We), they reflected on how exactly a crowdsourcer can turn these three facets of self-identification to their advantage.

Ultimately, we are dealing with personal or personal self-identification (private self), which is an individual's representation of his physical attributes, character traits, abilities ("I am smart," "I am honest," etc.); extended self-identification (extended self), which is associated with the representation of material and symbolic goods that an individual owns ("My house", "My property", etc.); finally, social, public or collective self-identification (public self), which represents an individual's belonging to a certain group ("We are conservatives", "We are Americans", etc.).

As a result, an organization, touching one or another facet of an individual's self-identification, can ultimately motivate him to take part in a crowdsourcing project.

IV. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

As mentioned earlier, there is no invariable motivator that would be suitable for all types of crowdsourcing activities and projects, therefore, in each specific case, it is necessary to influence different facets of self-identification. Let's consider them in more detail:

1. Personal self-identification, "I". Four aspects can be distinguished here that are associated with the behavior of Turkers in the process of crowdsourcing activities and the joint creation of a certain product:

1) *a sense of continuity throughout time*. Thinking of ourselves in the future, we do not perceive ourselves in the future as a separate and alien person, the same applies to the past. In order to work on this aspect, we can link current activities and relevant experience of the local worker in the past and / or the desired image of the future ourselves.

2) *a sense of agency*. That is, the individual needs to feel that he is in control of his life and can, one way or another, influence the events around him (which in turn provides some guarantees that the individual will live up to "myself in the future"). Here you can increase the motivation and

involvement of users by giving them the ability to control certain aspects of the activity.

3) *biological reflexivity*. It is possible to influence this aspect by linking the project or crowdsourcing activities, as well as the problems to be solved within its framework, to the Turker's life experience, important events in his life.

4) *bodily awareness*. You can influence here in different ways, but they all relate to the "body" of the crowd worker.

Summarizing the above, we note that since personal self-identification is a reflection of the individual's perception of himself (not always objective, but, nevertheless, it is central in self-consciousness), it is extremely important to influence these aspects of his personality if we want to create and maintain a strong relationship not only between the crowdsourcing organization and the Turkers, but also between the organization and future consumers of the product.

2. Extended self-identification, "My". Participation in a crowdsourcing project valuable for an individual can be achieved through the creation of such a platform for crowdsourcing activities, which not only allows the crowd workers to solve a particular problem together but can also become part of their self-identification.

It can be done through the following steps:

1) *Allow personalization at the crowdsourcing site*. Currently, only a few crowdsourcing platforms allow their users to control and change the virtual environment of the site, their virtual workplace. An exception is the CrowdTap site, where users have the opportunity to customize the site's workspace. In general, this direction is still an area of undisclosed potential.

2) *Provide opportunities for learning and growth*. A crowdsourcing organization can, for example, add reference and training materials in the direction of a crowdsourcing project, as the 99designs and Zooppa crowdsourcing sites did, by hosting design textbooks and conducting webinars and workshops. You can also add some free materials for work (for example, free fonts, stock music). This will not only improve the quality of individual contributions of crowd workers to a crowdsourcing project but also strengthen the connection of participants with the crowdsourcing platform, crowdsourcing projects, and crowdsourcing organizations.

3) *Create a virtual space where the contributions of individual participants are marked*. This can be done by introducing separate web pages in the space of a crowdsourcing platform, where the most significant contributions of individual users will be noted. Some sites also try to personalize user data, that is, to reveal their identities, what is hidden behind a nickname. 99designs uploads video interviews with such users, Zooppa and Talenthouse publish short biographies of the most active crowd workers, Mofilm and CreateMyTattoo create virtual exhibitions for such users in the crowdsourcing space.

4) *Ask participants to share their stories*. That is, a request, as well as a motivation (with various bonuses) for participants to share their personal experience and personal stories in the crowdsourcing platform space.

3. Social self-identification, "We." The social self-identification of a crowd worker is probably the main field for

the work of the crowdsourcing organization. It is by acting on it that you can turn a crowd into a close-knit community.

Group membership is usually based on some similarities between group members. Depending on the type of project and context, it is necessary to influence different similarities between the crowd. Among them may be: demographic features (young parents or people of retirement age, etc.), possession of certain things (car owners or, for example, people using prostheses, etc.), geography (residents of Nizhny Novgorod or the Volga population, etc.)

To inspire and motivate members of the crowdsourcing project community, you need to not only remind them that they are different but also tell them how and how much better they are than others. There are five ways to do this:

1) *Highlight the community*. This means that, firstly, it is not enough to simply indicate the existence of a community, for example, by mailing or writing a company's blog, by unilaterally mentioning the project's community in the company's press materials, etc. It is necessary to separately emphasize the group identity of crowd workers, linking them with a crowdsourcing project or crowdsourcing organization ("We are a team"). An example of this attitude to the crowdsourcing community is the Get Satisfaction service, where crowd workers are indeed an impressive part of the technical support service, the company's team.

2) *Claim about the identity of the community and its exclusivity, benefits*. The crowdsourcing organization should not only say to the project community the phrase "We are different from others", but it is also necessary to justify for crowd workers why "We are better than others". Many crowdsourcing sites and crowdsourcing organizations perform this task by creating capacious self-determination. For example, 99designs.com speaks of its community as "a community of strikingly talented designers," which, firstly, is certainly pleasant for the crowd workers of this site, but also motivates people to join this community.

3) *Support and encourage interaction*. A crowdsourcing organization should provide the community with opportunities and incentives for horizontal peer-to-peer communication and interaction, as well as for collective discussion and reflection. Oddly enough, not all crowdsourcing sites allow their users to freely communicate with each other. Among examples of sites where, firstly, there are visible user profiles for other users and ample opportunities for exchanging messages between users, CrowdTap and CrowdSpring can be cited. Another example is the American platform for political crowdsourcing Challenge.gov, where there are discussion boards integrated in the platform, discussion forums designed to discuss participants with existing problems and to unite them on various issues.

4) *Design a social structure*. This can be done by gambling the work of the site, thanks to which it will be possible to distribute certain statuses among community members. This is how platforms like Mofilm, CrowdTap, eYeka, SAP, etc., do it, where users earn reputation points for certain actions and contributions, which ultimately determine their status among the community [19, 20]. Some platforms create exclusive content accessible only to high-ranking users, others (for example, SAP) go further and hire the most

prominent users as community managers. True, here we are only talking about users with a high rank in the built-in system, when as few sites pay attention to low-ranking users and beginners. Examples of such sites include MindSumo, where there is a help and mentoring system for beginners and low-ranking crowd workers.

5) *Take into account local culture.* The community of the crowdsourcing project will invariably develop a number of standards of behavior for its participants, its own code of ethics, its own convictions, its own special language, etc. At the same time, the community itself will teach beginners these rules and regulations, as well as engage in self-control, apply certain sanctions to members of the community who do not adhere to these standards. At the same time, on the part of the crowdsourcing organization, it is important to give the community opportunities for self-regulation and to develop certain mechanisms for the application of community sanctions against its members.

Now let us turn to the results of a study of motivation factors among Russian crowd workers.

As mentioned above, to clarify the factors of motivation, when implementing crowd projects in Russian practice, a study was conducted of the organizers and executors of crowd projects with experience in organizing / participating in at least two crowd projects.

In the beginning, the authors distributed the survey participants by type of crowd projects. The data obtained show that Russian crowd projects are more common in the field of social problems, the creation of joint creative products and assistance, rather than in the field of improving goods and services.

The largest number of workers in Russian crowd projects have relatively little experience in their implementation: most of the surveyed organizers and executors of crowdfunding projects have 3-5 projects in their “baggage”, which is associated with a rather short period of spreading crowdsourcing technology in our country. Only 21% of the total number of respondents, took part in crowd projects that paid for the work performed.

Further, motivational factors were identified that the organizers consider key (it was proposed to select several positions (the results are presented in Figure 1).

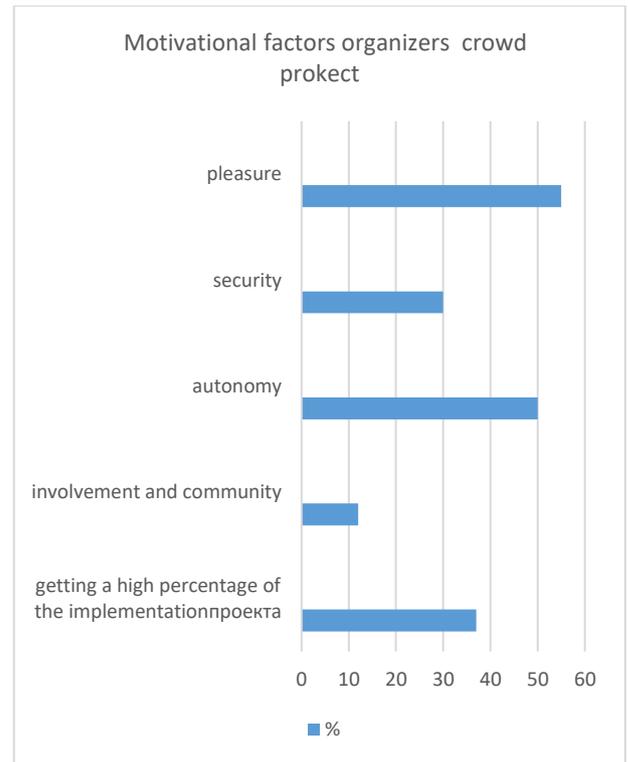


Fig. 1. Motivational factors of crowdfunding organizers

As can be seen from the diagram, among the key aspects are: the pleasure of the project, autonomy and the receipt of monetary rewards. We would like to note that material motivation is not leading, which confirms the research results presented above.

Next, we present the results of a study of the motivational aspects of Turkers.

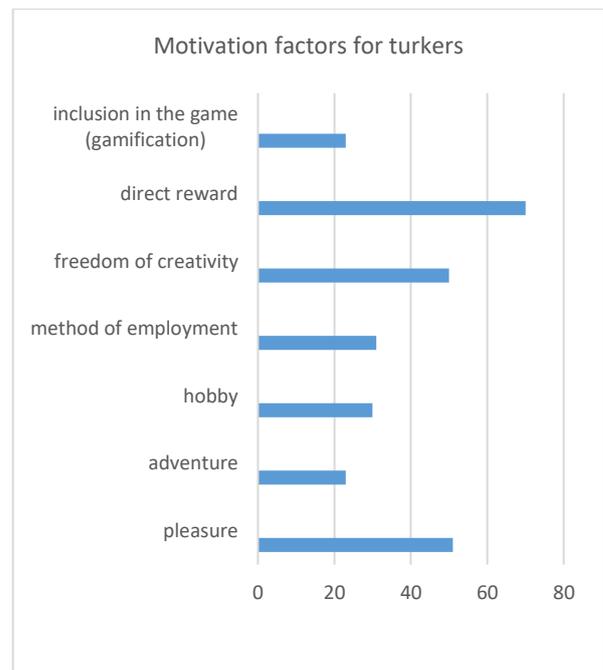


Fig. 2. Motivation factors for Turkers

The results of the motivation factors for the Turkers show that, unlike the organizers, the Turkers pay attention to direct remuneration, the possibility of creative freedom and the pleasure of working on a project.

V. CONCLUSION

The data obtained in the study allow us to state that the motivating factors are the freedom of creativity, the opportunity to enjoy working on a project, and in the case of Turkers, receiving direct remuneration.

Thus, the use of social self-identification of online communities helps to develop and strengthen interaction and communication with the organization, brand, as well as disseminate the most successful innovative practices among participants. The result of this is a faster innovation cycle, more effective cooperation, as well as the high value of a crowdsourcing project not only for a crowdsourcing organization but also for Turkers.

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