Abstract

This Master degree thesis deals with content quality regulation and motivation to participate in the Scuk.cz project – web server dedicated to reviews of restaurants and other culinary venues. The server represents a specific case of user-generated content (UGC) whose content comes from closed community of reviewers chosen among non-professional food lovers by the server´s founder. Aim of this thesis is to describe this filtration and regulation process as well as the qualitative criteria applied to reviewers and reviews, both from the point of view of administrators and community members. It uses the theory of reputation systems as well as Carpentier´s more dynamic concept of quality as the ever-changing result of democratic negotiations (in the context of community media, as Scuk.cz can be to a certain extent). Motivations for participation are explained with Bourdieu´s concepts of social and cultural capital and their later derivations.

Empirical part of the study is based on qualitative interviews with administrators and 11 community members and following thematical analysis. Interview data are completed with analysis of texts – Scuk guidelines, reviews and other community communication.

We found out that the first access filter plays a key role in content regulation, creating like-minded community and facilitating further measures and acceptance of community norms. Another very strong qualitative regulation is the responsibility and high standards of good text perceived by the reviewers. It is also a non-intended quantity moderator, as the reviewers´ standards can delay or even inhibit publication of the review. We also discover strong emotional and identity bond towards the community, conceptualised as relational capital and possible source of ontological security for its members.