

FIDE Online Commission - 2019 Report

Major activities:

1. Web development

FIDE Online Commission major goal for 2019 was to run the "New FIDE.com" project. The new FIDE.com site was launched on Sep 19, 2019 despite the fact that the agreement with the chosen developer was signed only in May, 2019.

FIDE Online Commission was in charge of defining technical requirements for the new site, negotiating with the developers' company, overlooking the whole development process, testing & bug-fixing. By agreement with the FIDE Management Board FIDE Online Commission is also running the site after its launch. Members of the Commission are serving as FIDE.com editor-in-chief, technical operators, web-designers etc. In the Q4 2019 FIDE Online Commission started working on the list of technical requirements and improvements for FIDE.com Development Stage II that will be finalized next year.

The goal of the project was to create a new FIDE site with a completely new, modern look; serious improvements of its visual part; comprehensive content management system. After the launch, it was necessary to organize editorial work process to guarantee timely publications of chess news, official info, various press-releases & calendar updates etc. Although this is an ongoing process that always has room for improvement, everyday operations of the site are now well-organized and it is updated in due course. Almost 300 unique materials were published in this period.

After FIDE.com re-launch in 2 months there was a 13.4% growth in the number of FIDE.com users, though these stats are not reliable enough due to the site's reindexing by search engines etc.

FIDE Online Commission believes that a good platform for future growth & development of FIDE online presence was built.

2. Social media

As of October 2018 FIDE was non-existent in social media. FIDE Online Commission first task was to restart or in some cases to begin FIDE & chess promotion work in all key social media. This project was realized thanks to the tremendous effort of FIDE Online Commission councilor Anna Burtasova.

Here are some of the results of Anna Burtasova's work in social media (data for Nov 20):

Facebook - 47.1K subscribers (86% growth)

Instagram - 39.1K subscribers (from 0)

YouTube - 25.8K subscribers (112% growth)

Twitter (from March 1) - 62.2K (17% growth)

Twitch - around 9M views (from 0; English, Russian & Spanish channels were launched)

Burtasova single-handedly creates & produces all the content including some self-made videos (for example -

<https://www.facebook.com/ChessFIDE/videos/441099253498240/>). These results are achieved with zero marketing budget.

3. Broadcasts

FIDE Online Commission supervises and takes active part in all FIDE-organized video broadcasts from major chess events, especially those produced by the ChessCast company (where Anna Burtasova used to work before FIDE). Here is the list of the broadcasts Online Commission helped with:

- Rapid & Blitz Championships (December, 2018)
- World Team Championship (March, 2019)
- Grand Prix Moscow (May, 2019)
- Women's Candidates (June, 2019)
- Grand Prix Riga (July, 2019)
- World Cup (September, 2019)
- Women's Grand Prix Skolkovo (September, 2019)

Members of Online Commission work as producers & editors of these broadcasts, taking part in the process of choosing the commentators, organizing & improving the broadcast quality, working with the technical staff & the commentators on daily basis before & during the broadcasts etc. Online Commission is working on reaching bigger audiences setting up three different Twitch channels, launching broadcasts on Facebook & constantly developing & updating FIDE YouTube channel.

Among other activities members of FIDE Online Commission were actively working together with FIDE Marketing & Communications Director David Llada, defining key media & coverage policies for FIDE website & social media, actively communicating with FIDE press officers during & after the key events of FIDE 2019 calendar.

FIDE Online commission chairman Ilya Gorodetskiy was also involved in partnership negotiations with different media & online chess entities including chess24.com, lichess.com, KIM solution (possible FIDE mobile partner), Premium Chess, World Chess etc.

Work experience:

On behalf of FIDE Online Commission we want to thank FIDE management for the opportunity to work for chess promotion & representation. In general after the inevitable transition period members of the commission have all the possibilities to fulfill their working assignments & enjoy adequate support from the top management.

To improve our work in the next year we can propose following measures:

- to work on FIDE internal infrastructure to give everyone involved better picture of who is in charge of what part of FIDE activities;
- to go forward we need to spend at least some money on social media marketing - we're close to reaching our maximum figures without spending on promo activities;
 - stimulate more productive activity from the commissions and other FIDE institutions referred with their representation on FIDE.com, commission subdomains & social networks; PR activities (at least in the form of timely provision of needed info) should be a key part of their job
- financial procedures could be improved: there is no clear system in place for compensations of those commission members & FIDE.com editors who are agreed to be paid; it will be also nice to have some pre-approved budget for minimum editorial needs

like ordering a few extra articles/translations, paying for some needed analytical or content-creating software, designing a banner or promo picture etc.

We believe that strengthening FIDE web/media team is a must for year 2020. We still have no FIDE press-officer (they work only during big events and they're always different) & a native speaker who will proof-read & edit the key texts especially those of legal significance will improve our work significantly.