THE INSTITUTE OF OPTIMISM FOR PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA ERA

by
Jin Kyu Lee

B.S. Architectural Engineering
Hanyang University, 2005

Submitted to the Department of Architecture
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Signature of Author: _____
Department of Architecture
January 14, 2013

Certified by: _____
Antón García-Abril
Professor of Architecture
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by: _____
Takehiko Nagakura
Associate Professor of Design and Computation
Chair of the Department Committee on Graduate Students

THESIS COMMITTEE

Antón García-Abril

Professor of Architecture
Department of Architecture

Advisor

Andrew Scott

Associate Professor of Architecture
Department of Architecture

Reader

John Ochsendorf

Associate Professor of Building Technology
Department of Architecture

Reader

Maria Alessandra Segantini

Principal
C+S ASSOCIATI

Reader

The Institute of Optimism for Professional Journalism
in the Social Media Era

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Submitted to the Department of Architecture
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ABSTRACT

The ecology of contemporary journalism is experiencing a power shift from traditional media such as newspapers and TV news to social media. This shift is bringing a crisis of professional journalism in the traditional media and the emergence of public journalism based on social media.

The Institute of Optimism for Professional Journalism in the Social Media Era (hereafter "IOPS") is a new institutional building for a professional broadcasting organization. The aim of the thesis is to find a new spatial medium to reformulate the function of professional journalism through a systematic friction with public journalism in the process of news production.

The thesis deals with the imminent deterioration of the broadcasting station through two phased strategies. First, the thesis studies the trajectory of the relationship between the sphere of professional journalism and the sphere of the public in the broadcasting building. Based on this research, the new type of relationship envisaged by the project is formulated. Second, the thesis addresses systematic friction between professional journalism and public journalism through the architectural interfaces in a tectonic manner.

Subsequently, the synthesis between the logic of the new relationship and the logic of transparency derived from the interfaces is utilized as the foundation for the construction of an institutional building generating optimal alternative journalism.

THESIS ADVISOR	TITLE
Antón García-Abril	Professor of Architecture

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IOPS, physical model

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Bankruptcy of Traditional Media Companies
Tribune Company's bankruptcy in December of 2008

one.

Crisis and New Stream

In 2008, the Tribune Company, which was the third largest media group in the US, went bankrupt. Although the public's desire to consume news is getting higher, the reason why traditional media industries such as newspapers and broadcasting are declining is the appearance of social media. The ecology of contemporary journalism is experiencing a power shift from traditional media to social media. As a senior editor of the *Huffington Post*, Danny Shea reveals, "Huffington Post Passes WashingtonPost.com In Unique Visitors In September: Nielsen." The Huffington Post. TheHuffingtonPost.com, 15 Oct. 2009. Web. 10 Jan. 2013. It also means the crisis of professional journalism in the traditional media and the emergence of public journalism based on social media. The crisis of professional journalism consists of two main parts: a weakened funding structure and an obsolete journalistic authority.

First, social media is threatening the funding structure of traditional media companies. The important thing is that this crisis is not limited to the issue of the circulation of newspaper and ratings of TV news. The traditional media companies are isolated from new dynamics between consumers and journalism and capitalism. Because of the development of social media networks, advertisements do not need to be distributed through the traditional media. According to a book by Huney Kong, "In the past, in order to advertise a new product, companies needed to distribute the press release and request media companies to report it through the news. Otherwise, as long as the companies did not pay an enormous cost for extra advertisement, there was no way to promote their product to consumers. However, in the social media era, the press release can be distributed to public without passing through the previous media companies" (Kong, 2010, p. 264). Consequently, since advertising revenue has been the most significant source of income for traditional media companies, they confront a crisis of bankruptcy (see Figs. 1 and 2).

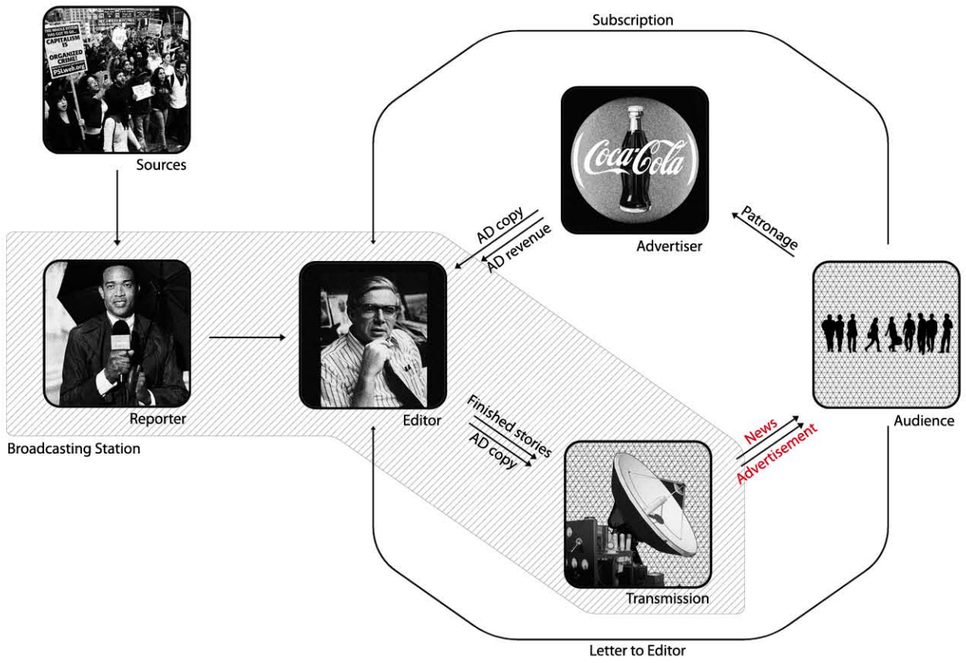


Figure 1. Dynamics of Old Journalism
Source: *http://journalismthatmatters.wordpress.com*

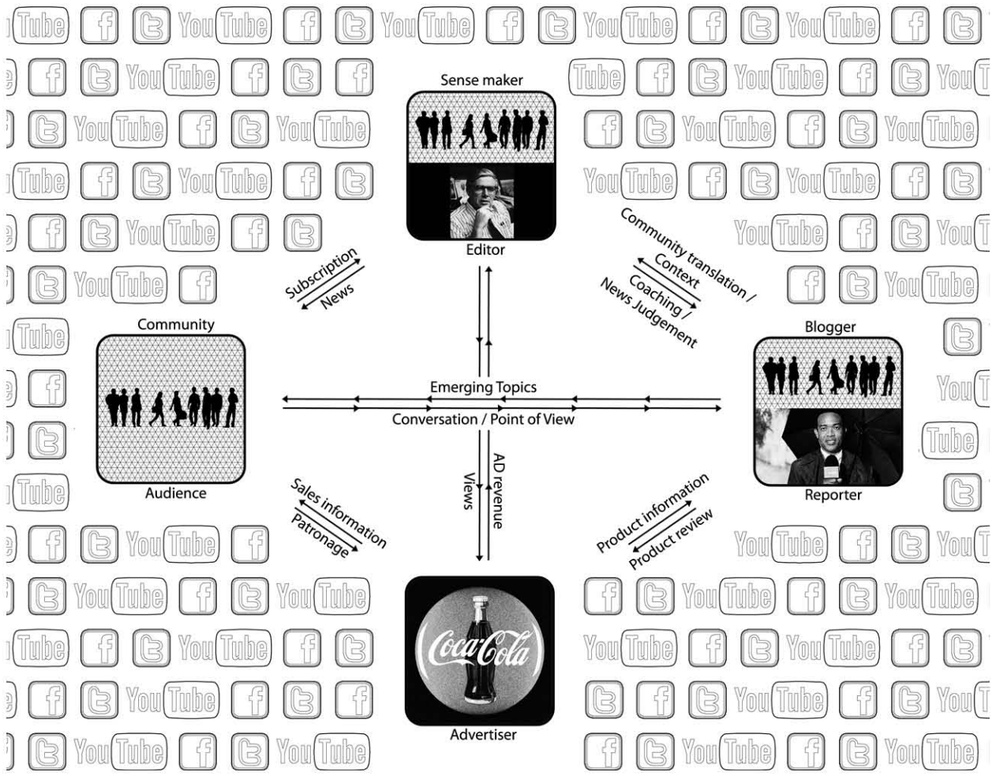
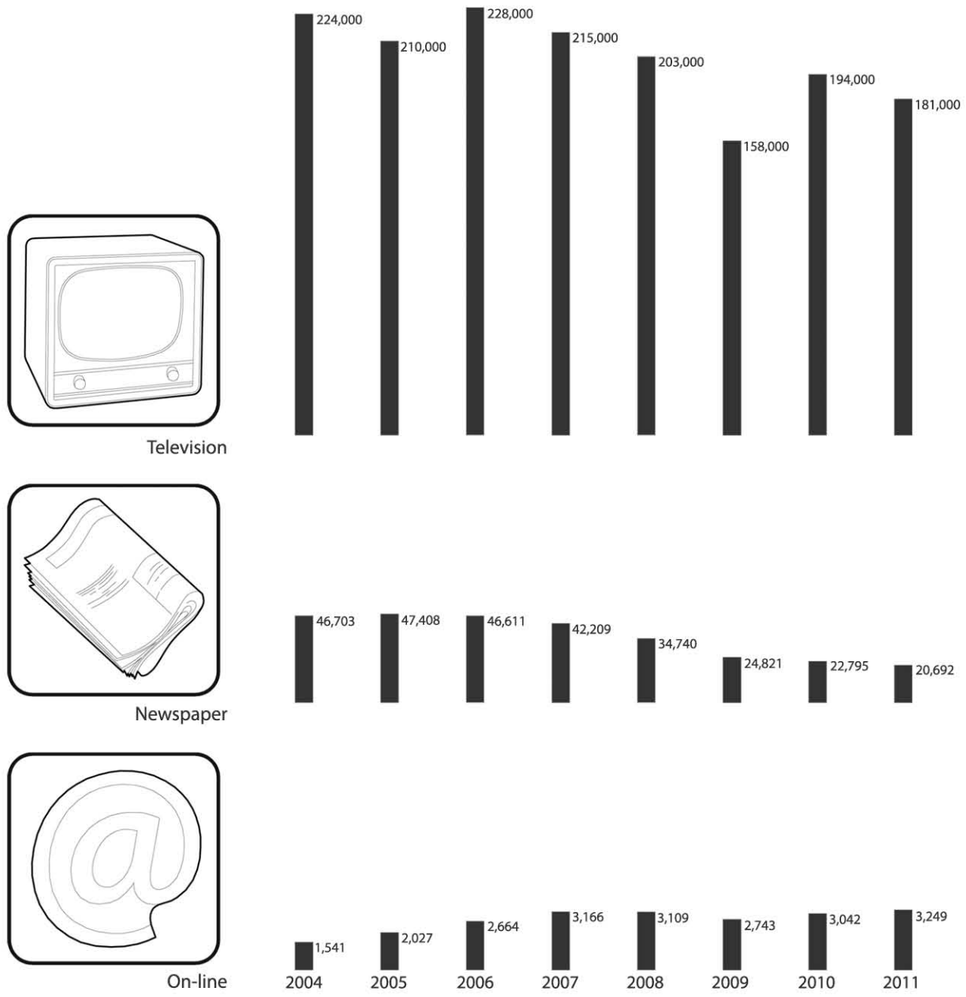


Fig. 2. Dynamics of New Journalism
Source: *http://journalismthatmatters.wordpress.com*



Advertising Revenue of Media (in millions of dollars)
Sources: *Newspaper Association of America & BIA/Kelsey*

Second, the authority of professional journalism is being diminished by social media. Unlike in the environment of traditional media, people can participate actively in journalism in a social media setting. Furthermore, members of public can even establish a one-person media company in the social media environment. This situation can be explained by the media device proliferation with the development of technology. As a journalism professor, Clay Shirky stresses,

> [j]ournalistic privilege is based on the previous scarcity of publishing. When it was easy to recognize who the publisher was, it was easy to figure out who the journalists were. We could regard them as a professional (and therefore minority) category. Now that scarcity is gone. Facing the new abundance of publishing options, we could just keep adding to the list of possible outlets to which journalism is tie-newspapers and television, and now blogging and video blogging and podcasting and so on. But the latter items on the list are different because they have no built-in scarcity. Anyone can be a publisher (and frequently is) (Shirky, 2008, p. 73).

That is, the high entry barrier into the media industry, which is based on the astronomical cost for setting up the facilities of a newspaper factory or broadcasting station, is collapsing thanks to the access of the public to social media journalism through smart devices like smart phones, tablet PCs, and so on. Subsequently, the authority of professional journalism, which had been guaranteed by this entry barrier, is declining (see Figs. 3 and 4). If the professionalism in journalism should evolve based on the new framework of social media, which way should it go?

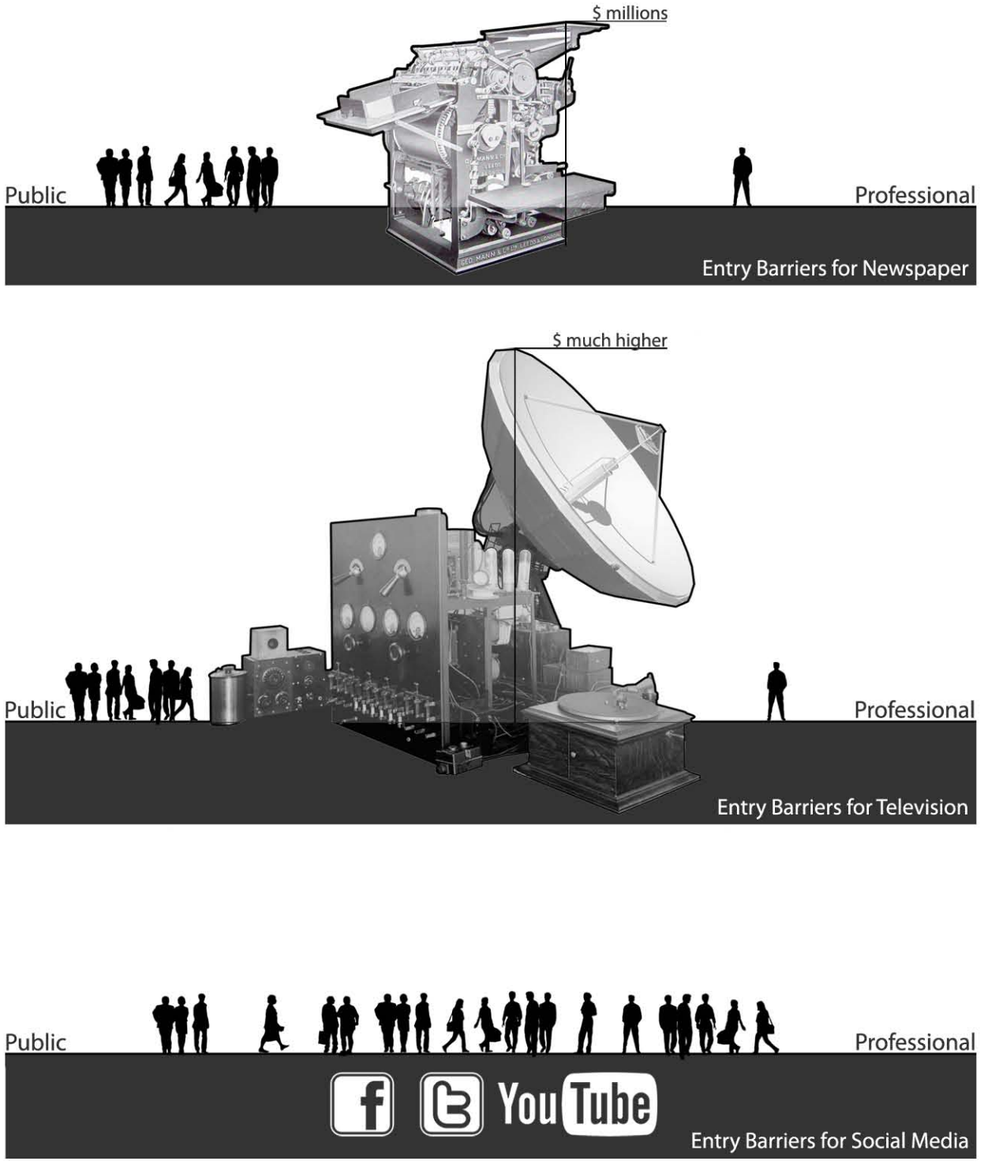
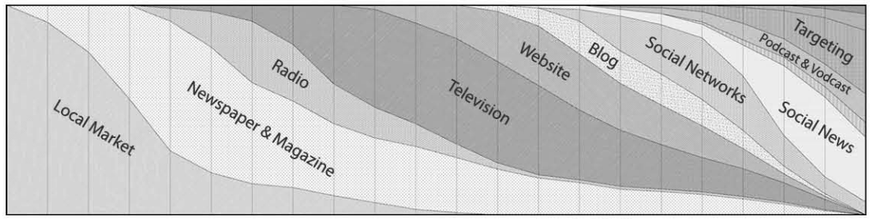


Fig. 3. Entry Barriers for Media Based on the scarcity of technology



Baekdal diagram, Source: *www.baekdal.com*

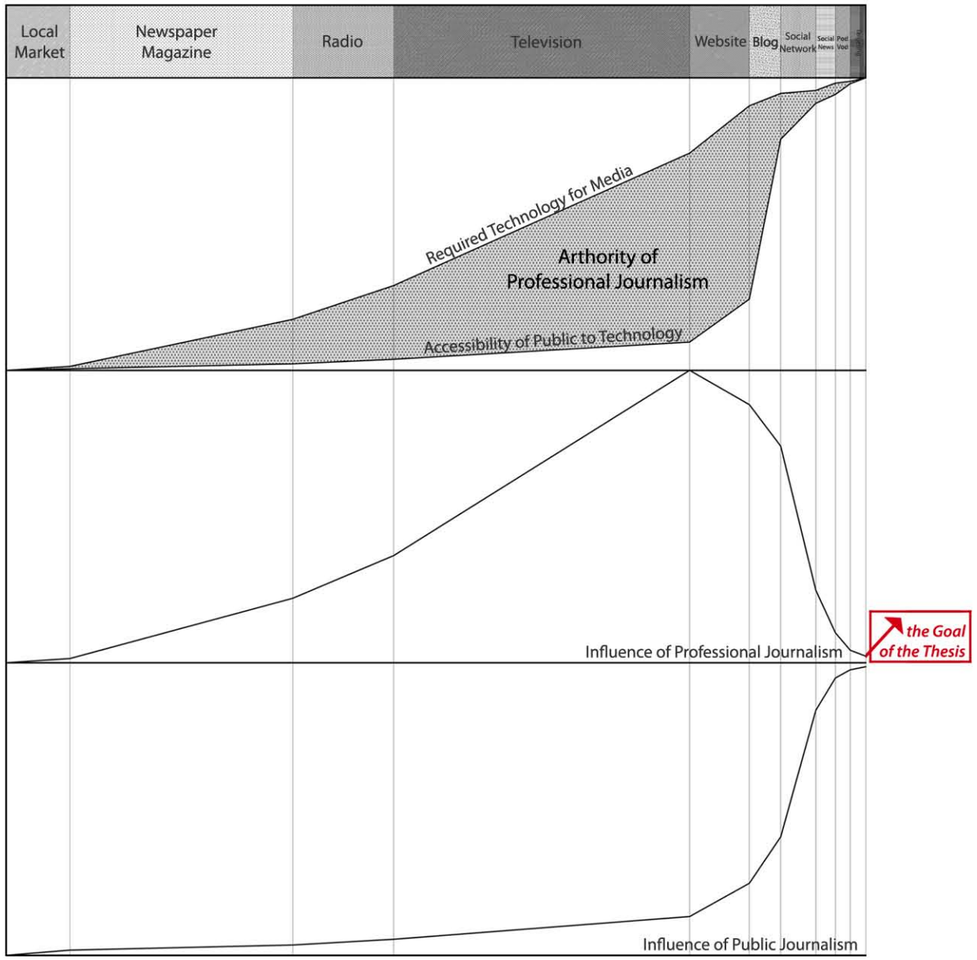


Fig. 4. Arthority of Journalists and Technology Based on History of Media

two.

Democratic Newsroom

The dichotomous relationship between producers and consumers in the media industry became established in the last century. However, the rise of social media has blurred the boundary between producers and consumers, because consumers are starting to produce news for themselves. As conventional producers have begun to face consumers as competitors, many media gurus have suggested that producers should open their own realm to the public for participation and collaboration in order to adjust to the new ecology. According to the work of Don Tapscott, a business consultant, "Smart companies will bring customers into their business webs and give them lead roles in developing next generation products and services. This may mean adjusting business models and revamping internal processes to enable better collaboration with users" (Tapscott, 2006, p.136). This principle could also be applied in professional journalism. Since the main reason why the traditional media industry has difficulty in following the new journalistic stream is that they still adhere to a dichotomous and doctrinaire managing discipline, they should stop defending their exclusive authority and start to collaborate with the public and experts of various fields. According to the writing of Charlie Beckett, a founding director of POLIS, the forum for research and debate into journalism and society at the London School of Economics,

> Networked journalism is a description and an aspiration. It reaffirms the value of the core functions of journalism. It celebrates the demand for journalism and its remarkable social utility. But it insists on a new process and fresh possibilities. It means a kind of journalism where the rigid distinctions of the past, between professional and amateur, producer and product, audience and participation, are deliberately broken down. It embraces permeability and multi-dimensionality (Beckett, 2008, p.6).

Consequently, the participation and collaboration will become the initial concepts to be constructed as the most significant part of the new institutional building: a democratic newsroom.

The history of journalistic architecture shows the same type of transformation of the relationship between public and professional journalism. In the same way that the high entry barrier for setting up hardware for the media industry has offered journalistic privilege to professional journalists, the typology of media architecture has generated the diverse distinctions of status between public and professional journalism (see Fig. 7). For example, the plan of the Broadcasting House of BBC as an embodiment of traditional journalistic ecology shows how news production in a newsroom has been separated from the public (see Figs. 5 and 6). The remarkable thing is that the distinction was derived from a technical issue. As Staffan Ericson, a professor in Media and Communication Studies of the Södertörn University, has written:

> [T]he main concern in that scheme was sound insulation. Every single studio had to be acoustically sealed off from the outside world. … Second, this plan reflected an ideal model of the media institution at the time. Howard Robertson, Principal of the Architectural Association School, compared the plan of the building with a medieval castle: "There is the central Donjon, the Keep, which is the inner core, and round it are more public apartments, the service ways, like the outer ring of the defence. In the new building the public might invade the corridors, and even the offices, but the staff of the BBC could take refuge in their inner fastness, lock themselves in, live, cook, eat, circulate, and even produce music, plays, and noises-to-taste, without in any way being disturbed. (*The Architectural Review* 1932, p. 43) (Ericson, 2010, pp.29-30).

Although the isolation of the newsroom from its outside context was for achieving a technical requirement, it has been a physical symbol of a journalistic

barrier to the public. Media buildings have kept this donjon for their authority throughout the history of the building typology. In order to follow the new journalistic ecology, the type of the media building should be transformed as the spatial medium of participation and collaboration by breaking open its donjon.

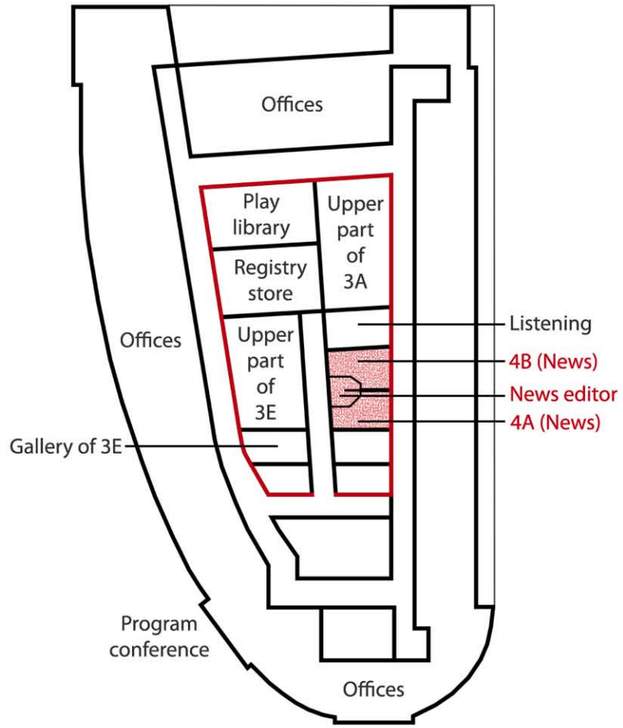


Fig. 5. The 4th floor plan of the BBC Broadcasting House

Fig. 6. The old newsrooms of the BBC. Photograph. The BBC W1 Project. *http://www.innovationsinnewspapers.com/index.php/2009/11/26/the-bbc-w1-project/*. Web. Jan, 11th, 2013.

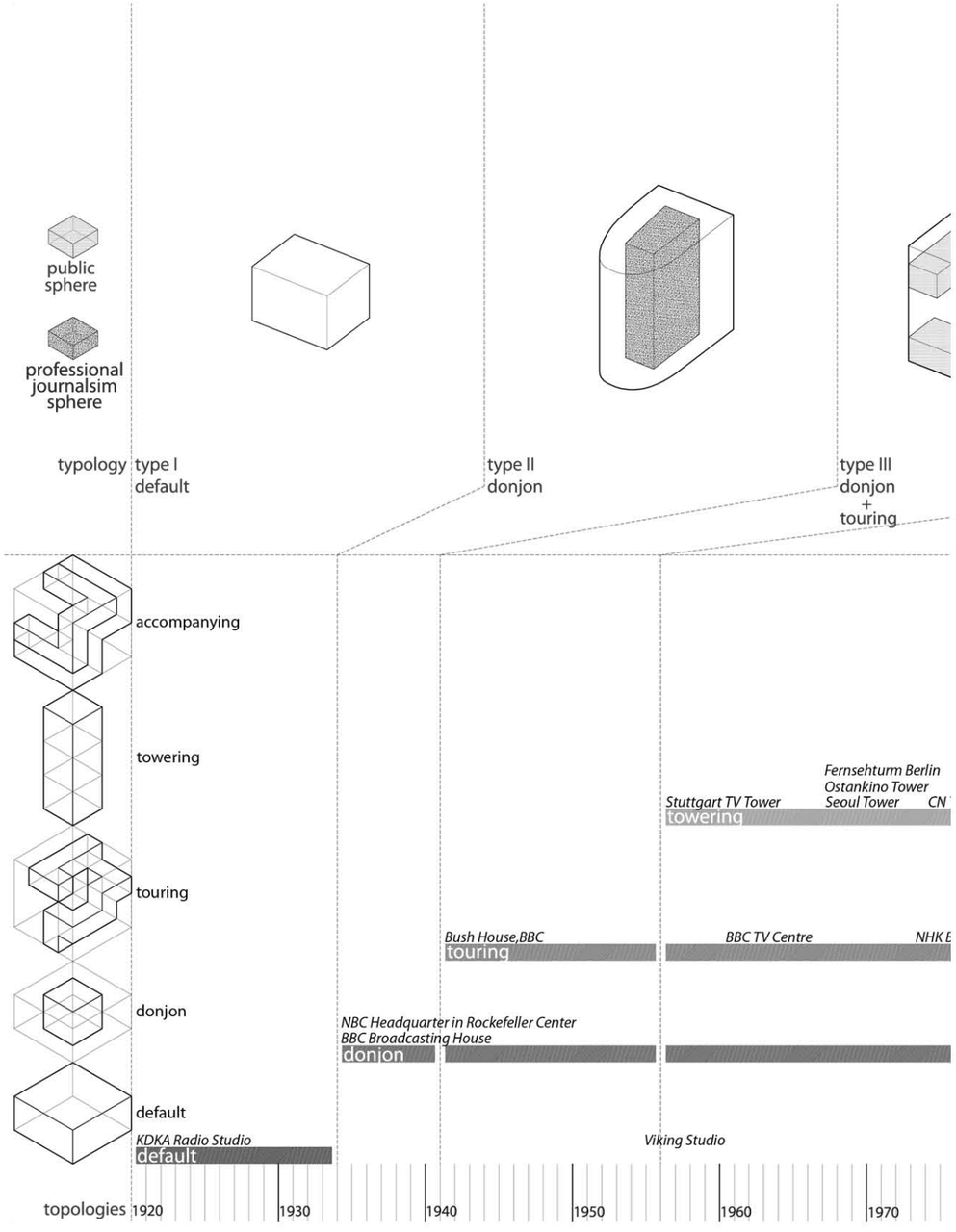


Fig. 7. Relationship of the Public and Professional Journalism Spheres in a Building Typology

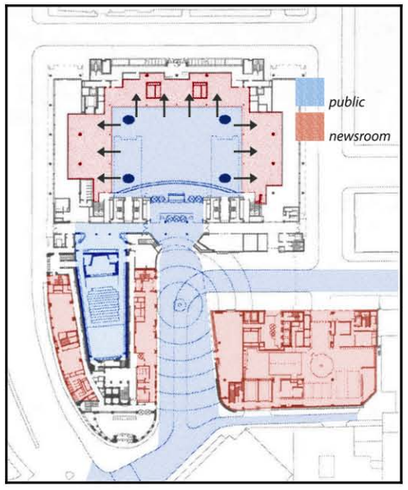
three.

Dynamics of the Public and Professional Spheres in a Journalistic Institute

In order to explore the new type of the newsroom and the building, it is critical to redefine the "publicness" in media buildings. Since the sphere of public journalism, through social media and smart devices, is getting more prevalent, the definition of the public in a journalistic institution has changed. For instance, in the two projects constructed recently, the changed concepts of publicness are remarkable.

First, the extension project of the BBC Broadcasting House, known as the BBC W1 project, by MJP Architects, exposes the workplace of professional journalists to the public not in a touristic, but in a journalistic manner (see Fig. 8). As Ericson stresses, "they want a unique opportunity to display their products in the making. Langham Place is connected to the arcade, which in turn is visually connected to the production facilities via transparent surfaces. . . . The boundary between audience and production is transgressed through architectural means. . ." (Ericson, 2010, p. 189). In this case, the definition of the public is the supervising audience for professional journalism, but their status is that of a consumer.

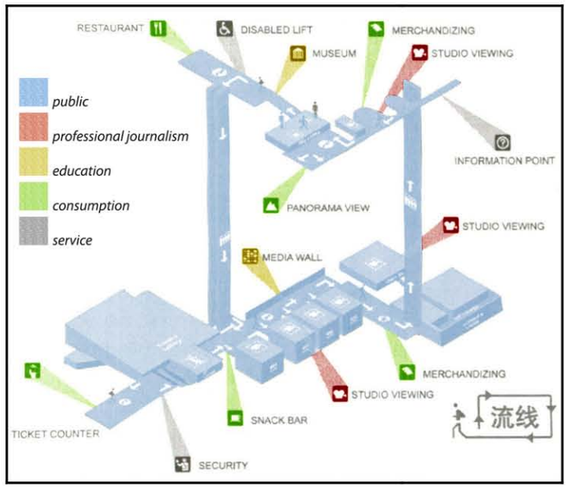
Second, the New CCTV project by the OMA suggests a more advanced idea about "publicness" than the BBC W1 project. While the architectural response of the BBC W1 project is remaining at the level of visualization of the professional realm, the New CCTV project offers a multi-dimensional opportunity for the public to understand a contemporary media industry (see Fig. 9). Unlike other industries, the contemporary media industry is consumed through a consumer's experience. As Lash and Lury writes, "Sign-value and the brand are not qualities of products: they are qualities of experiences. This experience is situated at the interface--or surface--of communication of the consumer and the brand. It is part of events; it is eventive" (Lash & Lury, 2007, p. 7). And the sequence of the "brand" has been defined as the "brandscape" by Anna Klingmann, an architect and brand consultant. "One could argue that the latent potential of brandscapes for generating responsive urban design rests on their attempt to creatively integrate experiential and sociocultural values with functional and economic aspects" (Klingmann, 2007, p. 106). It is the "brandscape" that puts the New CCTV project in the advanced stage, compared with other obsolete media buildings. According to Ericson's work, "Those zones, the New CCTV, that I have previously talked about in terms of an interface between audience and media could in the terminology of Lash and Lury be called a 'brand,' a space of events which has replaced the media buildings' communicative facades" (Ericson, 2010, p. 195). However, in terms of the status of the public, even though the New CCTV project broadens the public sphere in a media building, the public is still a consumer.



The Status of the Public
= the Consumer

image source:
MJP Architects. The BBC W1 Project, Plan. Drawing.
Staffan Ericson, Media Houses, *architecture, media, and the production of centrality*, New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2010, 188.

Fig. 8. The BBC W1 Project by MJP Architects
Publicness 1: EXPOSING PROFESSIONAL WORKPLACES



The Status of the Public
= the Consumer

image source:
OMA. The New CCTV, Diagram. Drawing. Staffan Ericson, Media Houses, *architecture, media, and the production of centrality*, New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2010, 193.

Fig. 9. The New CCTV by OMA
Publicness 2: BRANDSCAPE

Since the OMA designed the "brandscape" of the New CCTV while regarding the public as the consumer of the media industry, the room for participation and collaboration between the public and professional journalism was not considered. In order to formulate an optimal architectural response for democratic journalism, the new definition of the public realm should be "engaging with professional journalism". Simultaneously, the status of the public in the institution will be that of a journalistic partner.

The conventional broadcasting station has been closely related to a process of news production (see Figs. 10 and 11). As Thomas Markus insists, "This structure is a classification system that we carry in our heads and whose conceptual elements are defined in language. ..., This use of language permeates the entire social practice of building production. They form the substance of building regulations, design guides, competition and other briefs and critical descriptions, and management rules" (Franck, 1994, pp.154-155). Through this investigation, the thesis can discover the critical moments that a social structure is transformed into a building morphology.

Among phases of a news production, there are three parts that overlap with a realm of public journalism ongoing actively in a social media network: news coverage, news review, and news footage. That is, in these parts, the professional journalism can attract the participation of public journalism and collaborate with it. On the other hand, news editing, news control, news anchoring, news graphics, and news technique are still the sphere that only professional journalists can fulfill. Thus, in order to reformulate the function of professional journalism, the news production process needs to be re-categorized based on the feasibility of participation and collaboration (see Fig. 12).

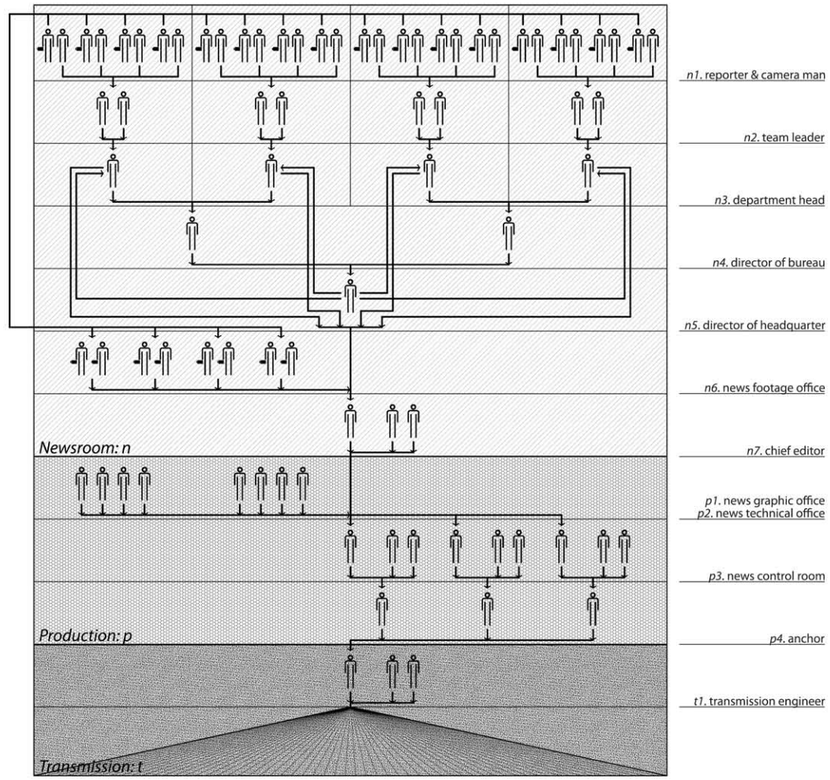
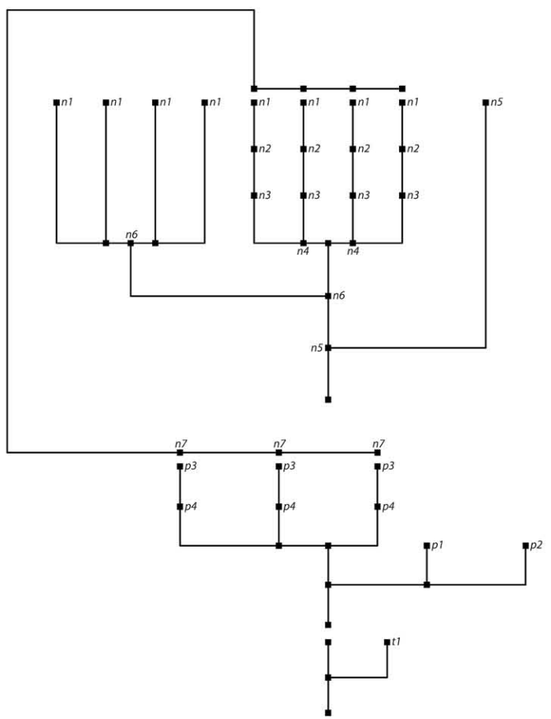
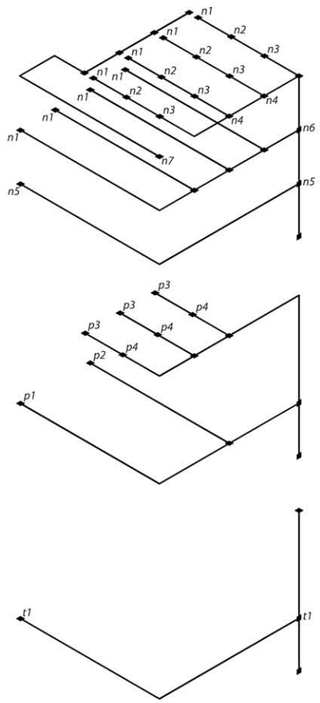


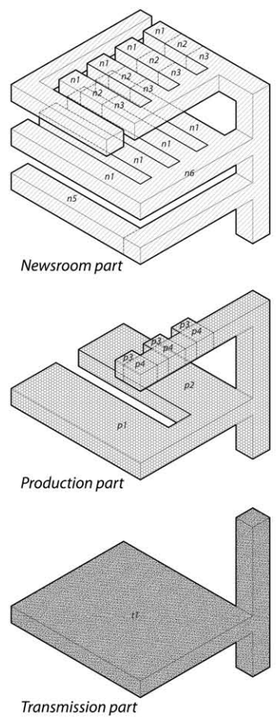
Fig. 10. The Process of News Production in a Broadcasting Station
Park, Tae Nam, Personal interview, 5 July. 2012.



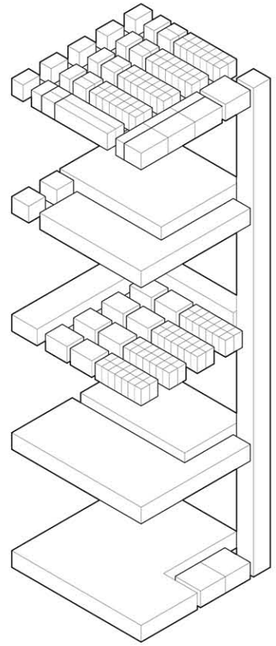
TOPOLOGIES



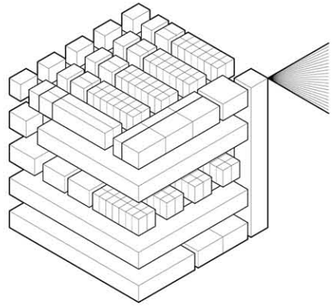
TOPOLOGIES IN 3D



VOLUMES OF 3 PARTS

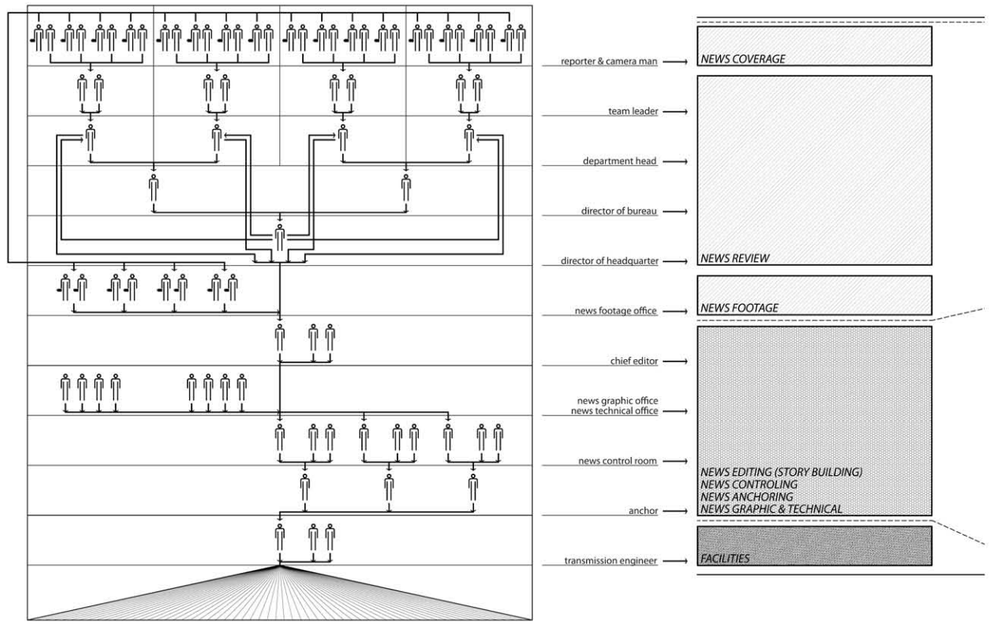


AGGREGATION



TYPOLOGY

Fig. 11. The Transformation of a Social Structure into a Building Morphology



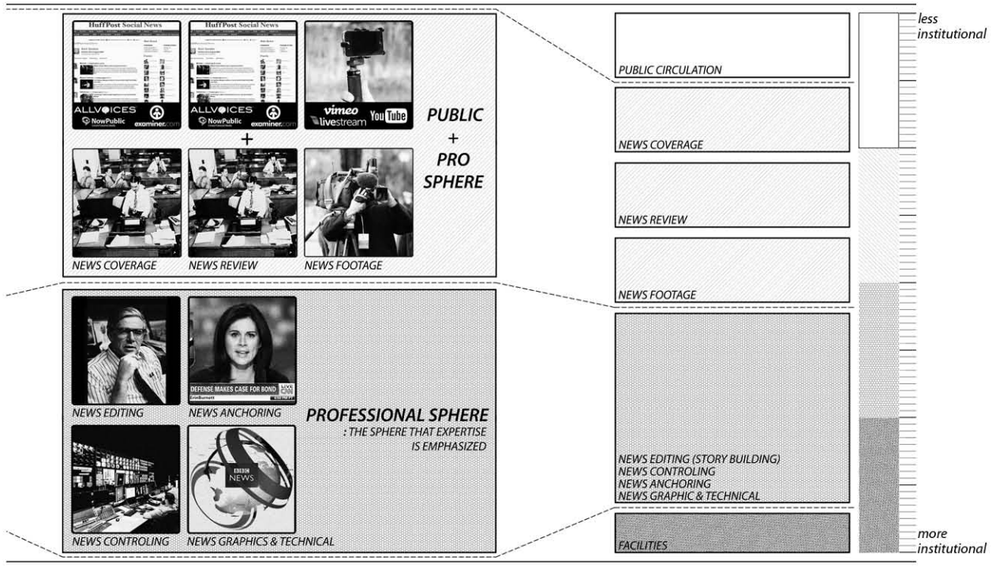
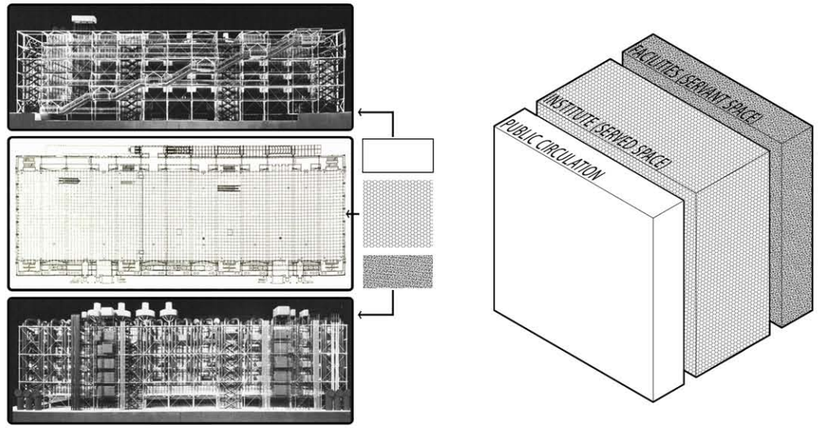


Fig. 12. Re-categorizing the Phases of the News Production
based on the Feasibility of Participation and Collaboration

The project consists of four main parts: (1) a public circulation, (2) a hybrid sphere of both public and professional journalism, (3) a professional journalism sphere, and (4) a broadcasting facility (see Fig. 15), and they are arranged based on a level of institutionality. The development of the design begins from this model.

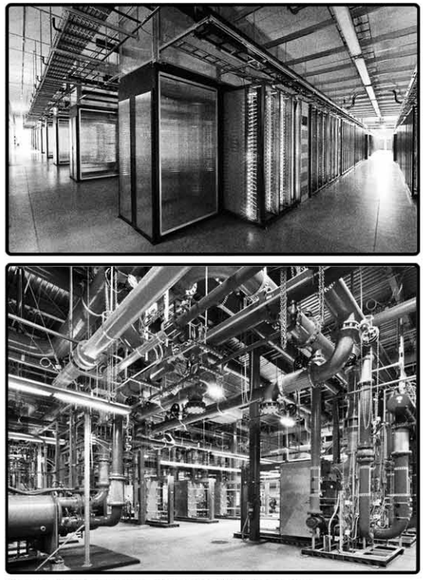
First, the public circulation occupies a main facade, and the stratum of four main parts is revealed at the other main facade (see Fig. 15). These two facades will represent the entire journalistic landscape of the project by combining it with the urban context.

Second, the position of the facility is shifted (see Fig. 16). One of the important factors which determine a schematic design of a media house is the broadcasting facility. Due to the security issue, the facility has been concealed at the most secluded spot in a media building. However, the new stream of the social media journalism is requiring a media industry to open up its facility, which means a journalistic sanctuary (see Fig. 14). As Cade Metz, the editor of *Wired*



Pompidou Centre
image source: Piano, Renzo (1984), *Renzo Piano, projects and Buildings, 1964-1983*, Milan: Electa; New York: Rizzoli

Fig. 13. A Served Space, Servant Space, and Public Circulation



Facebook Data Center at Prineville, Oregon (above)
image source: http://www.highsnobiety.com/2012/10/25/a-look-inside-the-facebook-data-center/

Google Data Center at Dalles, Oregon (below)
image source: http://www.businessinsider.com/google-data-center-walkthrough-2012-10?op=1

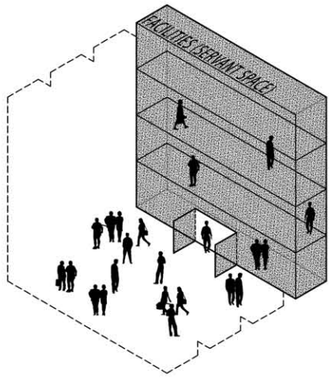


Fig. 14. A Changed Status of Facility in a Media Building

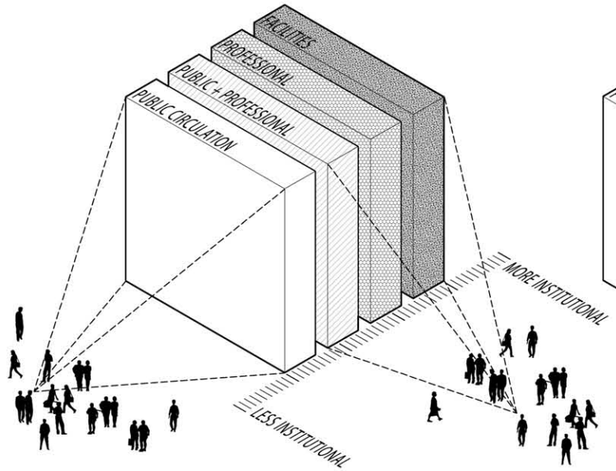


Fig. 15. Arrangement based on a Level of Institutionality

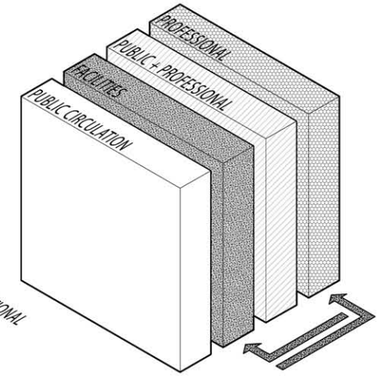


Fig. 16. Shift of a Position of Facility

Enterprise, stresses, "When Facebook turned on its Prineville Data Center this past spring, it also "open sources" the designs for the facility and its custom-built servers. . . . Facebook is trying to make the world a better place -- showing others how to build more efficient data centers and, in turn, put less of a burden on the environment" (Metz, 2012). The facility will become a remarkable asset that can allow the public to experience the physicality of the new media industry ecology. Consequently, the position of the facility should get closer to the public sphere in the media building.

Third, in the scenario investigated by the thesis, it is the hybrid sphere that can generate the systematic friction between public and professional journalism. As an architectural strategy, the hybrid sphere is composed as the superimposition of platforms designed as three urban types. These three urban types

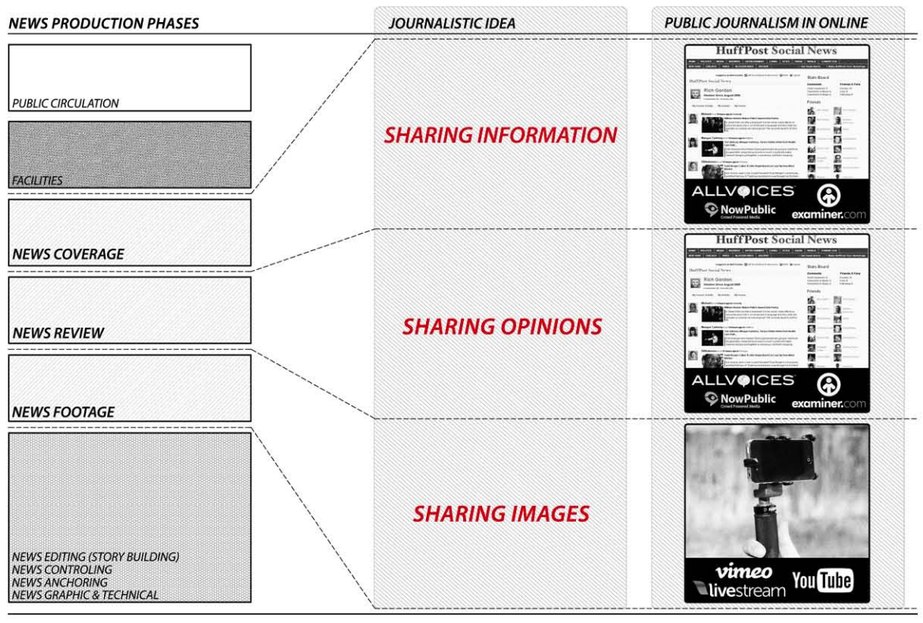
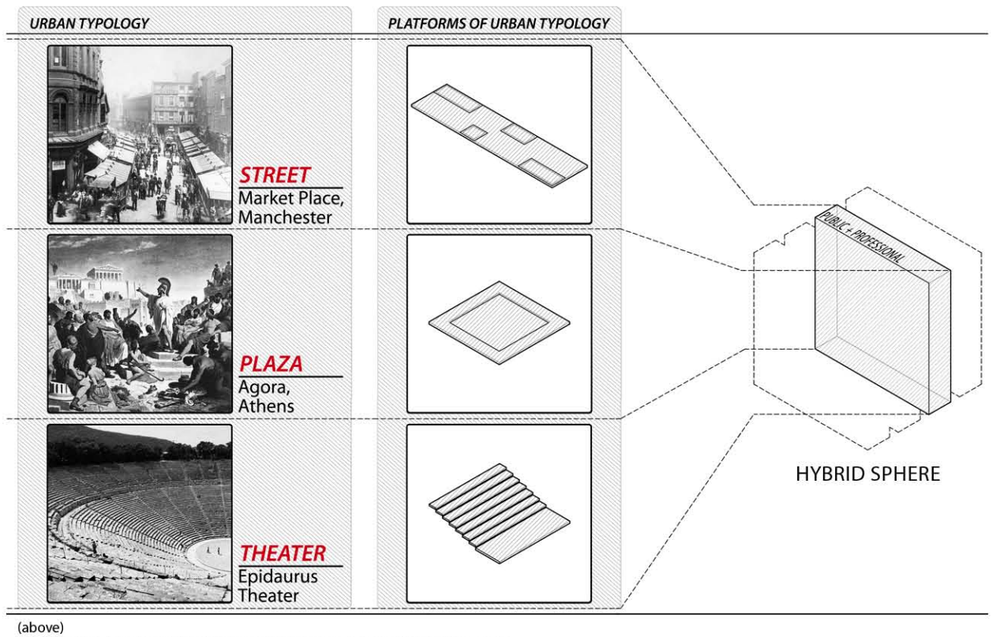


Fig. 17. The One to One Correspondence
between News Production Phases and Urban Types

-- a street, a plaza, and a theater -- imply three journalistic ideas in a public daily life. A street type is matched with sharing informaiton, as in news coverage; a plaza type corresponds to sharing opinions, as in news review; and finally, a theater type is equivalent to sharing images, as in news footage (see Fig. 17). Consequently, positioning itself at the intermediate spot, the hybrid sphere will become the multi-dimensional platform for formulating the friction between two journalistic groups (see Figs. 18 and 19).



(above)
image source: http://manchesterhistory.net/manchester/gone/marketplace.html
(middle)
image source: http://cimsec.org/first-principles/discurso_funebre_pericles/
(below)
image source: http://news.softpedia.com/newsImage/The-Mystery-of-Modern-Acoustic-in-Ancient-Greek-Theatre-Solved-2.jpg/

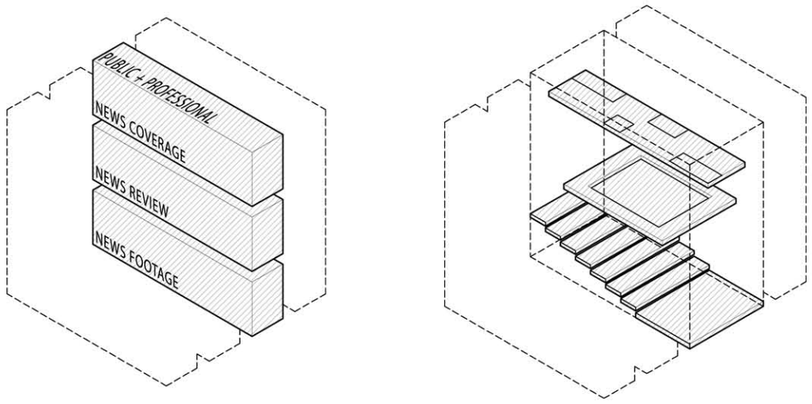


Fig. 18. Applying Three Urban Types into the Hybrid Sphere (the Public+Professional Sphere)

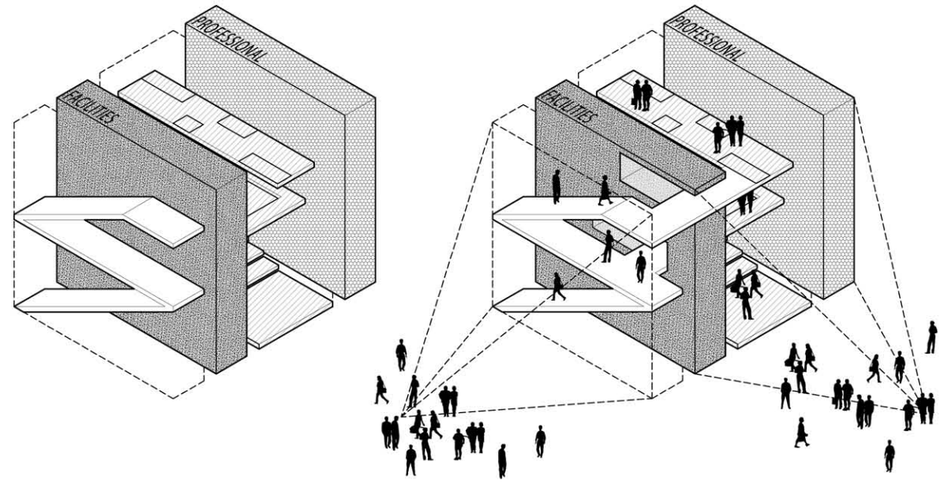


Fig. 19. an Overall Circulation

four.

Place Where It Happens

The site of the thesis is 39-1, Seosomun-dong, Jung-gu, Seoul, South Korea. Geographically, the site is no more than a gently sloped place. However, it is the urban context of the site which is stratified by social and political layers that make this site suitable for the broadcasting station. There has been a traditional protest route network around the site since the 1920s, consisting of the Seoul City Hall Plaza, Sejong Boulevard, and so on (see Fig. 20). Furthermore, the site is at the intersection point of popular public roads connecting the protest routes (see Fig. 21). It means that the open platforms of the project can be exposed frequently to offline public opinions which are ongoing.

a Protest on the Sejong Boulevard
image source: http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=sec&sid1=102&oid=047&aid=0001942739

a Protest on the Seoul Cityhall Plaza
image source: http://blog.naver.com/wpckpress?Redirect=Log&logNo=90081441953

Fig. 20. Offline Public Opinions on Protest Routes

Fig. 21. A Protest Route Network in Seoul

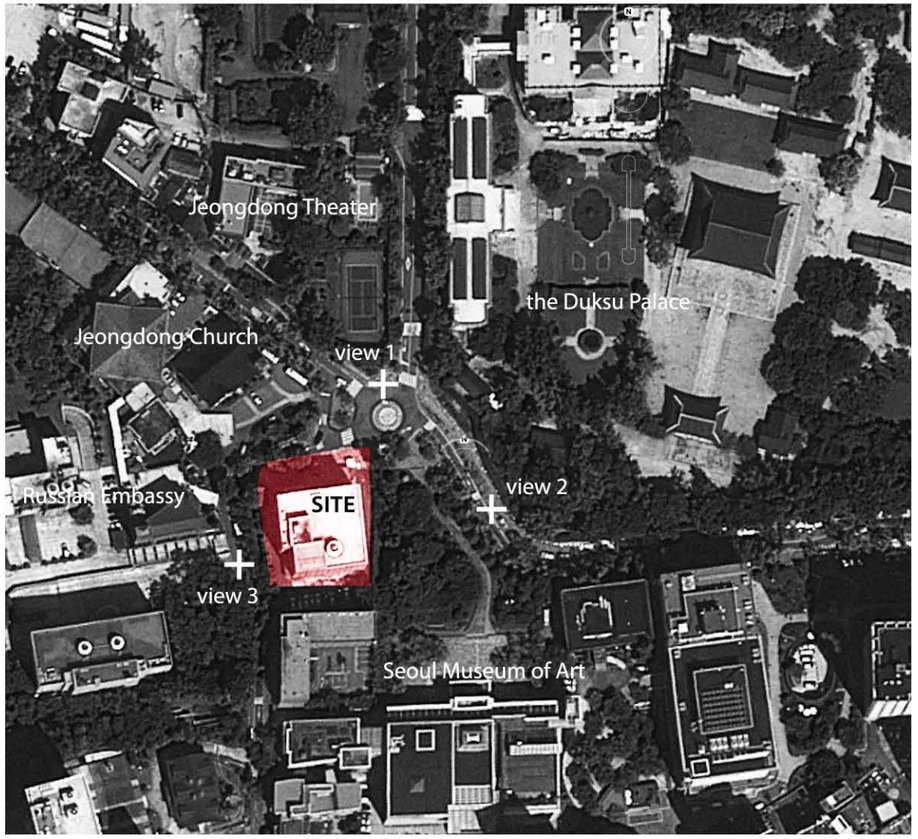


Fig. 22. Site

Fig. 23. Views

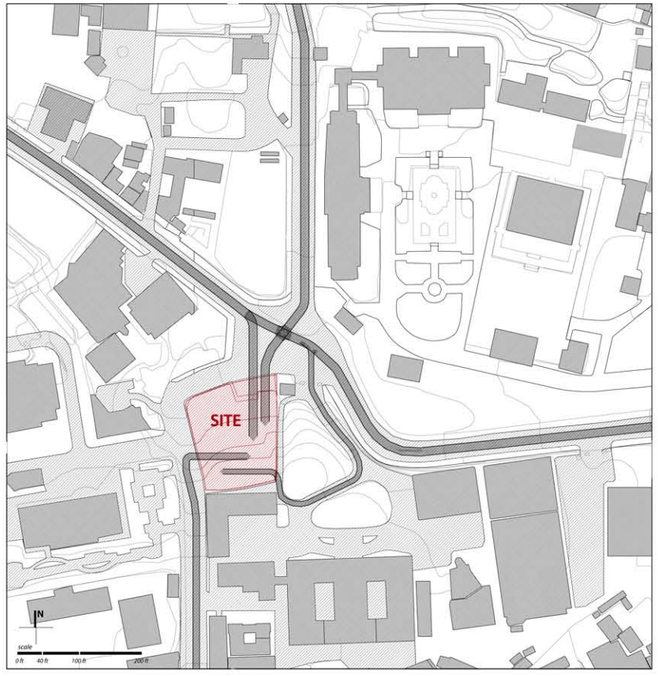
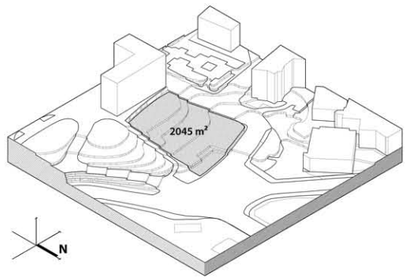
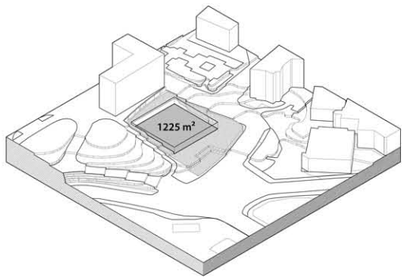
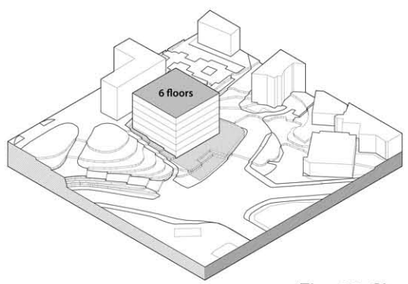


Fig. 24. Flow of Pedestrian

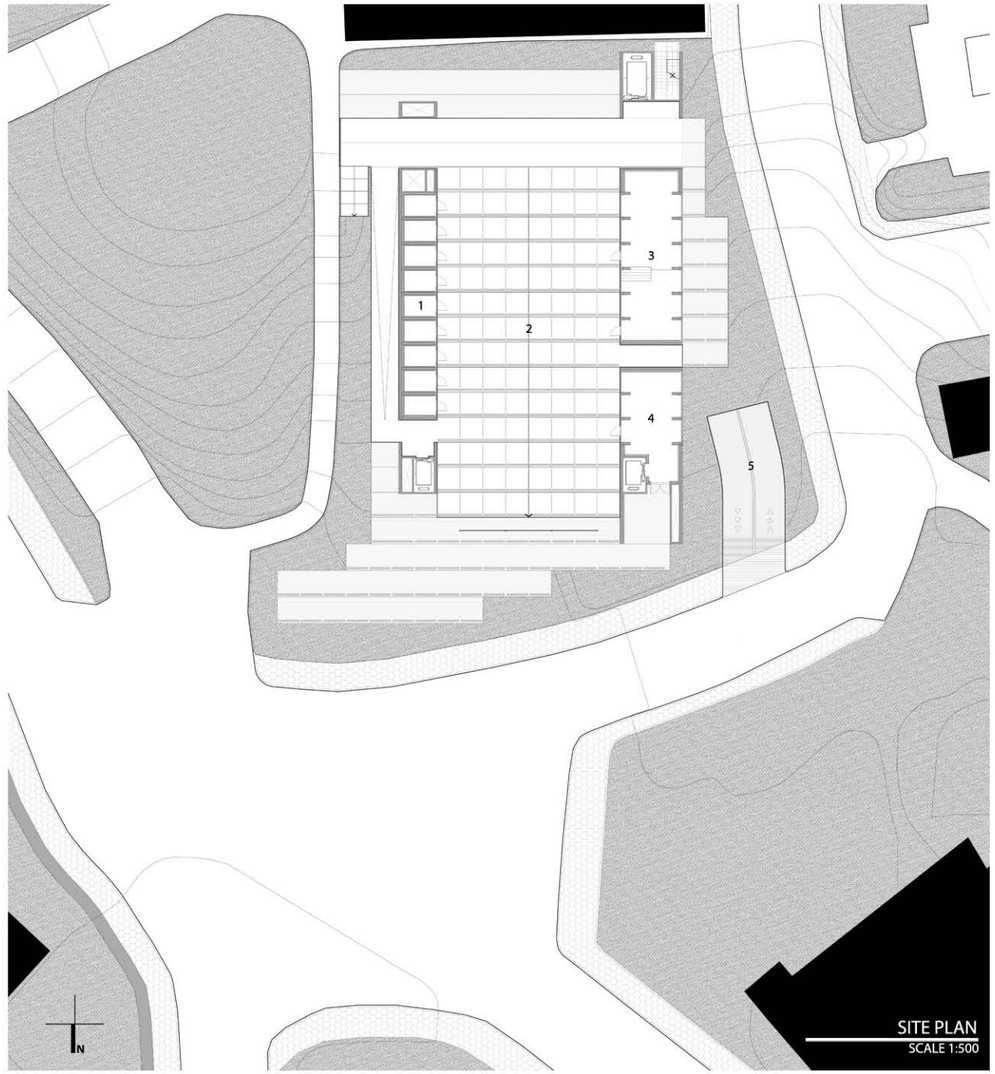






Address: ***39-1, Seosomun-dong, Jung-gu, Seoul, Korea***
Type: ***Ordinary Residential Area (Type 2)***
Height Limit: ***under the 7th floors***
Floor Area Ratio: ***200%***
Building Coverage Ratio: ***60%***
Lot Area: ***2045 m²***
Building Area: ***1225 m²***
Total Square (on the ground): ***4092 m²***

Fig. 25. Site Specification



1. NEWS FOOTAGE EDITING ROOM
2. OPEN AIR THEATER
3. NEWS FOOTAGE OFFICE
4. INFORMATION & SECURITY
5. PARKING LOT

Fig. 26. Site Plan

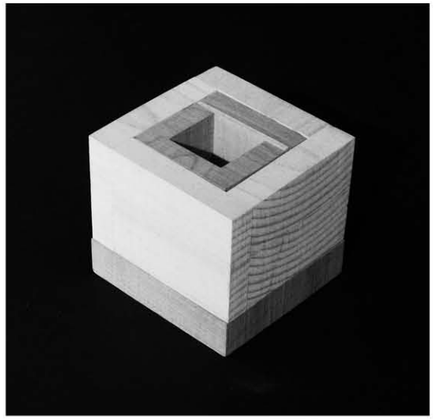
five.

Brandscape? Frictionscape!

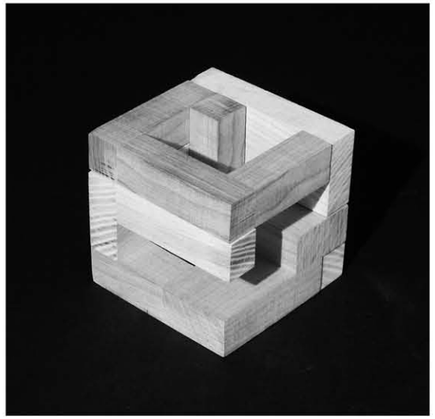
As the method for achieving the main purpose of IOPS, the systematic friction has been suggested frequently through the thesis. The meaning of friction in this thesis implies more than its dictionary definition. Although the friction with public journalism can cause temporary disruption of an existing framework of professional journalism, simultaneously this disruption will offer a foundation of journalistic evolution for professional journalism. As Mark Cladis insisted,

> he portrayed variously aspects of this friction: private perfection versus public compromise, self-reliance versus social dependence. . . Rousseau recognized this friction yet refused to surrender either side of the conflict, preferring to keep them together, precariously, in spite of the tension. . . his refusal to evade the tension may be his greatest contribution to modern social thought. For determination to wrestle with such tension, without denying it, is a hallmark of modern, democratic societies (Cladis, 2003,p. 214).

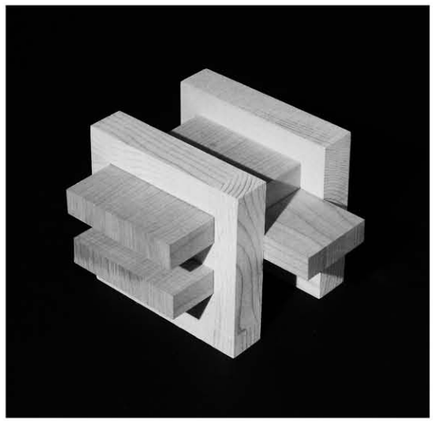
In order to establish the framework of systematic friction, three groups of people in the IOPS need to be set up: (1) the general public, (2) the public journalists, and (3) the professional journalists (see Fig. 28). First, the general public means every person who is strolling around the IOPS. In this group, anyone who wants to express his opinion and share information will be the potential public journalist. Second, the public journalists are people who know how to use smart devices as social media. The important thing is that the project should be regarded as an ordinary platform, continued from the urban context, rather than an isolated institute, to this group, because public journalism is feasible in daily life such as browsing social news in a cafe or uploading journalistic photos at a shop. Finally, the professional journalists can seek for ways to evolve by interacting with the public journalists.



Centralizing



Twining



Penetrating

Fig. 27. Topologies of Friction
dark: public sphere / light: professional sphere

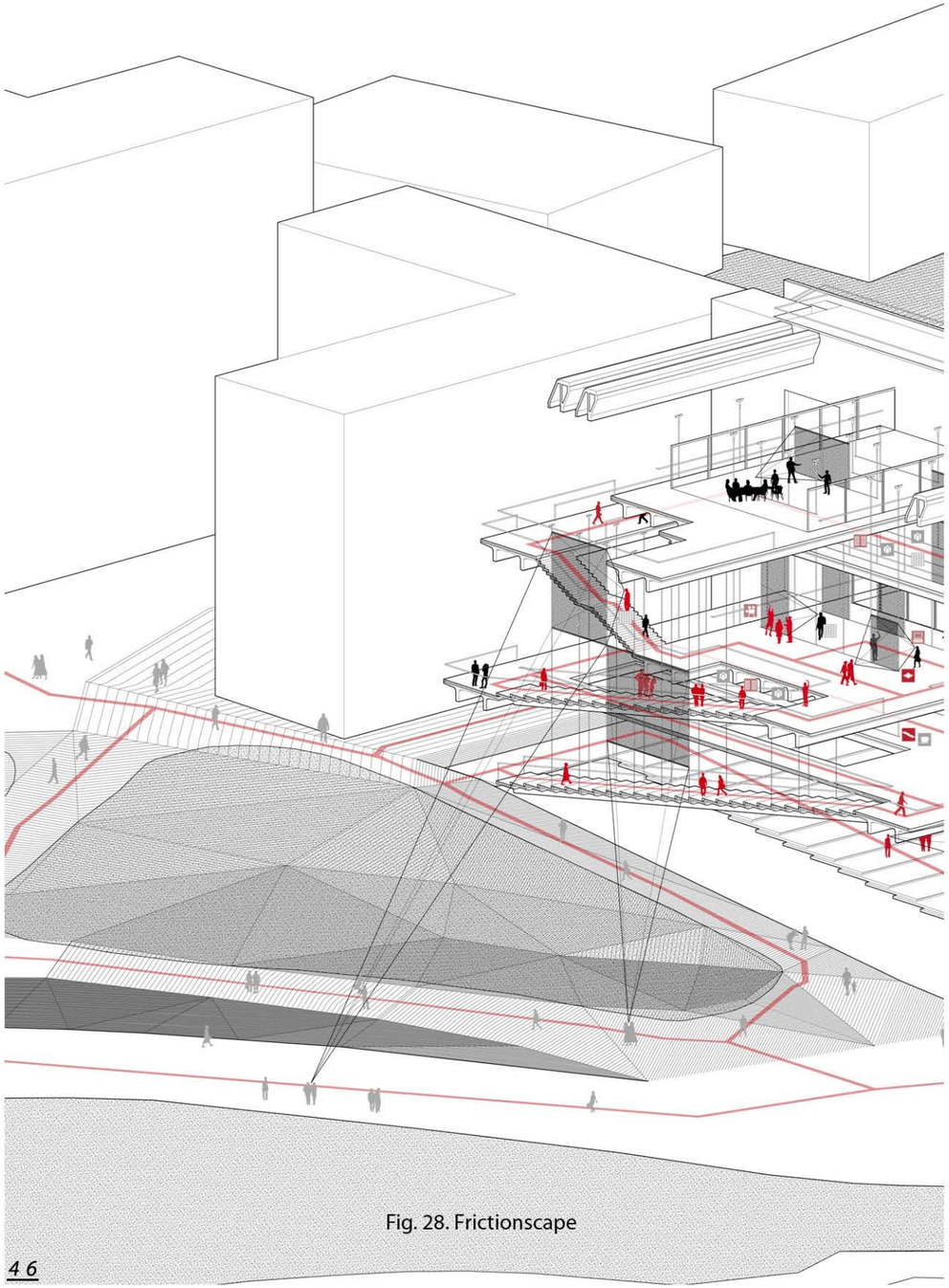
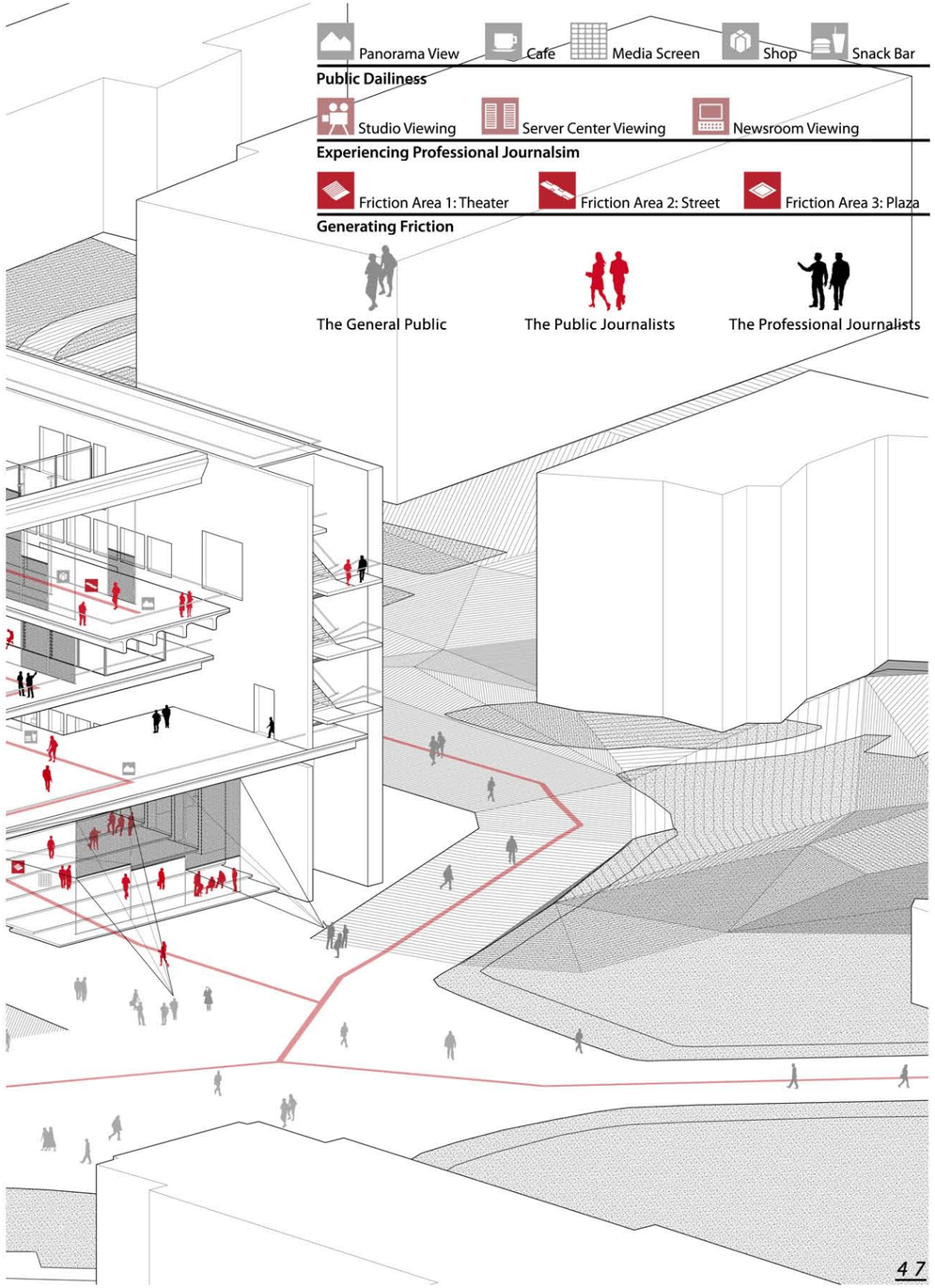


Fig. 28. Frictionscape



The “frictionscape” is designed to formulate moments that the workplace of professional journalists are exposed to the ecology of public journalism at three spots through an entire circulation: between (1) a news coverage room as a professional sphere and a street typed platform as a public realm, (2) a news review room and a plaza typed platform, and (3) news footage rooms and a theater typed platform (see Fig. 29).

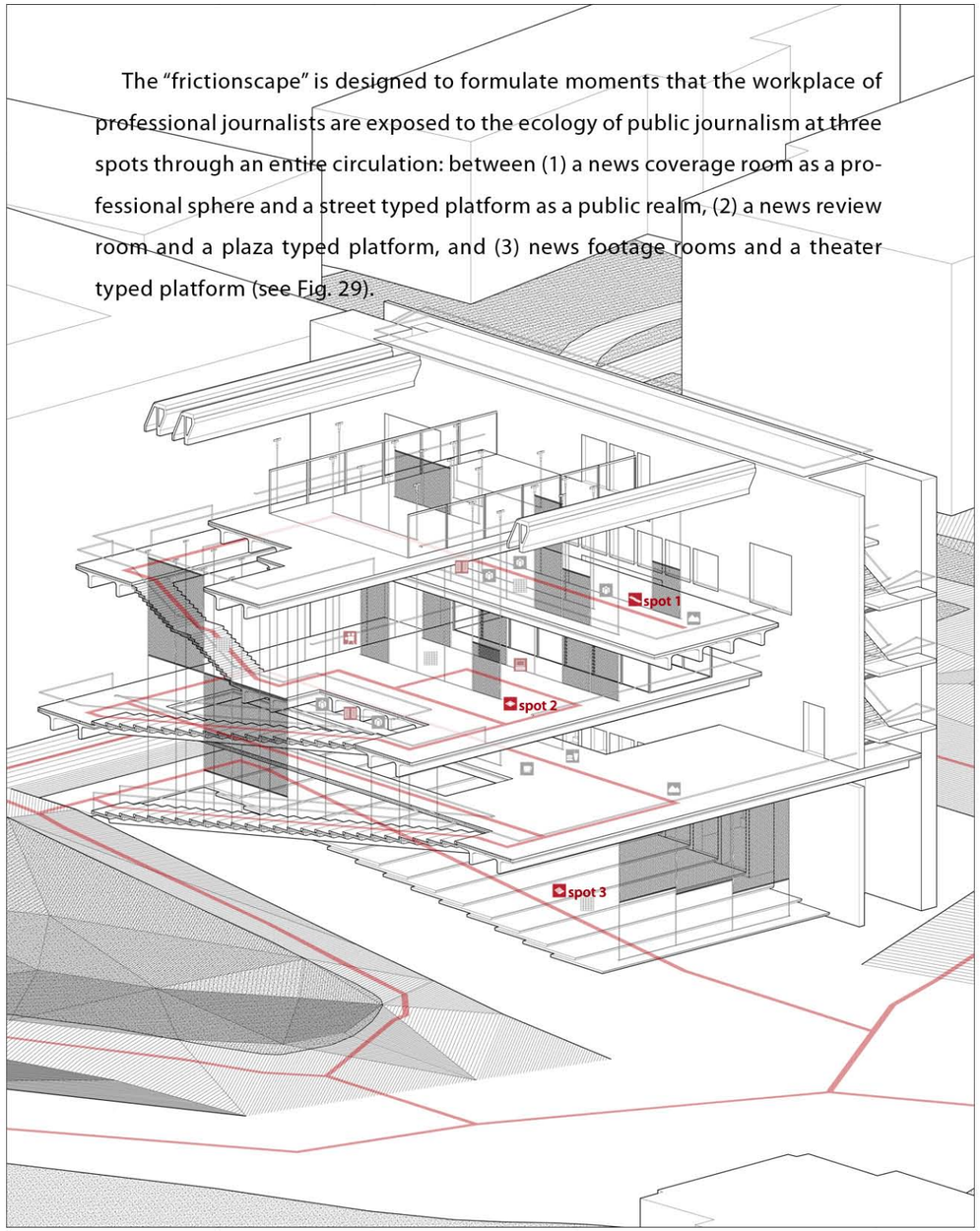
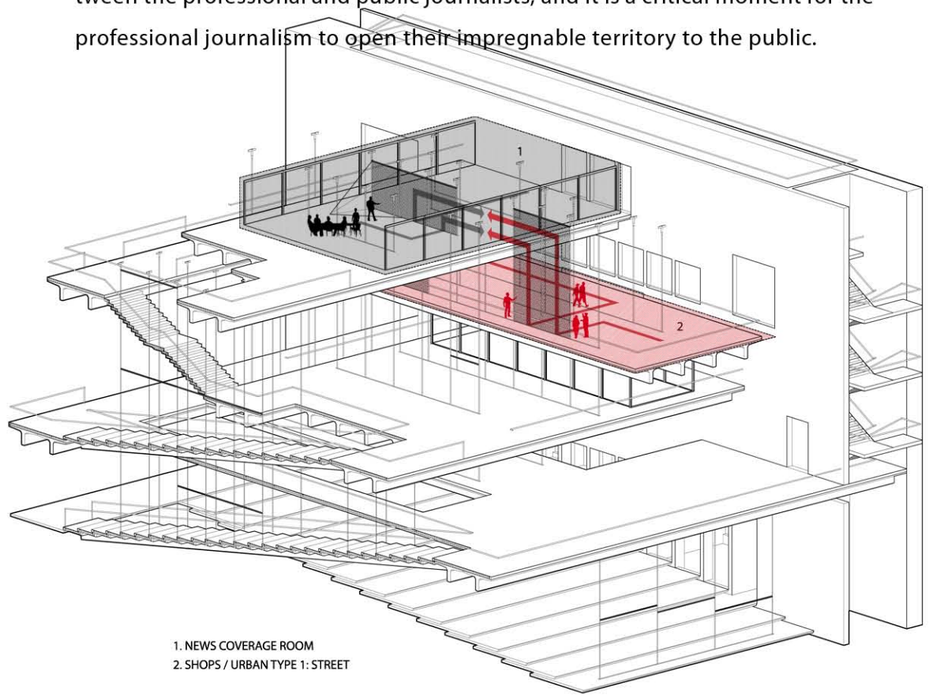


Fig. 29. Friction Spots

The first friction, between a news coverage room and a street typed platform, is visual interaction. Since media screens penetrate into the news coverage room, the professional journalists can be surrounded by information and image of social media news uploaded from the smart mobile devices of public journalists (see Fig. 30). This visual friction can lead to face-to-face conversation between the professional and public journalists, and it is a critical moment for the professional journalism to open their impregnable territory to the public.



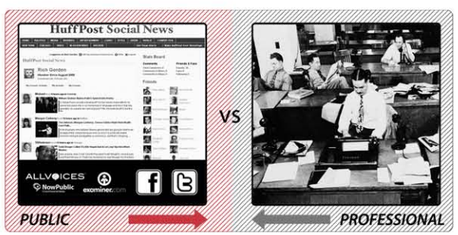
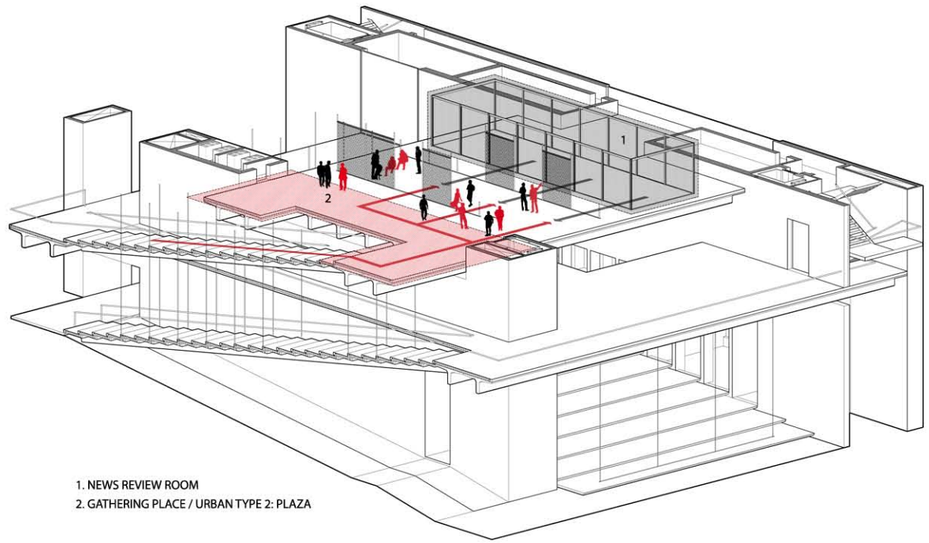


Fig. 30. Friction Spot 1: News Coverage
red: public journalism / grey: professional journalism

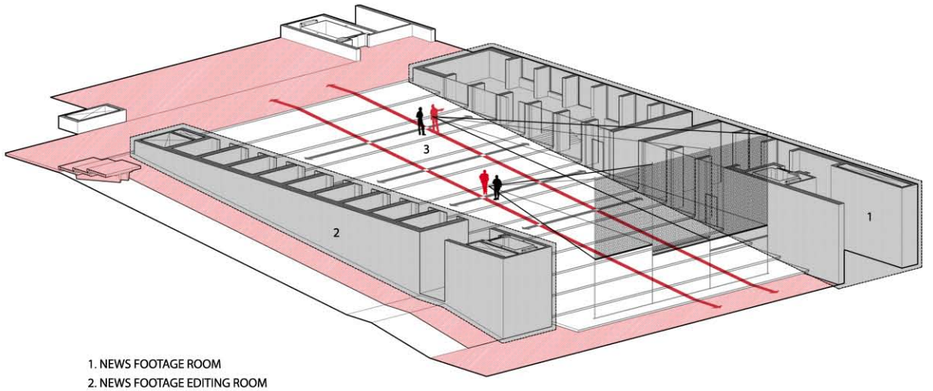
The second friction generates more intense exchange between a news review room and a plaza typed platform. Thanks to media screens and a wide gathering place on the platform, the professional and public journalists can discuss and review news directly through their different perspectives (see Fig. 31).



1. NEWS REVIEW ROOM
2. GATHERING PLACE / URBAN TYPE 2: PLAZA

Fig. 31. Friction Spot 2: News Review
red: public journalism / grey: professional journalism

The third friction starts from conflict between the movements of public journalists and professional cameramen, because the general direction of public journalist's movement is perpendicular to that of the professional cameraman. Through the media screen of theater typed platform, they can share the idea about image editing and contents (see Fig. 32).



1. NEWS FOOTAGE ROOM
2. NEWS FOOTAGE EDITING ROOM
3. GATHERING PLACE / URBAN TYPE 3: OPEN AIR THEATER

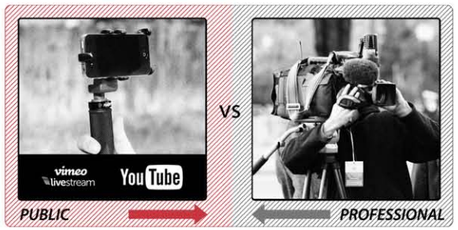


Fig. 32. Friction Spot 3: News Footage
red: public journalism / grey: professional journalism

six.

Tectonic Interface

There are two important architectural elements for achieving the friction: (1) a platform that is constructed with precast concrete single-T beams, (2) a media screen made of wire mesh and LED panels.

The precast concrete single-T beam platform is an "environmental interface". The arrangements of the platforms create various topological relationships of the friction such as collision, superimposition, and penetration (see Figs. 30, 31,32 and 33). These relationships become physical environments for the friction. Moreover, the platform can satisfy the technical requirement for operating the journalistic facility, because the precast concrete single-T beam contains a mechanical system in the "servant space", and the "served space" (see Fig. 34). The servant space is a data server room and the served space is a work place. Since the IOPS is an internet based broadcasting station, it is critical to figure out the data networking system and the HVAC system for the data server room. The platform can resolve the problem of the mechanical system by formulating the relationship between the "servant space" and the "served space" (see Figs. 36 and 37).

Even though the basic function of media screen is displaying journalistic images and information uploaded by the professional and public journalists, its main role is to complete the friction in a detailed level. Every type of the friction originates from the interactions between the two different forces, and the media screen (see Figs. 30, 31, 32 and 40). As Sylvia Lavin states, "[T]oday it derives from the delicate balance that the surface in these works still manages to maintain between different sets of claims. . . . Kissing opens architecture to a means of expression founded in the touching of (at least) two surfaces, surfaces that in their twoness highlight either material or epistemological difference" (Lavin, 2011, p. 30). The main reason why the media screen can formulate the interaction is because the media screen is a "surface interface" that can exist all throughout the building. As Sylvia Lavin also argues,

> Architecture's most kissable aspect is its surface. . . . Architecture also has more surface and more kinds of surface than anything else: outside, inside, soft and hard, there's a surface for everyone. . . . Finally, surfaces are where architecture gets close to turning into something else and therefore exactly where it becomes vulnerable and full of potential" (Lavin, 2011, p. 26).

The synthesis of "environmental interface" and "surface interface" generate a "tectonic interface" formulating logical and constructional relationships of the IOPS. Consequently, the "tectonic interface" can construct a collective space for optimal alternative journalism through materiality.

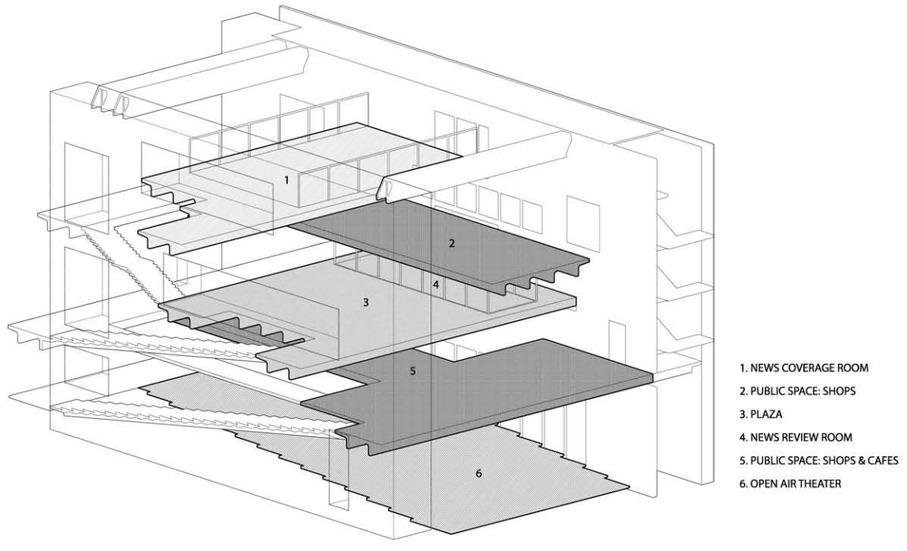


Fig. 33. Topological Relationship of the Platforms

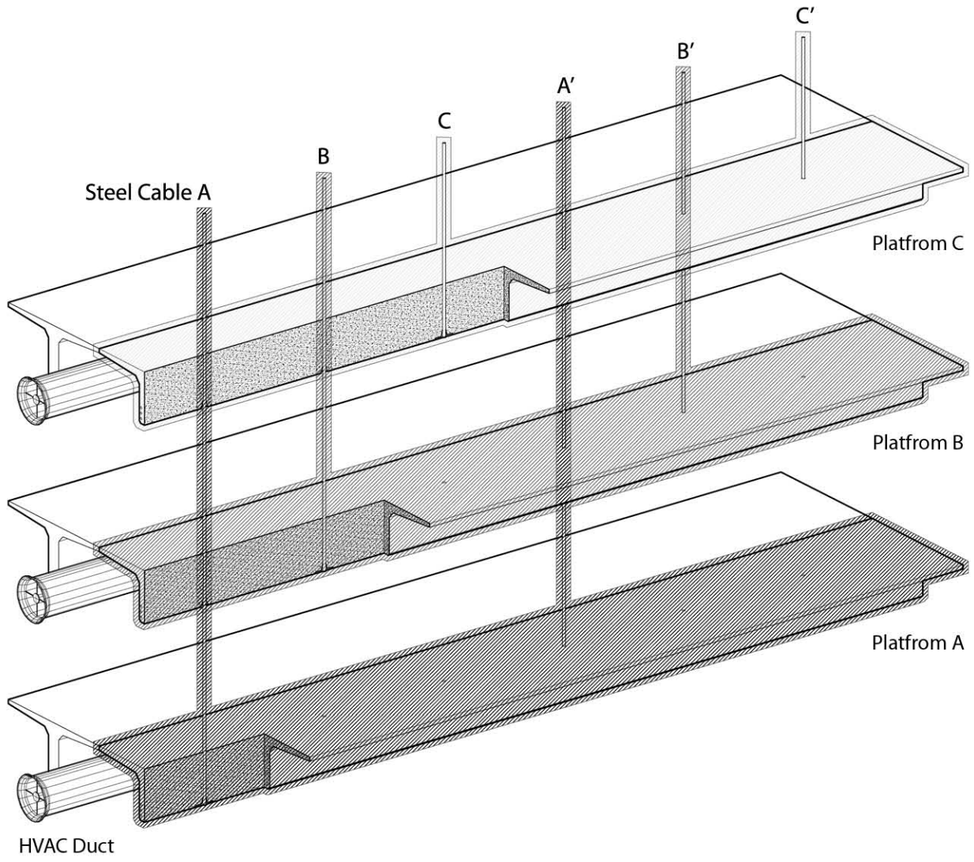


Fig. 34. Precast Concrete Single T Beam Platforms:
Containing Mechanical System and Structural Strategy

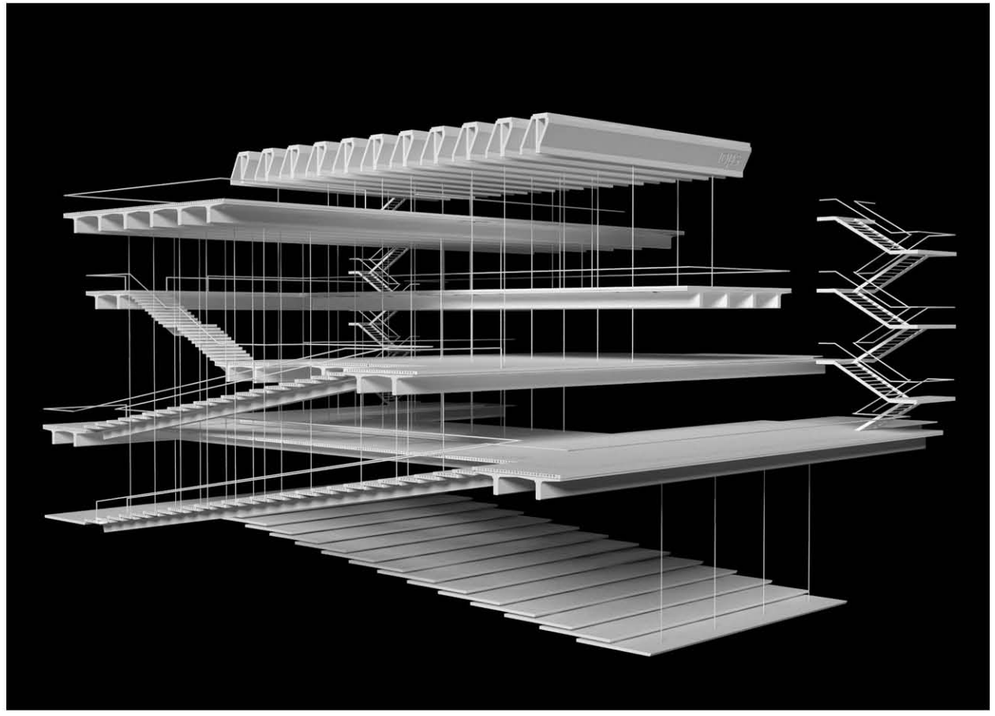


Fig. 35. Structure

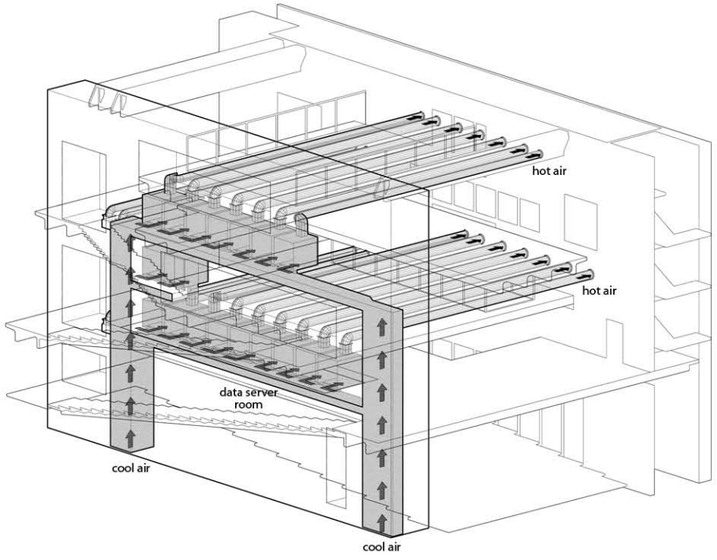


Fig. 36. HVAC System for Data Server Room

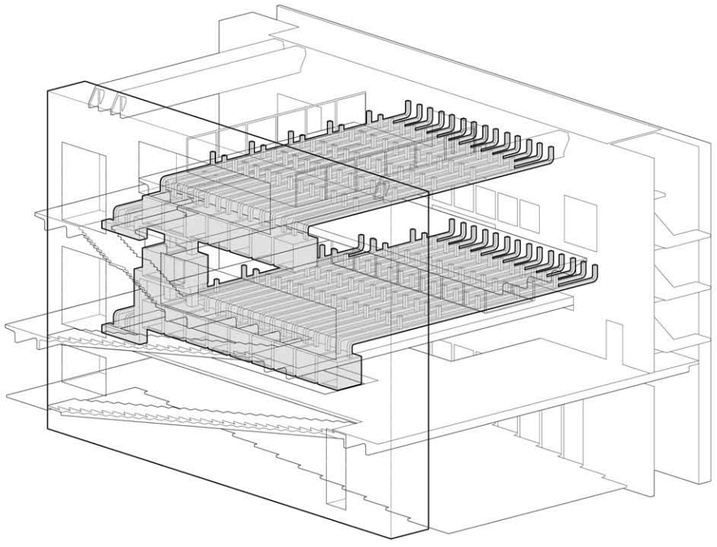


Fig. 37. Data Networking System

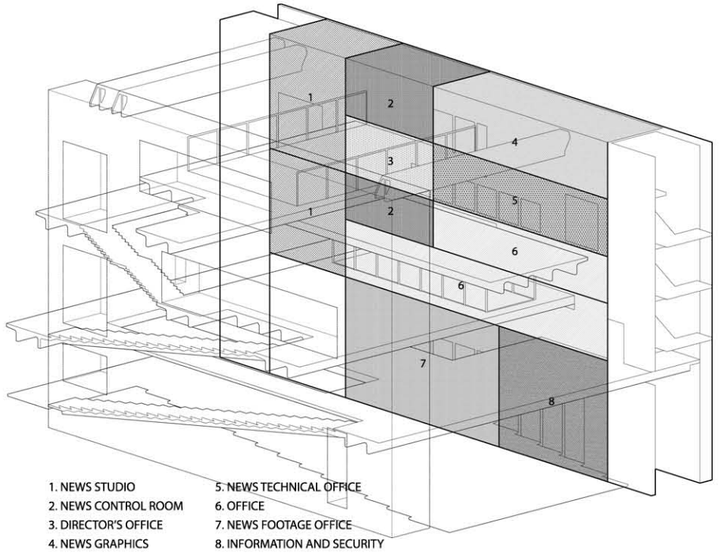


Fig. 38. Programs of the Professional Sphere

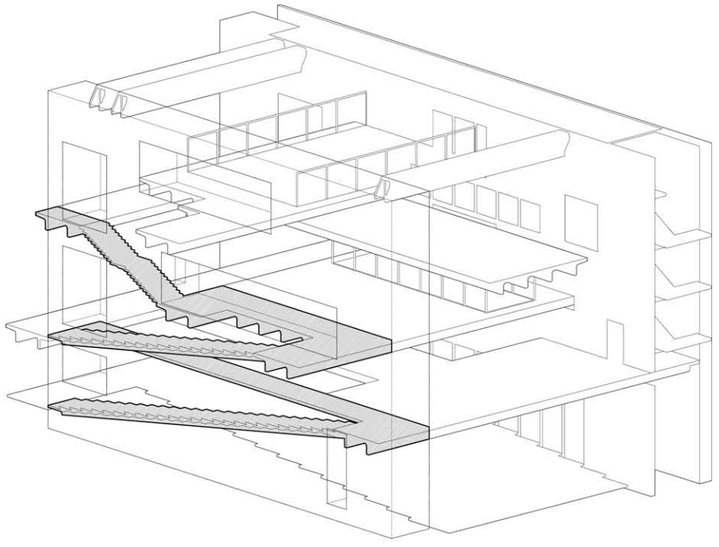


Fig. 39. Public Circulation

Fig. 40. LED Panel Media Screens in the Friction Spot 2:
Plaza & News Review Room

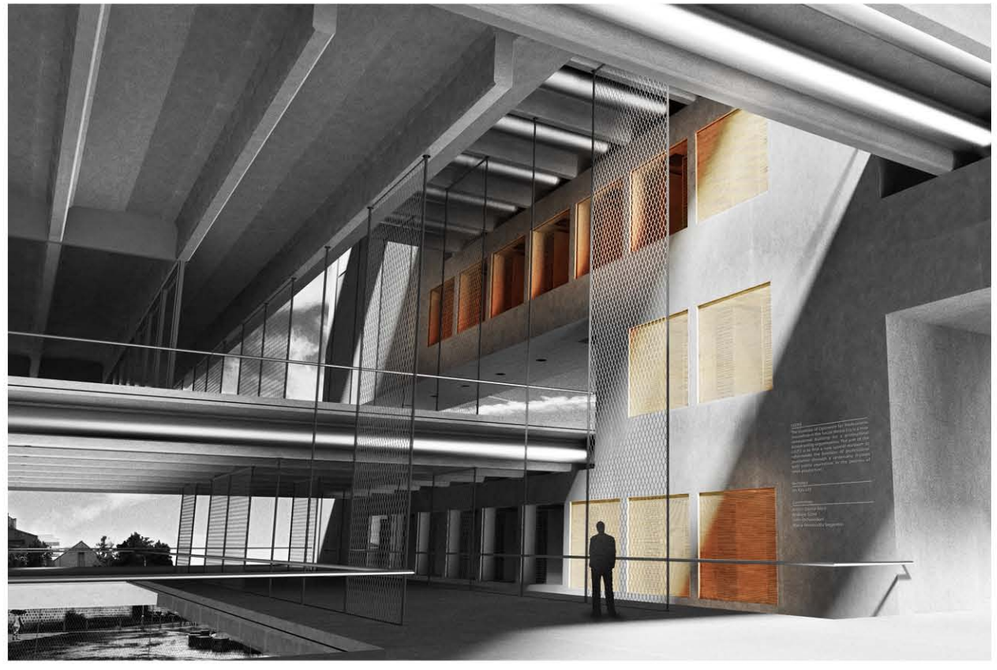


Fig. 41. Experiencing the Physicality of Media Industry

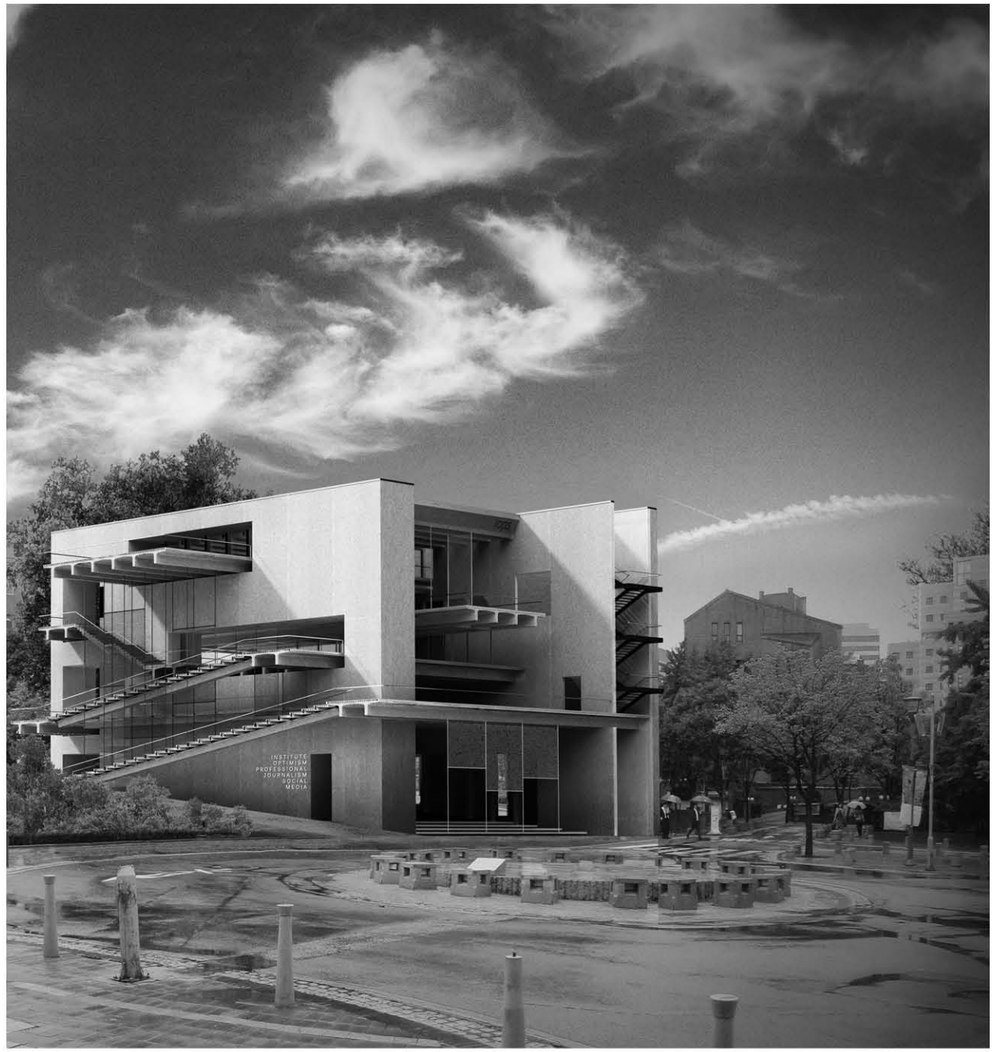


Fig. 42. Exterior View

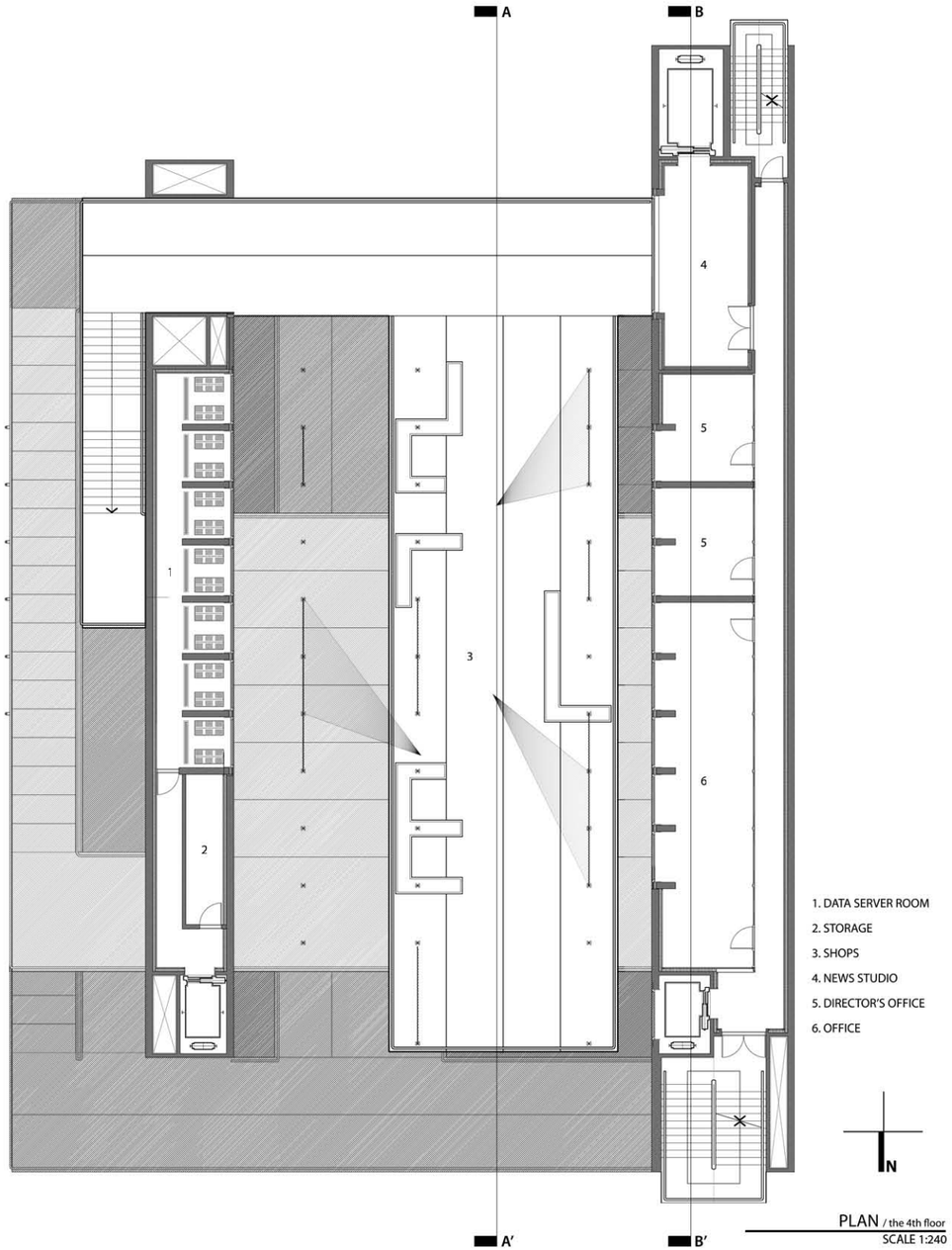


Fig. 43. Plan I

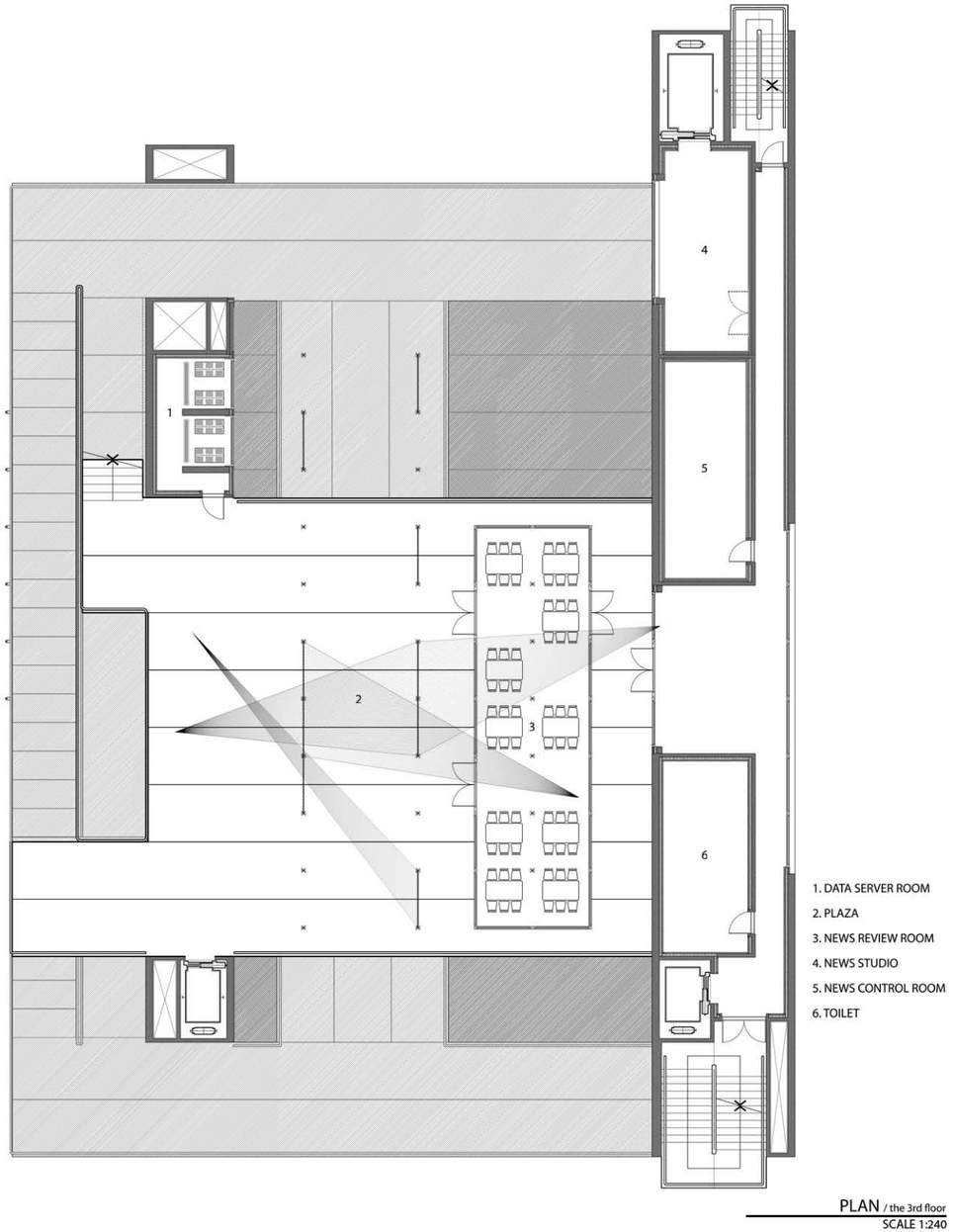
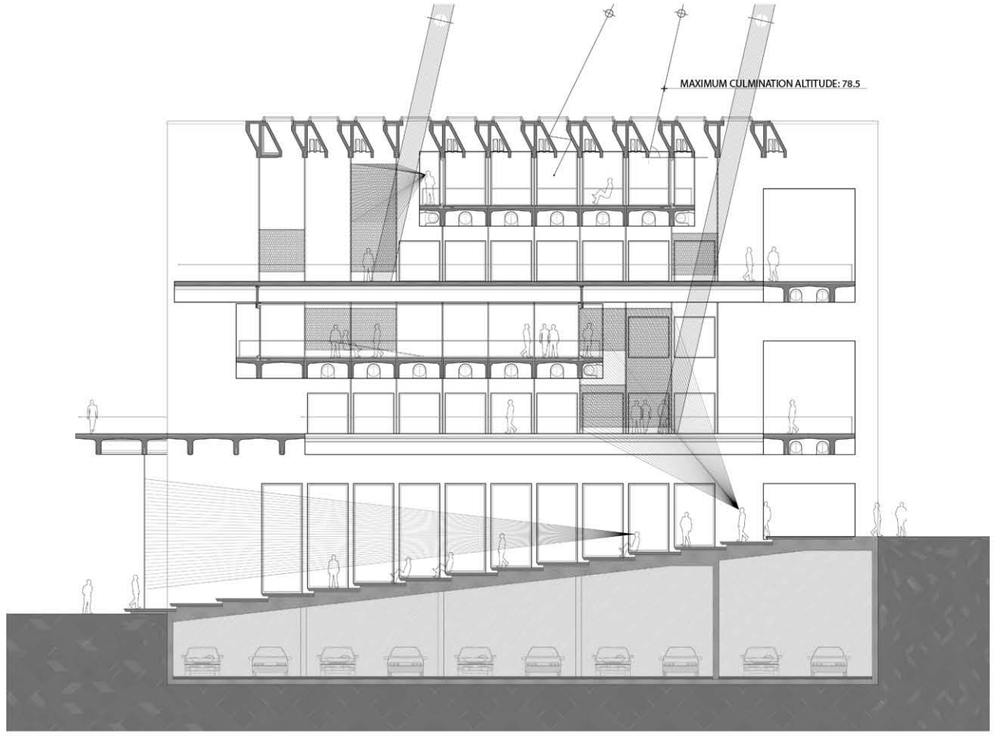
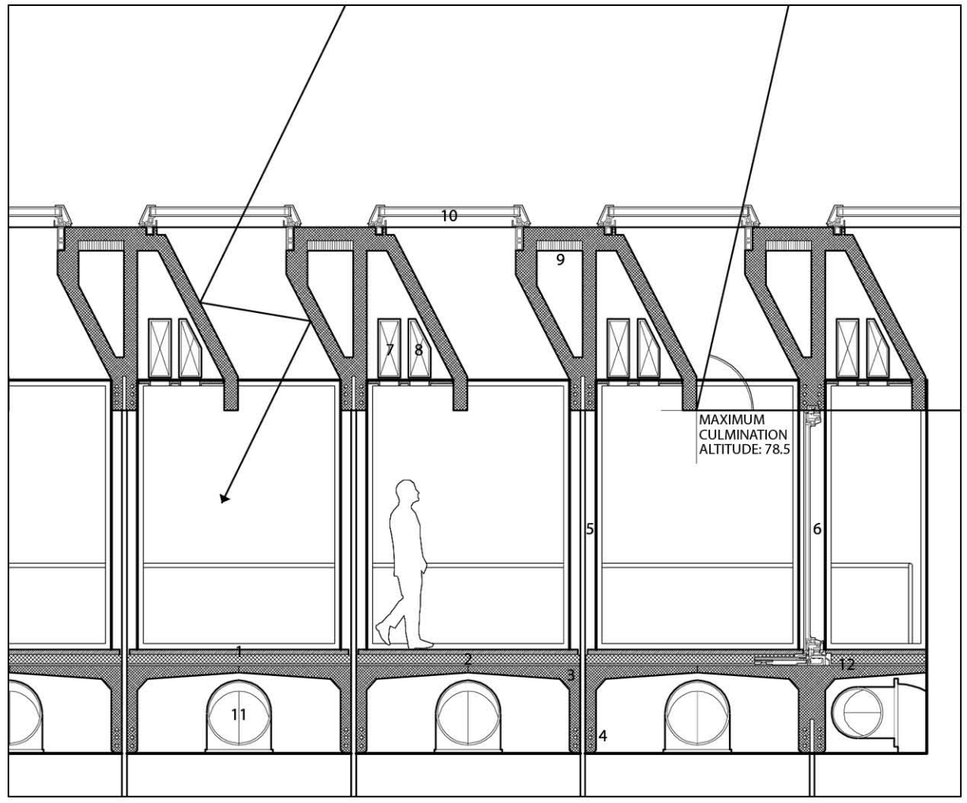


Fig. 44. Plan II



Section A-A'/ PUBLIC+PROFESSIONAL SPHERE
SCALE 1:300

Fig. 45. Section A-A'

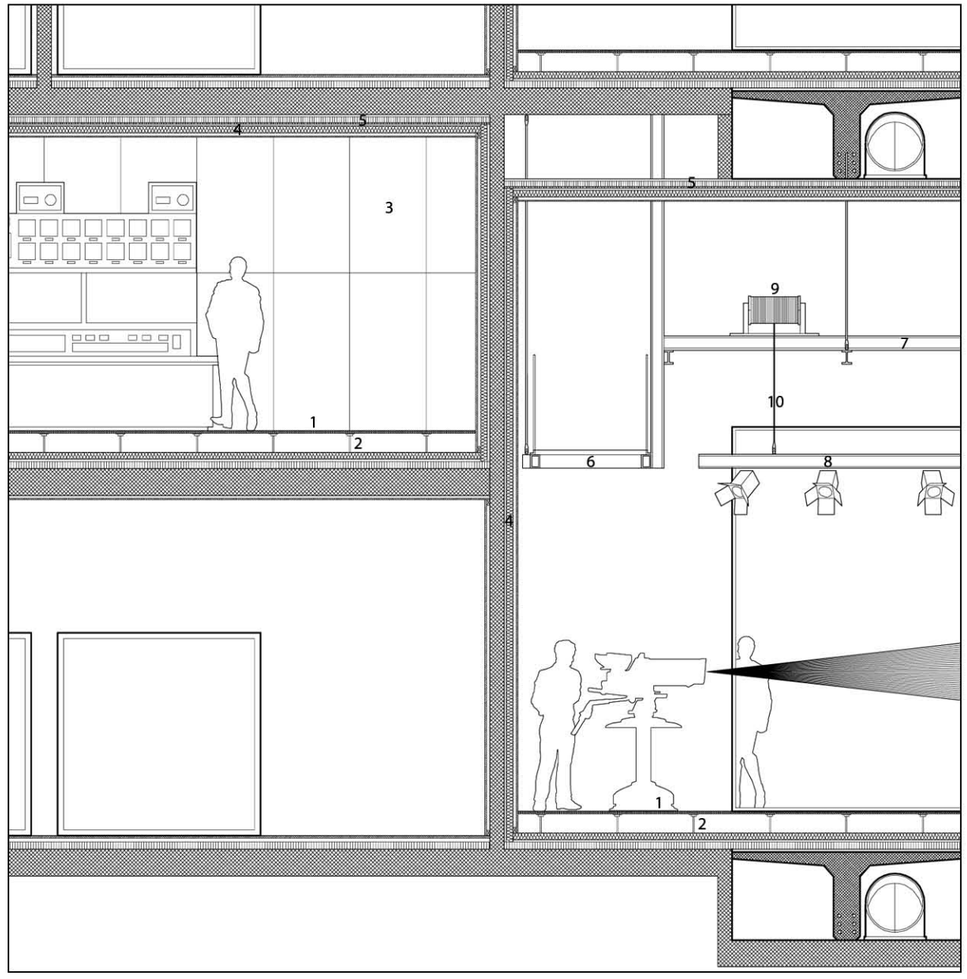


1. Precast paver
2. Concrete
3. Precast concrete single T beam
4. Rebar
5. Steel cable structure
6. Water proof double glaze
7. HVAC duct
8. Lighting
9. Thermal insulation
10. Water proof skylight
11. HVAC duct (data server room)
12. Drainage layer

Section A-A'/ DETAIL
SCALE 1:60

Section B-B′/ PROFESSIONAL SPHERE
SCALE 1:300

Fig. 46. Section B-B′



1. Free access floor
2. Free access
3. Sound absorption panel
4. Sound insulation
5. Thermal insulation
6. Cat walk
7. Pipe grid
8. Light botton
9. Wire rolling machine
10. Wire

Section B-B′/ DETAIL
SCALE 1:60

Fig. 47. Physical Model

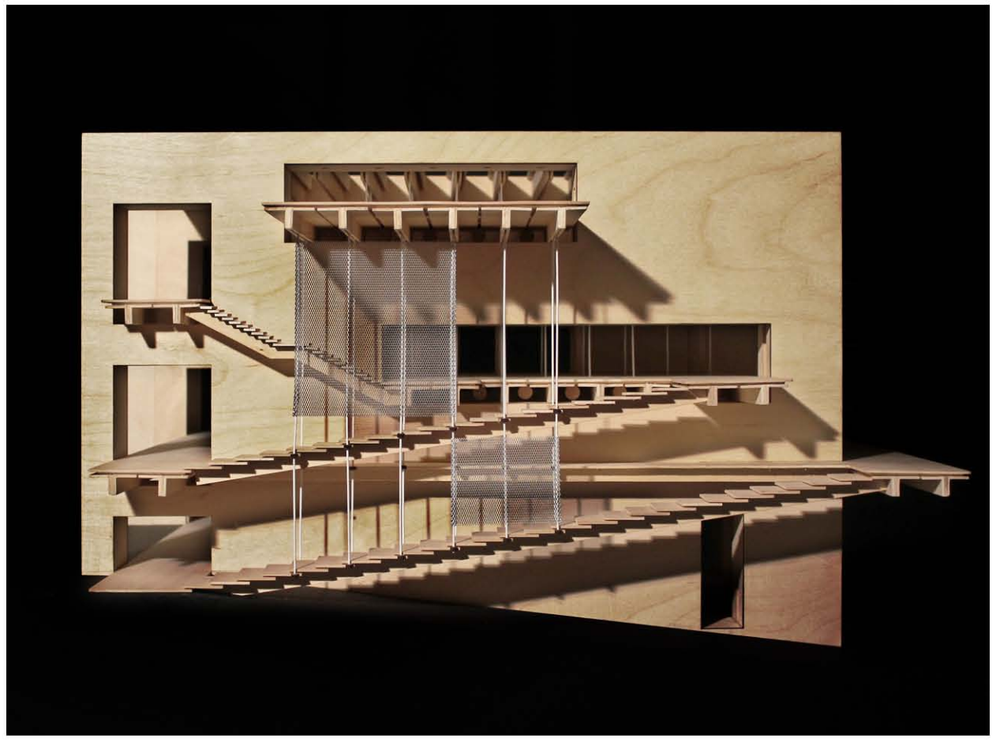


Fig. 48. Physical Model

Fig. 49. Physical Model

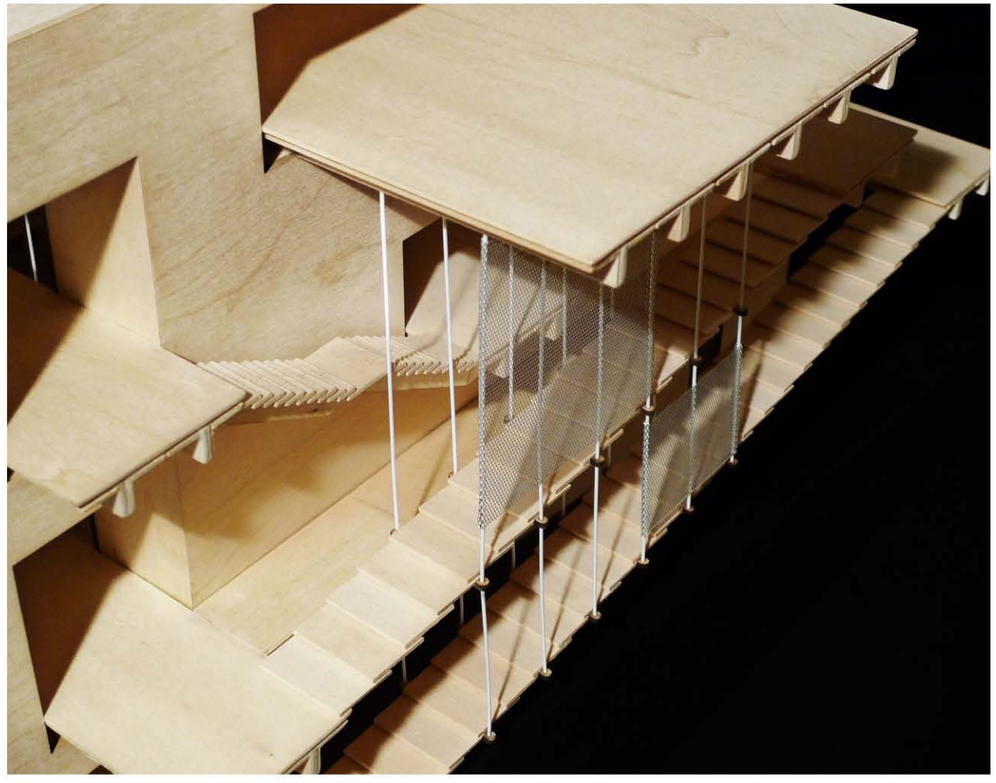


Fig. 50. Physical Model

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