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**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**MASTER OF MEDIA, CULTURE AND CREATIVE CITIES**

**2013-2015**

**SOCI8030 CAPSTONE PROJECT**

**“THE INFLUENCES ON THE READERSHIP  
AND CONTENT OF CITY MAGAZINE  
WHEN IT GOES DIGITAL”**

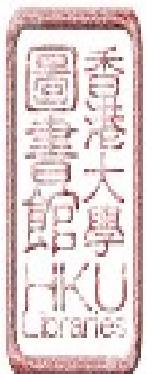
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on

**31<sup>st</sup> JULY, 2015**



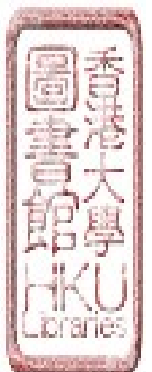
## Abstract

This report examines the influence on the readership and content of *City Magazine* if it goes digital. In the first part, I give a brief introduction on the development of wireless Information Communication Technology and talk about how it affects our daily life. Social media platforms, such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook enhance human communication and shift the consumption behavior of audience in the media market.

In the second part, I review the concept of convergence culture where old and new media collide by Henry Jenkins. More focus is put on the participatory culture which refers to the bi-directional model between media producers and audience. It aims to examine the way how new media is changing the decision of producer and expectation of audience.

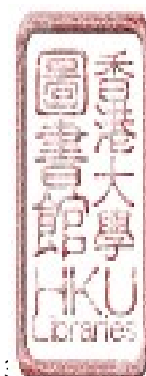
In the third part, findings from the interviews with media producers in *City Magazine* and *Apple Daily* are presented. It is mainly about their feelings on the opportunity and constraints of the digital expansion of *City Magazine* as well as the future trend of the new media. Successful cases of local and foreign new media, like *100Most* and *Medium*, are examined through desktop research to see the strategies contributing to the success of new media.

This report concludes that content of new media is converging in our modern society. In order to outstand oneself with the existing digital communication tools, voice of audience is important. Interaction is essential to get audience engagement. We are now undergoing the produsage period which marks a new page of new media.



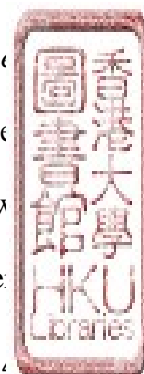
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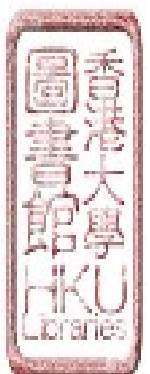
## Introduction

Over the past two decades, the internet and the World Wide Web have brought us to a new age of communication technology. The development of wireless Information Communication Technology (ICTs) like smartphone changed the daily life and culture in modern society remarkably. In the digital age, the internet revolutionized work and office life. The internet now becomes a major part of work, leisure, social and political life, for most people in advanced economic society, like Hong Kong. It also created active audiences instead of the passive recipients of the traditional media age (Poster, 1995). However, the impact of internet is getting less noticeable by many people as it is gradually integrated into our “offline life”. The boundary separating online sphere from the offline “real world” becomes less significant. There is a wider forms of digital cultures associated with new media and its consumption nowadays, including music, gaming, web blog, online newspaper and magazines. It changes the behavior of audience as they can access to everything they want to read or listen instantly in the internet. These changes showcase that the digital technologies are not just “technologies”, they become a set of social relations which incorporate the use of technologies with various results (Miller, 2011). It changes the way of communication among media producer and its audience in the digital age. Audience are no longer information receivers only, they are demanding a two-way communication. They are active in voicing out their expectation and participating in the construction of online environment. The new technologies set the rules and conditions for this social change and progress (William, 1990). Regarding to the article “How Twitter will change the way we live” (Johnson, 2009) in *Time Magazine*, it displays that technological innovations are seen as a key driver in the development of our society and culture. By using this new social platform, we can know how others are doing without making direct contact with them or hearing from our friends. Twitte



can provide us the same information as well as a channel to share news and stories, tailor-made your own favorite blog list and a platform for branding and advertising. In short, the rapid development of digital media platform offers us a more interactive life experience with each other. We can now watch movie and TV dramas, play poker with strangers around the world, publish our articles, rediscover our college friends, etc.

ICTs are transforming our society into a networked society. The networked society correlates to economic globalization and the concept of “space of flows” as well as “timeless time”. Digital media can brings us things that have already happened and allow us immediately to experience culture produced far away (Howard, 2011). These concepts are important in shifting to the new ways of production format and consumption style. In this bi-directional communication model, audience are no longer silent recipients and producers are trying to get more engagement from their targeted audience through various digital media tools. The world is now moving toward convergence with the universal influence of digital technology. Being an essential part of the information society and digital culture, convergence gathers together various materials, strategies and organizational structures to facilitate marketing in a globalized economy and provide new forms of media experience. Miller describes technological convergence as the movement of almost all media and information to digital electronic formats, for example, from analogue to digital and networking of different media devices (Oscar, 2012). In this study, I apply the case of *City Magazine* going digital below to unpack the digital media society in Hong Kong regarding its transformation and challenges from traditional media industry. The background of *City Magazine* will be introduced before its case analysis.



## Convergence Culture Where Old and New Media Collide

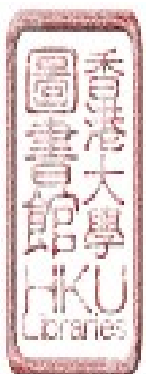
Convergence means “come together” or “become similar”. Convergence is a term that has been used as a technological process associated with digitization, a regulatory trend among governments and a process among the media and telecommunications industry, to describe the soon to be dominant form of media culture.

For media studies, it refers to the direction of content across multiple media platforms, the correlation between various media industries and the shifting consumption behavior of audiences who would make good use of the ICTs in searching their expected kinds of entertainment and life experiences. In the world of media convergence, every audiences are able to access multiple media platforms, therefore every story gets told or every brand gets sold does change our culture and society. And the significance depends on who’s speaking and the perception of audiences. The flow of content is now defined as top-down by the decision made by the media producers (corporate-driven) and bottom-up by the decision made by audiences who are online users (consumer-driven). The digital media environment is now shaped by the desires of media conglomerates and the audiences. Media conglomerates here refers to those large, usually multinational corporation that owns a large part of the mass media market and usually has holdings in the news media, as well as movies, music, book publishing, newspapers, websites, television, concerts, etc. The Internet has become dominated by big companies, like Google, Yahoo, Apple, and Facebook, primarily in the content distribution business, rather than in the business of producing original content. They want to expand their business across multiple media platforms. On the other hand, the desire of the audiences refers to their expectation to have the media which can satisfied their daily needs anytime anywhere.



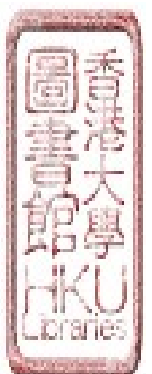
Henry Jenkins talks heavily about the 'Black Box Fallacy' and how convergence affects older media and the new media experience. Much contemporary discourse about convergence starts and ends with what I call the Black Box Fallacy. Sooner or later, all media content is going to flow through a single black box into our living room of the one we carry around with u. Part of what makes the black box concept a fallacy is that it reduces media change to technological change and strips aside the cultural levels we are considering here. But the truth is that the old idea of convergence was that all devices would converge into one central device that did everything for you. What we are now seeing is the hardware diverging while the content [software] converges. (Jenkins, 2006: 14-15). He displays how 'Cinema did not kill Theatre or TV did not kill radio' but rather each medium was 'Forced to coexist with one another'. He also talks about how old media is not being eliminated, but its status has shifted by the introduction of new technologies. The reason why the term was coined is because we see more and more black boxes around our homes and work places, but these boxes over the years have started to converge and have multiple uses. Jenkins talks about how university students carry around 'Black Boxes' all the time - Laptops, Blackberry - and they're not even aware of it. (Jenkins, 2006: 16)

In analyzing the influence on the readership and content of *City Magazine* when it goes digital, I put my focus on the participatory culture to showcase the changing dynamic between producers and consumers in new media convergence culture. This circulation of media content across different media systems, competing media economies, and national borders depends heavily on the active participation of the consumer. It is more than just a technological process, consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and make connections among dispersed media content. Consumers produce their own experience of the product in isolation or in groups. It is intended to contrast with older notions of media





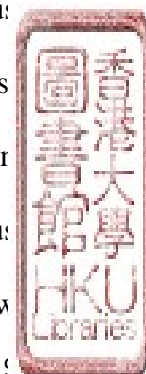
spectatorship. In this emerging media system, both producers and audiences are transformed to be participants who are expected to interact with each other according to a new set of rules. Over the past two decades, the nature of audiences changed. Feedback processes are encouraged between producers and consumers (prosumers), allowing for more consumer influence over the production of goods. It increases the choice of information source on an 'information pull' basis rather than a 'product push' basis. The means of producing and distributing information become widely available and democratized. Networking technology enables collective means of organization and engagement where users, fans, or consumers can communicate directly with each other to form affinity groups around their interests. Last but not least, digital content is easily produced, copied, modified, shared and distributed, therefore digital info and goods have become non-rival and be endlessly used by all.



## Research methodology and data collection

My research methodology is composed of two parts: (1) in-depth interviews with media producers; and (2) desktop research on successful cases of local and foreign digital media.

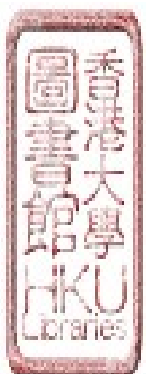
I have arranged interviews with people working in *City Magazine*, including Chang Tieh Chih (Former Associate Publisher and Chief Editor), Nico Tang (Deputy Chief Editor), Ching Siu Wai (Creative Director and Publisher) and Carrie Siu (Senior Marketing Executive). The main theme of the interviews is to get a better understanding of how the positioning of *City Magazine* will be regarding its readership and content if it really goes digital. This is very informative to have interviewees from both editorial team and marketing team providing feedback on this topic. They disclose their feelings on the future digital media trend and how they foresee the opportunities and obstacles of *City Magazine* would face in launching its digital media platform. Also, they talk about the correlation between the traditional media (printed version) and the new media (digital platform) after the expansion, whether the new media would be a supporting role or a brand new business segment. It is inspiring to find the similarities and differences by comparing their feedbacks on the influence from the digital expansion. They reveal their concerns on retaining the core value of *City Magazine* as a leading local lifestyle magazine while expanding its business across multiple digital platforms. Due to their working role and experience in *City Magazine*, their age and background as well as their participation in the online sphere, some of them are optimistic about the digital movement, but some are feeling negative because of the commercial consideration, market saturation and keen industrial competition. The interviews focus mainly on the producer-side due to a number of constraints. Comparing to other magazines the target market of *City Magazine* is relatively niche and its loyal audiences are scattered in various industries, age groups and lifestyle. It is difficult and time-consuming to have a focus group discussion with the target audiences to see what they expect to have from the new



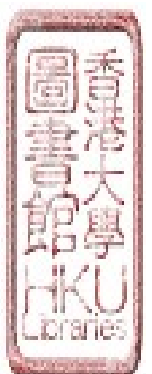
media. Even Chang Tieh Chih offers to communicate with the loyal audiences from the customer database of *City Magazine* with a designed questionnaire, it is not feasible due to the regulation of personal privacy.

Apart from *City Magazine*, I had an interview with Ma Long Ching, who works as Social Media Specialist of *Apple Daily*. *Apple Daily* is seen as a successful local new media, especially for its revolutionized image of the lifestyle sector. The brand new image attracted a large scale of existing and new audiences. Throughout the interview, Ma analyzes the key factors attributed to the success of *Apple Daily*, these factors including the scale and resource of a corporation, its risky and ambitious media style with reference to foreign new media, exploitation of innovative digital tools to get interaction with audiences to enhance their loyalty, so on and so forth. She also provides useful information on the difference of operation format between newspaper and magazine as well as the source of production, whether it is information-pull from the general public or a product-push by the media producers. I am going to elaborate the details in the upcoming part for the case of *City Magazine*.

Regarding the second part, I am going to have a desktop research on the successful stories of the new media in the local and foreign markets. I pick *100Most* as the local reference with the aim to discover how it can afford the rapid expansion from the printed weekly magazine to the online TV platform. I would like to compare the opportunities and obstacles faced by *100Most* and *City Magazine* regarding their nature of business, readership structure as well as their way of content development to achieve a conclusive finding. Last but not least, we can see there are numbers of successful foreign digital media, like *The New York News* and *Medium*. Regarding to these new media, we can find out the elements which is missing in



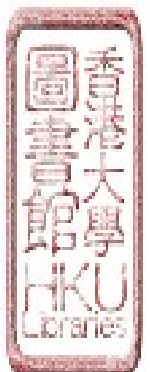
Hong Kong and investigate the reasons why local media are not doing what the foreign new media are doing, are there any geographical constraints, difference in the mentality of readers, economic and political considerations, etc.



## Background of City Magazine

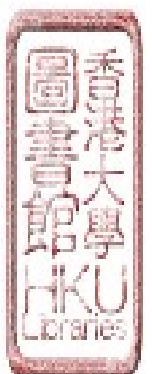
Before proceeding to the case analysis, I would like to give a brief description on the background of *City Magazine*. *City Magazine* is a monthly magazine is founded by John Chan, Koon Chung and other cultural workers since 1976. The content is encircling fashion, dinning, architecture, art and design, visual and music, books as well as all culture-related issues. This printed magazine is selling its elegance and prestige by focusing on visual expression. One of the thing which differentiate *City Magazine* from other magazines is its size( 238 x 337mm ), it is comparatively larger than the common size of magazines. The main target audience is the middle class and this attracts a lot of luxury and fashion brands post their ads on it. The golden age of *City Magazine* is in the 1980s, *City Magazines* published the fiction regarding the Ivy League as a serial, and it is seen as the post-war symbol of the rising of middle class as well as the leading icon of local lifestyle trend. During the 1990s, there are a large number of lifestyle magazines emerged in the market, the market share and circulation of *City Magazine* started declining and audiences gradually shifted to the other lifestyle magazines due to their new marketing strategies and the way they re-package the lifestyle of middle class.

In 2003, *City Magazine* is purchased by Modern Media, a listed company registered in the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. It has offices in Guangzhou, Shanghai, Beijing and Hong Kong. In 2012, Chang Tieh Chih became the chief editor of *City Magazine*. He is a Taiwanese author and well-known for his status in the political circle in Taiwan. During the period of his management, *City Magazine* published a significant portion of articles related to social movement every month. Umbrella movement should be one of the important social campaign known by the general public that is adopted by *City Magazine* as its cover stories. Due to the background of Chang Tieh Chih, he is good at pointing out the similarities and differences o



the government as well as its citizens between Taiwan and Hong Kong. Apart from the political scope, he is also a rock music lover and it is easy to have a clue on it from the articles of *City Magazine*. He likes to introduce those independent rock bands from Taiwan, Hong Kong and the mainland China in the magazine. He believes music is inseparable from our daily life.

In 2015, Chang Tieh Chih resigned from the post of chief editor and Nico Tang succeeded as the deputy chief editor. He got a very good knowledge in the history and style of *City Magazine* since he has worked there for around eight years after graduation. He operates a quarterly magazine named *What* before rejoining *City Magazine*.



## Traditional media to co-exist with new media

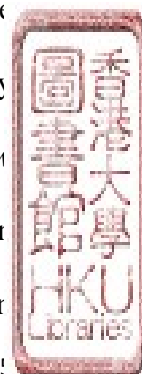
When we talk about the digital age, people think of the correlation of printed media, here we refer to traditional media, with digital media. It is a question worth us to think about before we drill into the next section. Taking the case of *City Magazine* as an example, is it the digital media a supporting role for the printed media or vice versa? If not, can they be a totally independent role with each other? Chang Tieh Chih reveals that both old and new media can co-exist in the market as they are in different nature in terms of content, frequency of information upload, value to audience, etc. They are both operated under the name of *City Magazine* and they are not necessary to have conflict with each other. According to Jenkins, he said the invention of TV didn't kill radio and the popularity of email still keeps room for hardcopy mailing. The status of both old and new media is just a matter of changing roles regarding the introduction of new technologies. Nico Tang talks about the difference in the managing the content of old media and new media published through the means of printed magazine and digital platforms. For printed media, *City Magazine* is a monthly magazine, it takes a longer time for preparation and usually on a specific topics surrounding Hong Kong. The theme normally features the current issues happening in our society with a coverage of around thirty to forty pages. For the new media, it is more about fast-moving and informative news which requires frequent upload on a daily or weekly basis. Therefore, it is not feasible to feature a project on a specific topics in Hong Kong, instead, it provides short and brief cultural activities or lifestyle products which can arouse public interest. All in all, printed magazine still retains its value from its project-based content recording the collective memories of Hong Kong people as well as its elegant packing and visual design. Both old and new media are separated core business of *City Magazine* which retains the spirit and value of its foundation.



## Expansion of the empire across multiple media platform

Nowadays, there are numerous of digital media to be found in the market. According to Chang Tieh Chih, *City Magazine* are planning to step in this media revolution in the future. Until this moment, *City Magazine* only has its Facebook page publishing to the public for which is considered to be lag behind from the market. I am going to talk more about the constraints and limitation for the slow-paced digital expansion later. Chang Tieh Chih believes it is important to create various platforms to further enlarge the market share and enhance the popularity of *City Magazine* in the digital world. In terms of audience engagement and participation, he suggests to set up a forum and blogging page like *House News*, *Stand News* and *Huffington Post*. By having its audiences to post their articles talking about the stories happening in the city, it can get more of their loyalty to *City Magazine* and discover young potential authors in order to promote the creative industry in Hong Kong. With the inflow of ideas from its target audiences, it can provide sufficient content to be uploaded to the digital platform after screening by the editorial team of *City Magazine*. This information-pull approach can make it easier to match the taste of the general public.

With a significant increment in the readership scale, *City Magazine* will have more bargaining power over its corporate clients regarding the direction of brand advertising. We all know it is unhealthy in the advertising cycle to be always product-oriented with hard core selling strategy. It is no longer useful to get the attention of audience nowadays. Many foreign media, like *The New York Times*, they have a high degree of authority in the developing the sponsored content without much control from their corporate clients. They can write some interesting stories not related to the brands directly. Take the case of *The New York Times*' Netflix sponsored content as an example. *The New York Times* posted an interactive story about how the prison system fails to meet the needs of female inmates in

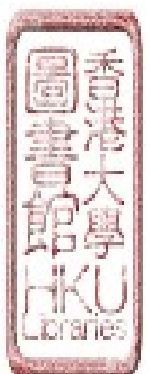




2014. The piece was well-reported and it included quotes from advocates of prison reform, former inmates and statistics about incarceration rates. The story was sponsored content, paid for by Netflix to promote *Orange is the New Black*, and produced by T Brand Studio. This successful case shows that new media can get the balance between editorial independence and commercial income. *City Magazine* can retain its core value to publish the sponsored content about the stories in the city, all about is the number of hit rate to get the confidence of investors.

Apart from setting up forum and blogging page, Chang Tieh Chih foresee that *City Magazine* can further create a leading role of culture and lifestyle platform in the digital world. He disclosed that although there are keen competitions in the digital media industry, there is no representative website in the cultural sector. Using umbrella movement as an example, it is the recent big social issues in the society, Chang Tieh Chih imagines to create an archive to record the artistic work and the collective value of Hong Kong democracy. This can be done by uploading visual images of creative artwork and protestor during this social movement which is seen as a library for the younger generation to search online.

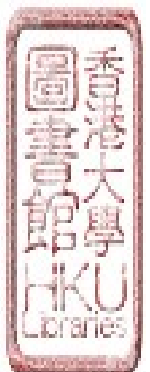
Last but not least, Chang Tieh Chih believes the digital media development somehow stands for a geographical expansion of *City Magazine* in other South East Asian region, like Taiwan, Singapore. Like the printed media, the circulation expands to Taiwan after Chang Tieh Chih became the chief editor of *City Magazine*, he thinks by the power of online circulation, it is possible to further expand to other countries without geographical limitation and turns out enhancing the cultural idea exchanges between countries.



## Obstacles facing in the digital movement

The major difficulty faced by *City Magazine* to have a further step in the digital world is commercial consideration according to Chang Tieh Chih, Nico Tang, Carrie Siu and Ching Siu Wai. They all claims that the business model for this digital development project is too complicated which makes *City Magazine* stuck in the middle. Factors including return in investment, human resources and pool of talent, high development cost of innovative digital tools and saturated usage of existing digital tools, hinders them to make the investment decision.

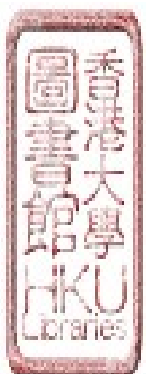
According to Ching Siu Wai, he agrees that digital media is the future trend in the media industry, but to what extend *City Magazine* will go for it depending on the amount of capital for the development as well as the innovative digital tools they can rely on. He disclosed that developing smartphone apps would be the next key step of the digital movement. To be contrary to the words of Ching Siu Wai, Chang Tieh Chih and Nico Tang got an opposite ideas towards it. According to Chang Tieh Chih, the popularity of apps is low in Hong Kong comparing to the mainland China, like i-Weekly and i-Bloomberg by Modern Media receives a high download rate in the China market, but not in Hong Kong. He suggest to focus on website development would be a better alternative. Nico Tang got the most pessimistic view on the digital media development of *City Magazine*. It is in this critical way that all media are the same. They serve up content to an audience that consumes it. This is what traditional media did; this is what new media do. New media have a modern texture and feel, but it's old wine in a new bottle. The norms of digital media in the local magazine industry is still following the handling method of traditional media. They simply transformed the printed content into digital format and upload to the website or share in the apps. Nico Tang considers this is not an appropriate way to make full use of the digital media tools. In a highe



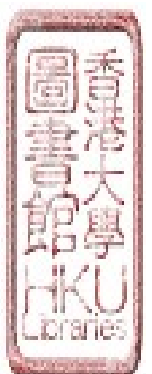
level, he thinks the innovative technological tools are kind of saturated in the market. For example, YouTube has already provided a channel for video sharing, Facebook has offered a platform for people to share their daily life and interaction between users and Stand News has already established a platform for bloggers to post their articles. So there would be a very narrow space for *City Magazine* to go for a prosperous digital expansion.

Since this is already a large group of options for audience to select from the market, it is not optimistic to see why audience would pick *City Magazine* out of the other digital platform. As mentioned above, the production value chain is transformed and there is a bi-direction of producer-driven and audience-driven mechanism shaping the media market. Media producers are trying to satisfy the expectation of its audience, but on the other hand, they are facing limitation of internal constraints as well as the increasing demand of the audience. Nico Tang also mentioned that online shopping platform is one of the key trend in the digital platform. But he denies that it is a good decision to touch this scope as it violates the core value of *City Magazine* as a media. Even though people might think it is appropriate to sell the lifestyle or fashion items mentioned in the magazine, but still there are numerous internal problems to be solved, like logistic and warehousing.

Moreover, Nico Tang disclosed that the publishing business of *City Magazine* is declining these years. Income from advertisement is no longer the major part to sustain the business. The old media is seen as a sunset industry in the coming decades. He also admits that the content to be uploaded to the digital platform would become valueless since every subscriber can read it for free. The range of service provided to audience is the only thing worth money. It is sad that he cannot foresee a bright future for the digital trend if there is no breakthrough in the technological tools which is unique in the market.

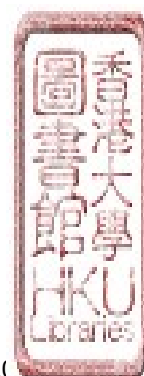


For the external factors, Ching Siu Wai got an interesting founding on the behavior of audience in the digital world. Hong Kong people is not an active online participant as people in Taiwan and the mainland China, they will just follow a page in Facebook or a person in Instagram without sharing people's posts or clicking a "Like". This shows the silence of online users in Hong Kong which also affects the confidence of corporations to invest in the digital media industry as they statistics of sharing rate or number of "Like" do count as a benchmark for the circulation. Nowadays, it is much harder than imagined to expand media business across various digital platform, even we are described living in the age of communication technology.



## Defining the internal roles in the digital expansion

Whether editorial team or marketing team would be the key person who is responsible for this digital expansion? Chang Tieh Chih said that the content selection and creative part are definitely the task of editorial team. Since editorial team has a better sense on the originality of story and selection of content, they can select the suitable content to upload to the digital platform which is also correlated to the printed media. There are always some conflicts between the decision of producers and satisfaction of audience. As what Jenkins said, the active participation of audience sometimes blur the boundary between producer and consumer, audience are always demanding more from the existing environment. Put this argument in the case of *City Magazine*, it is always profitable to cater the favor of audience by publishing what they expect to read, like K-pop related articles, selfie of celebrities, so on and so forth. But as a media producer, Chang Tieh Chih clarified that sometimes they have to retain the value of *City Magazine* while striking a balance for commercial consideration. Nico Tang also reveals that it is the hardest thing to fine tune the city stories to match the taste of youngster and keep the uniqueness of *City Magazine*. From the perspective of marketing, the circulation rate and return in investment are their key concerns, but they have to respect the decision of the editors in some sense. The dominating situation from the audience-driven phenomenon somehow affecting the uniqueness of *City Magazine* and it is difficult to create something really surprise audience nowadays, it is vulnerable to prevent from the decline of readership scale.

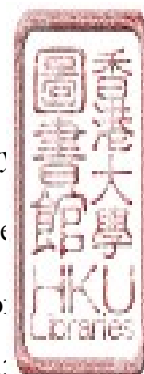


## Apple Daily as a successful case for digital media

*Apple Daily* is seen as one of the successful digital media in Hong Kong. During the interview with Ma Long Ching, she discloses that the way contributed to the successful revolution of *Apple Daily* is its marketing strategy and the huge resources invested by the corporation. The download rate of *Apple Daily*'s apps is always in the top ranked download list. Ma Long Ching considers the strategies adopted by the lifestyle is risky as they are doing something no competitors are doing in the market. From the support of a pool of talents and capital, they are able to develop sufficient content to hit various target markets and audience from different age groups. The instant news upload and creation of content is mainly driven by the media producers. Inevitably, they does have some marketing gimmick to get audiences to engage by asking them to provide interesting video and images in return for cash prizes. She claims that the current working structure is very tense as they have to squeeze every minute to publish interesting articles and videos which can attract the eye balls of all audience groups in Hong Kong 24 hours 365 days.

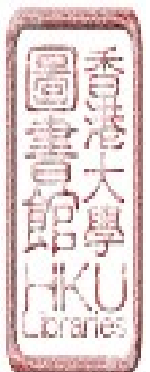
Being the leading role in the newspaper market, *Apple Daily* takes a new approach on the sponsored content strategy. *Apple Daily* stops all product-oriented advertisement in the website. They are now getting sponsor from the corporate clients to tailor-made a thematic story to features the trend of the industry which can be linked up with the brand of its client. Sometimes, *Apple Daily* will invite famous bloggings to endorse through their strong network in the media sector.

Ma Long Ching also mentions the information distribution model differs from among *City Magazine*, *Apple Daily* and *100Most*. For *Apple daily*, it is mostly information push by the decision of media producers. Since it has a large scale of crew to support the making o

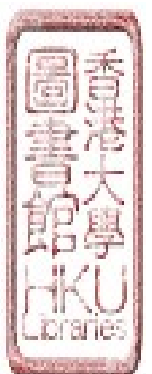


contents on various segments, including local news, fashion, beauty, travelling, lifestyle, etc. They are considered as the trend setter for the society and brings up topics among the general public. She believes that cheerful articles and videos are easier to be favored by audience. With a more open style, *Apple Daily* can reach the demand of its audience and retain the readership in long term. For *City Magazine*, as it has developed a certain level of image in the market, its content is somehow limited by the formed expectation from its audience. In such a dilemma, it is classified as producer-driven information source and its editors are trying their best to make the content interesting within the box. With the limited space of development, it is difficult for *City Magazine* to survive in the niche market with no further enhancement of its digital media development. In the opposite, *100Most* selects the consumer-driven approach for which 99% of its content is from the recent issues happening in the society or creative ideas of online users. It just exploits the existing contents created by the online audiences and re-publishes them in a more funny way to match the taste of the majority. This is one of the reason why *100Most* can expand rapidly these years from a weekly magazine to online TV.

According to Axel Bruns, the absence of producers, distributors, or consumers, and the presence of a seemingly endless string of users acting incrementally as content producers by gradually extending and improving the information present in the information common. Whether in this chain participants act more as users who utilize existing resources or more as producers who just add new information on which they take a hybrid user/producer role which inextricably interweaves both forms of participation, and thereby become producers. The produsage process itself is fundamentally built on the affordances of the techno-social framework of the networked environment. In the age of information overflow, a same story could be repetitively used by numerous media with just a minor changes on the topic and tone



of writing. This responds the pessimistic view of all interviewees on the future digital media.





## Desktop research on local and foreign digital media

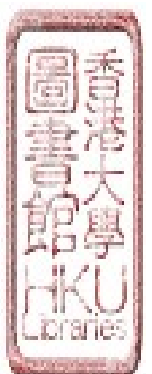
*100Most* is a Cantonese satirical weekly popular among Hong Kong youth. It is founded by Roy Tsui, Seven Chan and Bu in 2013. It raises the comedy bar by adding online video programming, TV Most, apart from the printed media. It is seen as the recent successful case of local new media. TV most is well known for its derivative work mocking the issues happening in Hong Kong. One of the programs, Most News, targets to mock people in a funny news reporting angle. The information source comes from the online sources, like Golden Forum, Facebook, etc. With the strong network in the entertainment industry, TV Most can find the celebrity to feature in the program which matches the taste of Hong Kong people. Although the content is considered as low, it gets a large scale of online audience to follow every day. This information pull approach is easier to get engagement of audience as things published come from the idea of audience, they will find it easier to accept and satisfy their expectation. With the supporting of Facebook and Instagram, the readership scale expands in a rocket speed. However, with the budget constraint and limited human resources, it is foreseen that it is difficult for TV Most to expand further.

A business model for digital expansion is always complex, budget and return are the factors to be considered in top priority. To stay creative and not too commercial is essential for the media in this generation. On the other hand, income from advertisement is the major source to keep companies running. So how to satisfy both audience and corporate clients in the same time to keep the content stay cool?

Using the case of *Medium*, a social media platform for audience to read, write, and interact with the stories. Every day thousands of new voices share there, it is well known for its content advertising and native advertising. Audience engages in this media platform due to



the frequent interaction among other audience and producers. They get comments from each other daily and their post are published to the public after strict screening to ensure the quality of posts. And they have the whole control in the sponsored content from the advertising partner. Some investors do not even know the content they sponsor before the thematic stories launch out. *Medium* did very well in the marketing strategy since they put a great effort to keep consumers interested in ads rather than avoiding the. The creation of sponsored content is content marketing, although it is also being called content advertising and native advertising. More familiar terms for the trend include branded content, branded entertainment and advertorials. General Electronic is one of the client of *Medium*, to enhance the branding of General Electronic, *Medium* invited a number of scientists to talk about the future technological development in the coming decades. This campaign is very successful due to the inspiring content and audience finds how their life would be. Another success campaign is BMW, famous bloggers who are also car lovers are invited to write an article on their expectations of dream car. It got a great echo from the public and the new car launched by BMW resulted from a high sales rate. It is important to think out of the box and to combine commercial and creativity in one concept. Traditional advertising approach is not sustainable any longer in the digital age. According to Jenkins, what we are now seeing is the hardware diverging while the content [software] converges. It is not easy for media to create a new digital tools like YouTube or Facebook by itself since the development cost is huge. So is it really hopeless to be success in the new media industry with the converging content?

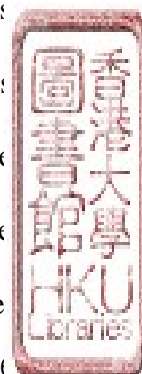


## Conclusion and Findings

In the case of *City Magazine*, it is playing a safe role in the digital media sector. The budget constraints and limited resource are faced by most of the media companies, but we can still see some successful cases in Hong Kong. Its hesitation is due to the conservative company culture as well as the established media image. *City Magazine* is seen as a leading lifestyle printed magazine in the 1970s, and it retains its core value and publishing style for decades though the content has been revised to some points. As a monthly magazine, the setup of digital platforms is complicated, especially for the online world which is required for instant uploading of news and articles. The collective value for *City Magazine* is piled up years by years, whether the existing audience will continue to support *City Magazine* if it really goes digital is still a doubt. One thing is for sure is that this digital movement can acquire a new batch of young readers who are active online users and local culture lovers.

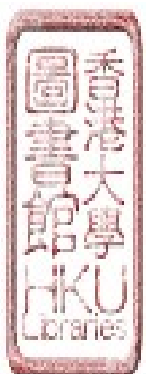
After the interviews with the editorial team and marketing team of *City Magazine*, they do not show a positive feeling on the digital expansion due to the internal factors, including limited resources, established traditional media image, nature of project featuring style, so on and so forth. For external factors, it refers to the saturation of choices in the market, unhealthy advertising cycle, mentality of local online audience and the low popularity of sponsored content in Hong Kong.

These days, we tell ourselves that we are living in an era of new media. It is mocking that it is not true as what we think, it all depends on what we mean by new. The content of media is converging nowadays, and with the same digital tools being used, it is seen as an impossible mission to outstand oneself in the market. I observed that several areas which can contribute the success in this keen competitor. Speed, news release and update content on a faster cycle



Co-creation, new media blur the lines between producers and audiences. Audiences can be the content producers sometimes. Sharing, new media are social platforms of exchange and connection, the way to make good use of the existing platforms is critical. To maintain a regular update and fast response to audience's comments are important to form the bonding. New media are further out on each dimension, but traditional media are catching up fast because these dimensions are also core to traditional media. The printed media is still seen as a core business segment though the circulation rate is declining.

Today's media world, the audience owns the active voice to speak. Content is acted upon, which means that content owns the passive voice. The magazine or blog post was read. The TV show or online video was watched. The talk radio show or streaming music was heard. In short, all media content, both traditional and new, is consumed, whereas all media audiences consume. The shifting consumption behavior is having a shocking influence on the content. Whether to feed the taste of online audience or to retain your own core value with appreciation from a minority group is a difficult choice to make. All in all, today's media - traditional and new - is at one end of the passive/active continuum.



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