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Can’t Stop the Signal:
How publishing companies are taking advantage of existing readerships online

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In this article I will be looking at fandoms as existing readerships online, and how publishing companies have used these to market and sell successful books. Fandoms are communities of people online who share a certain interest. Their interest leads to potential topics already having a successful fanbase from which a book can be produced. Blogs have been turned into popular books, books can be republished with a different cover, and authors can vie online to have their books read and released by publishers who know that they will sell instantly due to the fans already attained on the web. This has been the case with pop culture blogs such as I Can Has Cheezburger, This Is Why You’re Fat, Stuff White People Like, and Cake Wrecks, which were turned into books, and in some cases, such as Julie/Julia, to movies. Harper Collins even has their own online site, Authonomy, where budding authors can publish their works, have them critiqued by fellow writers, and vie to be the most popular book on the site. The top five rated are then read by editors at Harper Collins in hopes that a marketable story will be found. I believe that due to this global Internet connection, publishing companies have boosted sales by appealing to the collector in every person, as they already knowing where their passion lies. Instead of viewing digitalization as a threat, publishers can instead retain control by encouraging online forums, blogs, and any site that they can use in the future when popularity grows.

Keywords
BLOGS • FANDOMS • COMMUNITY • PUBLISHING • EXISTING READERSHIPS • MARKETING

Introduction

The first thing I do every evening is delve into my favorite blogs to see the latest humiliating Facebook post (Failbook), new cooking tips alongside mouthwatering photos (The Pioneer Woman), and yes, I do also succumb to ninja kitties (I Can Has Cheezburger). Learnt about from hyperlinks or friends, these blogs are a way for me to relax and to interact

1  http://failbook.com/
2  http://thepioneerwoman.com/
3  http://icanhascheezburger.com/
with others who enjoy the same interests. It is no surprise that the rise of the Internet has opened up the door to thousands of fandoms, which, according to the Online Etymology Dictionary, is a ‘realm of avid enthusiasts.’ Traced back to 1903, what originally was meant as a term to describe keen sports fans is now being used to describe any community centered on a particular interest. With the digital revolution, fandoms have boomed, formed of people who can globally connect to those with similar interests in an instant. Due to their obsessive desire to know and have anything related to their topic of choice, publishers have found a way to use these existing readerships to their own advantage.

**Fandoms as Communities**

Blogs have grown rapidly; Technorati has indexed 133,000,000 blogs since 2002. (Singer 2009) In 2008, comScore gave the number of people who read blogs at 346,000,000. (Singer 2009) That many fans have given a great many blogs their own followers, who eagerly anticipate the next post from the writer. A critical reason why this many people gather to a website and why publishers rely on them for book sales is because these readers form a community. Barry Wellman and Milena Gulia (1999) wrote ‘people’s allegiance to the Net’s communities of interest may be more powerful than their allegiance to their neighborhood communities because those involved in the same virtual community may share more interests than those who live on the same block.’ This idea melds itself in the definition of ‘fandom,’ as a common bond links itself through people all around the world and these fandoms become communities with close ties, people joined together through a shared appreciation of a writer, a piece of art, a game, an idea, or many more.

Blogs are not only accessible; they include forums, comments, and sometimes even the ability of readers to contribute. As John Quiggin said, ‘the most important are facilities for readers to make comments on individual posts and for other bloggers to link to posts with criticism, praise or merely to point to an interesting article.’ (Quiggin 2006) These fandoms are a critical part of any successful blog. Writers write for their readers, and the readers have a chance to talk to the writer and feel more involved. They can get to know the writer, and become more engaged with their latest post or comment, or even, their latest book. A blog can become something they are part of, and this security and common bond gives readers on the Internet an idea or a person to support, and when thousands echo this voice, it can create a force of some magnitude that publishers should not ignore.

Perhaps, as Nicholas Carr pointed out, our requirements for a community are low. He
stated that ‘what the Net seems to be doing is chipping away my capacity for concentration and contemplation.’ (Carr 2008) This could explain the high numbers of hits on a website about ninja cats. Perhaps we can’t absorb the amount of information contained in a book. It would seem that many are turning to blogs, with their short topics and pictures instead. Yet, a community is a community, especially when it comes to making money, and the figures are what publishers notice. Meredith Nelson sums it up with her statement:

‘Blogs allow publishers to monitor trends and “listen” to the conversations online about their books. Bloggers often act as filters for the information online, making it easier for agents and editors to identify the most interesting and unique new voices in the blogosphere. Bloggers who wish to be authors offer publishers ready-made platforms and opportunities to publish into established audiences.’ (Nelson 2006)

Instead of despising the digital realm and fearing it would make them obsolete, some publishers have opted to use it for their own good. As Nelson wrote, publishers can now easily pick up on blogs with high existing readerships and use it to their advantage.

From Blog to Book…

Publishing houses have picked up on these readerships, and follow the sites that have consistently high traffic. In the New York Times, literary agent Kate McKean said, ‘You can use that information to prove marketability.’ (Wortham 2009) Blogs have gotten so popular that agents like McKean are wholly web-oriented.

Humor websites have provided a quick fix to online readers and generated huge fandoms that revolve around witty quips or pictures. I Can Has Cheezburger? is a blog about cats and funny captions. This is Why You’re Fat⁴ contains pictures of disgusting food combinations. Love Mom⁵ is a collection of humorous online conversations between mothers and their children. Cake Wrecks⁶ shows pictures of monstrous cake creations, and Stuff White People Like⁷ is a satirical blog about the stereotypical white American. All of the above have been turned into books. I Can Has Cheezburger? received around 500,000 page views a day in 2007, and was picked up by Gotham Books for publication. (Tozzi 2007) Patrick Mulligan, the senior editor at Gotham Books told the New York Times that ‘As long as the category is selling books, publishers aren’t going to ignore it.’ (Wortham 2009) This thinking proved right, as I Can Has Cheezburger? sold more than 100,000

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⁴ http://thisiswhyyourefat.com/
⁵ http://www.postcardsfromyomomma.com/
⁶ http://cakewrecks.blogspot.com/
⁷ http://stuffwhitepeoplelike.com/
copies and stayed on The New York Times bestseller list for 13 weeks. (Wortham 2009) *This Is Why You’re Fat* got 1.3 million page views in 48 hours, and a six-figure book deal three weeks later with HarperStudio. (Tate, Wortham 2009) It’s existing fanbase led to it hitting the top ten on Amazon a week before it went on sale. (Syme 2009) Those are two examples of how blogs are turning into gift books; collector items that fans of the websites have to have and pass on.

...to Movie

Yet more heartfelt and compelling stories have also been picked up for publishing. An advantage of these has caught the eye of producers in Hollywood. They realized that these blogs written by ordinary people with a talent for skillfully detailing the extraordinary in their lives is a clever method of making money. One recent example is *Julie and Julia*[^8], a weblog started by Julie Powell detailing her self-set task of cooking all of Julia Childs recipes in one year. Julie Powell won the Blooker Prize in 2006 for best blog to be turned into a book, and from there she saw her book turn into a movie – a movie whose leading actress was nominated for an Academy Award no less.

From blog to book to movie, publishers have jumped at the chance to cut down the marketing involved in pushing new novels out to the public and are using a fast-track method that ensures high readership and high sales. *The Intimate Adventures of a London Call Girl*, *The Washingtonienne*, and *The Pioneer Woman* have all been brought through the stages of publishing to end up as high profile movies or TV shows. Whether it is a tale of one woman’s encounters with Washington politics and the sex that goes with it or another woman’s tale of finding true love with a cowboy, their fans online have rallied and produced sales for the books. Tucker Max, whose blog was turned into a book and then movie titled *I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell*, summed it up – ‘Blogs reduce the risk of the book,’ says Max. ‘When something starts as a blog, without spending any money you have an idea of the size of the audience and the reaction to the work.’ (Huguenin 2009)

**Authonomy – Harper Collins Goes Online**

Publishers now understand the full force of the web, and in the last 10 years, publishers from Random House, Grand Central Publishing, Pan Macmillan, Simon & Schuster, and Harper Collins have tried their hand at incorporating themselves into the communities on

[^8]: http://blogs.salon.com/0001399/
[^9]: http://belledejour-uk.blogspot.com/
[^10]: http://washingtoniennearchive.blogspot.com/
All of them initiated with the idea of drawing in people without the need of agents, and hopefully overcoming the ‘slush pile.’ The latest one is Harper Collins with their site ‘Authonomy,’ which aims to allow writers to publish their manuscripts online and allow the readers to vote on their favorites, all with the promise that the top five highest rated will be read by editors and given a chance to be published. Their aim comes across sounding fair and promising: ‘We don’t feel that our current, closed ‘slush pile’ system is fair to authors themselves – nor do we believe it is giving us the best chance of finding the brightest new talent. Authonomy is a genuine attempt to find a better way to determine the books on our shelves – and it hands selective power to the readers who will ultimately be buying them.’

Responses to this have been mixed, with some people praising the site for being forward thinking, and others criticizing it, saying it is trying to recreate the communities created with individual blogs and claiming that nothing comes out of it. Mary Walters wrote on her blog that ‘the primary motivation for most people who will read and back other people’s manuscripts on Authonomy is not to find good books for [Harper Collins] to publish – but rather to find other people to read and back their own books.’ (Walters 2009) Indeed, whilst one of the favorable aspects of Authonomy is the feedback from other writers that some authors truly appreciate, the comments aspect of it also invites spamming. Promoting a book just to get your own book promoted right back is rife on the site, and it seems that the community has been tainted by the promise of a chance of publication. This differs from the communities on other blogs as each writer has their own gain in mind, and they are not there simply for a shared admiration of something.

The Future of Publishing

However, even with all these bugs in mind, Harper Collins is still looking forward and still noting the rise in fandoms and communities and the importance in publishing they generate. Kate Hyde, a digital publisher at Harper Collins, conducted an interview with Writer’s Digest about Authonomy, and she notes the aspirations of the site as something not to provoke cynicism, but as something that she hopes will bring publishers into the digital age. When asked about the purpose of Authonomy, she stated that ‘We wanted to create a better way to surface fresh voices and writing talent that could be used not just by us but for all the industry. For too long publishers have been criticized for their vastly inefficient or insular methods of sourcing projects.’ (Hyde 2009) She also mentions that three book contracts have come out of Authonomy, and a few more that made it to the editors of Harper Collins. One of the books, *The Reaper*, was a self-published book they
could take national, Never Say Die was another that profited from the comments and changes made after being opened up to the Authonomy forum, and Fairy Tale in New York was a much beloved discovery.

Another interesting fact that Hyde points out is that agents also use Authonomy to find writers they feel they can sell, so perhaps even more works have benefited from being on the site, for, as she claims, ‘so many agents are now using the site, we have no way of knowing whether new talent was sourced from the site unless they tell us.’ (Hyde 2009) Authonomy is a fandom of passionate writers and readers, and their contribution to the site, whether it is their manuscript or their help with editing, is another forum the publishing world can use for their own cause. This is a case of a fandom not being about a particular subject that would publish well, but a fandom of writing itself. These are people who buy and read books, who encourage new authors, who long to become published authors themselves. Harper Collins has uncovered a new aspect of the online world and a new way to use online communities to bring new life to publishing.

Conclusion
As blogs continue to form communities and continue to have growing fanbases, there will always be a market for publishers. Fans are essentially collectors, whether it comes to devouring every issue of a comic book, buying the new Twilight edition, or in this case, buying any book that relates to the blog that they spend hours on each day. This is a case of the new media feeding the market for the old, as fans want to be owners; they want to have a part of this world that they love. Digital publishing may be booming, but it does not allow people to feel a sense of proprietorship. A book, with its glossy covers and photos, with its ability to be turned into a gift, with its new content, will appeal to the existing readership built up on the web. Whether agent or publisher, the work and the readers are already there, and the digital world can only benefit the publishing world.

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An Improved Digital Divide: How Chile’s political efforts have positively affected the educational divide

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Abstract
Economic progress is increasingly dependent on how countries and individuals use technology. At present, governments are aware of the power and opportunities that the Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) brings to accelerate the economic growth and social inclusion of all nations. The problem is that access to Internet and ICTs is still unequal around the world (Estrategia Digital Chile 2007). The gap that exists across countries in terms of access to Internet and ICTs is called the “digital divide,” and likewise, finding this gap within a country is called a “social divide” (De Munster 2004, pp. 133).

There are economic and non-economic factors to bridging the difference between these technological access, including connection, computers, and software. Many investigations state that the rise of Internet users is tightly connected to the rise or fall in economic development in any one country as well (Guillen & Suarez 2005). Similarly, the per capita income increases, allowing more able consumers to purchase technology (2005). However, there are also non-economic initiatives which help to provide access to Internet and ICTs to consumers, reducing the digital divide. This paper will explore the political schemes which have contributed to digital inclusion in a country with little access to higher technology. I will analyze how government policies have provided inclusive initiatives allowing consumers greater access to Internet and ICTs, and how this effort has positively improved the educational digital divide in Chile.

Keywords
DIGITAL DIVIDE • EDUCATION • GOVERNMENT • CHILE • ACCESS • ONLINE INFORMATION

Introduction: Chilean Scenario
The development of internet in Chile began timidly in the 1980’s, when different universities began experimenting with networking practices. A single decade later, Chile was acknowledged as a leader in higher technologies in all of Latin America (Tanner 2005). Leaders in different fields were assured that the general economic growth of the country
would spread the use of Internet, providing access to a greater portion of the population. However, this predicted expansion never occurred, fueling a major national discussion in 1998 about the importance of expanding Internet access within the country (2005).

In an era of growing access to information, limited access to the Internet is creating an unequal gap between Chile and the rest of the developed world. Therefore, Chile has found itself pondering a massive social dilemma, due to the inability of the country to participate in the new digital economy. These days, individuals, businesses and governments are connected to the global marketplace, as well as social media outlets, by computer access, where people conduct their own transactions, collecting new information and spreading further knowledge (Light 2001).

Academic experts and media constituents argue that it is the responsibility of the Chilean Government to spread the use of Internet around the country. Due to rising pressures, the Chilean Government created The National Commission on New Information and Communication Technologies in July of 1998, with the goal to provide policy recommendations on incorporating Chile into the digital world. At that time, one of the most salient problems that Chile had was being able to afford high telephone charges and connecting Internet Service Providers. As with many Latin-American countries, the government was also in charge of generating Internet Access Centers, incorporating computer and Internet access in schools and training teachers digital practices (Tanner & Hawkins 2003).

The Government began its work in 1999, reducing telephone rates to make way for Internet traffic. Thus, the largest of the telecommunications companies, Entel and Telefonica, had to reduce their prices as well. Changes in this aspect generated a positive modification in the amount of Internet users in Chile. The transformation of the country through political initiatives is shown in the following example:

Between August and October 1999 the number of Internet users in Chile arose from 375,000 to 625,000 according to government statistics. In the same period Internet traffic increased from 170 million minutes to 288 million minutes (Tanner 2005).

Due to this huge accomplishment, the Chilean Government was forced to make changes relating to networks as well. At this stage, two original companies which provided Internet service, RDC and Reuna, had created their own networks which connected directly to the United States. (Casari 1995) For this reason, the exchange of information from Chilean people who used different ISP in the country became increasingly expensive, as the content
had to reach the US before it came back to Chile.

In 1999 the situation dramatically changed when the government established the Technical Rule for the National Interchange of Internet Traffic, which constrained all of the Internet Services Providers, including Entel and Telefonica which also acted as Internet providers, to establish connections with all other ISPs, with the goal of increasing not just the speed of information within Chile, but also to reduce the cost of International Internet traffic (Tanner 2005).

In addition, many theoretical experts argue that digital inclusion is not just a result of economic factors, but also the consequence of regulatory, political and sociological ones (Guillen 2005). What’s more, it is possible to say that Chile has achieved more than other countries in Latin America due to the policies legislated by the government as well as the reduction of technological prices (Tanner & Hawkins 2003).

In 1999, the population of people with Internet access rose from 2-3% to 4-5% (2003). However, the largest change came in the year 2000. Casen, the most important survey in Chile, showed that 21.6% of the population had access to the Internet; a massive transformation for a country who only years before was struggling to connect its limited users at all. However, the real challenge was to generate universal access within Chile, which is still an ongoing issue, considering that the current lack of access means that information published exclusively online is out of reach for a lot of Chilean people.

Reducing the Educational Digital Divide

In 2006, the International Telecommunications Union showed how the digital divide appeared around the planet. While approximately 60% of the developed population had Internet access at the time, Internet user penetration remained less than 15% in developing nations, given the slow access growth (International Communication Union 2008). However, in 2006 The Economist Intelligence Unit stated that Chile was actually an exception in Latin-America. In fact, the e-readiness ranking of that year, which measured the ability of consumers, businesses and governments to use ICT to their benefit, placed Chile at number 31 among 68 developed and developing countries.

Chile is far ahead of other nations in its region, Mexico being the closest at number 40, and is still in a better position than developed countries such as Hungary. For this reason, Chile is considered a digitally integrated country with the ability to challenge the digital divide, even though the problem has yet to be fully resolved. Evidence may be found in the
last Casen survey which states that 42.5% of the Chilean population has Internet access, while the overall penetration in Latin-America is currently fewer than 15%, according to Pyramid Research. An optimistic statistic, considering that in the year 2000, Internet penetration in Chile was half that (Estrategia Digital Chile 2010).

Other ways in which government policies have improved the educational digital divide, can be measured by statistics stating that between 92% and 99% of all Chilean Students (up to 18 years old) have access to the Internet. Although 79% of students get Internet access through their school, particularly the poorest people, individuals are still able to access technology centers through government sponsored programs and institutions. Thus, it is through educational venues that Chile has been generating a digital inclusion within the country (Casen 2006). It was the Chilean Government’s priority to digitalize public schools, providing them with computers, software and connections throughout the country; a goal that, through the ministry of Education, created the Program Enlaces in 1992 (The experience of Informatics, n.d).

Program Enlaces has been the most important Chilean program for digital inclusion yet, due to government support in funding Enlaces’ vision. Today 9,696 public schools have access to ITCs, representing 96% of all registered users. What’s more, 4,845 out of the 10,000 public schools in Chile are connected to the Internet, opening new learning possibilities for thousands of students (Estrategia Digital Chile 2007). Unfortunately, many experts criticize this panorama as they consider that students with access to computers and Internet at home still have more possibilities to absorb knowledge (Barros 2000). They can not only search new online information, but they can also go deeper into some of the subjects that they learn at school, which people without access at home lack.

While 71% of the richest people in Chile (incomes over US$ 5,000 per month) use Internet from their homes, just 16% of the poorest people (less than US$500 per month) have equal at-home access, confirming the constant challenge that this country faces (Universidad Catolica and Camara de Comercio de Santiago 2009).

Yet, while in the year 2000 around 70 students shared a single computer in Chile, today just 13 students share one machine, representing a vast improvement in the education system (Enlaces 2009). Despite these statistics, the Government realizes that more needs to be done to bridge the academic divide, aiming to have one computer per 10 students in the year 2010. In order to accomplish this goals, the government created the Technology Plan for Quality Education in 2007 (EducarChile 2009). Committing US$ 200 million
towards the goal of reducing the digital divide, the government plans to increase the amount of available computers from 110,000 to 330,000 in its public schools. The final plan is to move Chile from a developing to a developed country, mirroring such countries as Spain, which also has 10 students per computer (The experience of Informatics Education in Chile).

The Chilean government also created “Laboratorios Moviles Computacionales”, a new initiative for 2010 to combat the digital divide. The plan focuses on the 1,500 poorest schools in Chile, giving 1 computer to every student in the 3rd grade, representing 64,000 students. Hopefully, they will be able to access information through the Internet and online publications (NetSupport, n.d). But it is not an easy goal. Students have to struggle with how to absorb the new interactive material and the online information. Thus, it supposes they will take time to incorporate the new platform of knowledge.

Scholars have seen a key improvement in the teaching practices of technological innovation, as they believe it can generate more effective learning environments (Abdullah 2009). This explains why the Chilean organization, Enlaces, has also focused on the importance of the teaching process. The program has trained 109,163 lecturers in the use of ICT; however, no progress will be generated if teachers are not prepared enough for this huge change. This is still one of the most important current challenges for the Chilean government, and the reason that Enlaces aims to reinforce the preparedness of lecturers who in the future will be able to promote new technologies in academic settings. Well prepared teachers will not simply improve skills among students, but also motivate them with new interactive material (2009).

Improving access

The World Economic Forum is a way of measuring the incorporation of ICT among all technologically active countries. The rankings in 2008-2009 placed Chile at number 40 among 133 other nations. It is by far the most advanced nation among other Latin-American countries. However, there is still a problem. Chile has to afford to be part of the digital world. As the ranking measures, Chile still has a weak connectivity and internal infrastructure. These aspects are essential to finally incorporating the whole country in the digital structure, allowing citizens to utilize all digital benefits (World Economic Forum 2010).

Because the Chilean government is aware of this problem, different initiatives which intend to reduce the barrier and produce universal access are the only way to reduce the
inequality between people who are able to access online information and those who cannot. In addition, different research shows that a common policy among most Latin-American countries is to generate telecenters or info-centers, managed either by Government or Non-Governmental Organizations (Di Meglio & Oregioni 2003).

Chile has modified some regulations to encourage these kinds of projects. In May 2001, the Chilean government enacted a new law that gives subsidies to support the creation of these sorts of communities (Republic of Chile Law 19,724, 2001). At the present, there are over 776 Telecenters throughout the country. In this respect, there are private and public initiatives that are worth analyzing. Among the private ones highlighted is the telecenter “El Encuentro”. It is the first its kind in the Metropolitan Region of Santiago. It is placed in Penalolen city and offers Internet access and computer classes to poor residents, students, teachers and entrepreneurs with the goal of reducing the digital divide (El Encuentro, n.d). Another example is “Comite de Democratizacion de la Informatica,” born in 1997. Today it has 44 telecenters spread all over the country with the mission to generate digital inclusion, giving technological access to people who have not been able to access the internet before. The third one is “Corporacion Maule Activa” created in 2000 in the Maule Region, 200 Km South of Santiago, which encourages entrepreneurs through the use of information tools (Fernandez 2004).

There are also public initiatives with the aim of incorporating more people into the digital world. All of them are part of the National Digital Alphabetization Campaign, which coordinates the work of the public and private sectors to expand the use of technology in Chile. Some are “Enlaces abiertos a la comunidad” which use the infrastructure of public schools to train the student’s parents in the use of ITC. Another is “Biblioredes” which aims to digitalize public libraries. Through an investment of US$ 20 million, 368 public libraries in Chile were fitted with new computers and Internet connections. Its operation began in 2002 and has received funds from both Melinda Gates and the Hill Foundation (2004). Today the challenge of universal access is even larger, considering that the earthquake of 2010 damaged 100 of the public libraries just mentioned (Sebastian Pinera 2010).

All of these initiatives are part of the Chilean Digital Agenda created in 2003, which aimed to unite a common strategy of converting Chile into a digital country by the year 2010- the Bicentenary of the country (Estrategia Digital Chile 2004). In the current agenda, 2007-2012, the government has acknowledged that their efforts should focus on improving the infrastructure and access of digital communications. This includes additional funding for the digitalization of all public schools (Estrategia Digital Chile 2007).
In conclusion, it is evident that Chile has improved the digital divide very strongly in Latin-America. Today, 46% of the Chilean population has access to the Internet and other new technologies, while in the rest of the region; the percentage is less than 15%. Chile’s success has been made possible due to political initiatives taken on by the government. Some efforts have relied on the reduction of call tariffs from telecommunications companies, and their obligation in establishing connections with all other Internet Services Providers, allowing people to obtain faster and cheaper Internet on the spot. Another government project, digitalizing public schools, has been exceptionally important in creating digital inclusivity. Especially, considering that most of the students get ICTs and Internet not from their homes but from their schools.

Despite the improvements however, Chile is still ranked far from the most developed countries. Its biggest challenge has been providing access to all of its citizens in rural and urban locations, ensuring that the total population has access to digital communications. Although there are still goals to be met, Chile has made enormous strides in providing internet and computer access to its citizens and will continue to do so in years to come. With innovative governmental initiatives, Chile will soon be able to compete with the rest of the developed world in accessing important information online in public and in the home.

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E-publishing: a dictator, or a co-operator?

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Abstract
With the fast growth of digital technology, we are living in a world where paper is no longer the dominant medium to other forms of media such as different recordings, which embedded themselves in stones, animal bones, woods etc. In the publishing industry, the e-book is so powerful that it has occupied a large market share originally belonging to the printed book. However, piracy, unstable content and profits distributing conflict are the drawbacks. Thus, in the publishing world, what will be the right path not only for the traditional book industry, but for the emerging electronic book industry, is the research question of this journal.

Keywords:
E-BOOK • DIGITAL REVOLUTION • PRINTED BOOK • LITERATURE • INSTANT PUBLISHING

Introduction
The digital revolution, particularly in e-book publishing, has changed the way in which the traditional publishing industry is run. More specifically, the whole supply chain and management system of the printed book is facing an unavoidable threat when content can be delivered electronically. Some standard assumptions, which are about the overwhelming position of the e-book market compared with the printed book industry, are becoming a debatable topic not only in the business field, but also in academic circles.

This journal will focus on the e-book and define it as an opportunity for the development of the entire publishing industry in current challenging circumstances. After providing a background of digital publishing, I will discuss some unavoidable problems in digital publishing field, for example, the limitation of DRM (digital rights management) and the lack of standardization and quality compared with printed book publishing. In order to illustrate that cooperation of e-book and physical book is ‘a perfect couple’, JIN JIANG, a famous original fiction website in China, will be used as a case study in the forth coming section. I will attempt to analyse a new model of publishing industry management, which
is considered to be the most successful example in China. In other words, on one hand, with the help of the genre of electronic book website, writers, especially the sponsors of publishers, are able to catch the most accurate first-hand information about the current situation of the publishing industry, the audience’s taste and the potential risks of themselves. On the other hand, readers can get rid of time-wasting reading experiences accordingly, making reading more flexible and personal. Undoubtedly, there is a sound, dynamic cycle of publishing activities and a new interactive relationship between the publisher and reader. Therefore, the establishment of e-book world is not meant to be the end of the physical book industry, but instead, a much brighter future.

**Background**

In this section, we present some background information related to e-book publishing. We firstly review its definition, development and basic classification. Then, we analyze the current situation of it focusing on the threat to the printed-book industry, for instance, the significant change in reading habits, even towards the entire daily lifestyle.

**What is e-publishing?**

Advancing computer technology enables book publishing to break the traditional boundaries between ‘time’ and ‘space’, contributing to the convergence of mediums. Particularly, the Internet plays a major part in the publishing revolution. For the definition of e-publishing, which can be also named as online publishing, net publishing, Ciolek (1997) defines it as: “Electronic publishing activities are aimed at systematic harvesting, processing and delivery of substantial chunks of information (scholarly/factual materials, news, software, entertainment, games, etc.) in electronic format to the public (users, purchasers).” Generally, e-publishing is a kind of commercial activity in order to purchase profits depending on content (electronic text). Especially, electronic commerce, the ability to buy and sell online, is one of the most significant outcomes, directly leading to the proliferation of online bookstores as Amazon which launched its first e-book reader named Kindle in 2007, selling books in electronic versions at a quite reasonable price compared with physical books.

**The classification of e-publishing**

2.2.1 **Self-publishing by individuals**

Actually, publishing individually has a more popular name: self-publishing, which means
that the author is the publisher, even the advertiser of his/her book. For this type, the writer needs to know the whole process of publishing including editing, encoding, online trading and promoting. This kind of publishing is widely used because it is the most convenient and personal compared with the others. In other words, anyone can do this if they follow the process although whether they are able to benefit from their work is relevant to the book quality and marketing strategies and so on.

2.2.2 Publishing by network companies
The second kind is conducted by several competitive network companies, who are fighting for the exclusive agency of producing e-books. As soon as someone is lucky enough to gain the power, she is able to post the content online, providing download services when readers have paid for their reading licenses.

2.2.3 Self-publishing by e-book publishers
For publishers themselves, no one could ignore the huge benefits from e-book publishing. Thus, in order to reduce the cost to a large extent, self-publishing by e-book publishers is a new model which is trying to get rid of “network companies”. Accordingly, the copyright belongs to publishers themselves.

2.2.4 Instant publishing (print on demand)
When some emergency happens, such as printed books are out of stock, or out of publication, e-book sellers would provide electronic versions accordingly. In other words, there is no plan for e-book producing, but completely print on demand.

2.2.5 Microsoft Model:
This model was created by Microsoft Company. It is quite successful in commercial operating, which allows advertisers to join the game and uses advertising profits to pay the bills for readers. Therefore, online readers are able to upload and download e-books freely if they can bear different kinds of embedded advertisements.

The reality of digital world
According to the expression in “Communication Theories: Origins, Methods, and Uses in the Mass Media” written by Tankard (2001), we are transferring from lack of mass media to media explosion, from one-way communication to mutual, even multi-way communication, from asymmetrical media to symmetrical media (interaction). For traditional publishing
world, there is no denying the fact that paper-printing techniques are facing an unprecedented challenges brought by digital technology. Traditional publishing is becoming increasingly hard to meet the needs for consumers’ taste. On one hand, the birth of Internet, characterized by hyperlink and interaction, is filling the technological gap. However, on the other hand, such replacement is meant to be the end of physical book industry seems to be negotiable.

The e-publishing deficiencies

Unlike the printing press, whose distribution and production are determined by the nature of duplication, online printing is not physical activities. Thus, in this section, I will analyze two main problems existed in e-publishing industry: the Digital Right Management (DRM) and the poor quality of e-books due to the over free network environment.

Copy right protection: is it the “Impossible Mission”?

4.1.1 the definition of DRM

DRM technology is the combination of different functions in order to trace the copyright usage of electronic content, such as describing, identifying, exchanging, protecting, monitoring etc (Picture 1). Obviously, the ultimate purpose is to protect authors’ intellectual property rights. At the same time, such technology is also used for supervising online information exchange. Particularly, the security of DRM system depends on the safety degree of its components, rather than a simple security key as we imagine. However, the current problem is the lack of unified regulation of DRM, directly leading to frequent conflicts happened in digital world. More importantly, how to protect online copyright is more concerning to moral question and social common judgment rather than only focusing on technological standards. To some extent, such problem combined with technology, law and economics is unable to be resolved in the near future.

![Diagram of DRM working process](Resource from: qkzz.net/article/95859356-73a6-480e-853b-8116...)
4.1.2 DRM-free: is it the end for e-book DRM?

One case has happened in USA in 2010 when Amazon announced that some publishers and e-book authors are able to upload or download e-book resources without the regulation of DRM (Lardinois, 2010). Apart from that, almost three years ago, Amazon has already launched DRM-free “Amazon MP3” music downloads (Topolsky, 2007). Admittedly, for Amazon, such DRM-free solution brings immense success in its new Digital Text Platform. However, is it really good to build up online copyright regulation, or, on the other hand, is it predicting the end for e-book DRM? If the other media industry follows the same path as music and e-book, what will be like when online regulation is out of control?

According to the Association of American Publishers (AAP), by the first quarter in 2009, sales for e-books were nearly 2 times as in early 2008, reaching over $25 million (Picture 2), which seems like good news. Unfortunately, not even a certain DRM system has been widely used by the great majority of computer users and network companies. Instead of that, driven by the high profits, different software companies develop different online protecting systems and e-readers. Undoubtedly, each system is exclusively serving its owner or several co-operators, directly causing the lack of uniformity. Taking the former case for example, people cannot take Kindle e-books to Sony readers, just because it is highly relevant to fierce competition within the same industry. Thus, thinking about the wide spread of Microsoft, DRM has long way to go.

![Picture 2: The wholesale revenue from 2002-2009 from AAP](image-url)
The problem of unstable content
Network regulation is not just an issue existing in the field of copyright protection, but also the battle between publishing houses and e-reader producers. Actually, publishing houses are rarely producing e-books because its copyright is too hard to control the content that has been posted online efficiently due to the “flexibility and radically different instantiation of textuality” of the Internet. As McGann pointed out, currently, the major publishing houses still intend to focus on printed-books, except for those professional e-book companies because they are hesitated that the criterion on profits distributing is still not clear enough. More importantly, with the fast growth of e-book production, the poor content quality and editing level cannot be the same as printed book due to the special producing process although William Blake Archive established the standard as early as 1993. That might be another reason. So, there exists a dilemma: at one side, e-book producers are keen to work with several big companies and use their reputation to promote their books. However, those companies seem to be a bit hard to accept an e-book as their mainstream product when considering its poor condition.

What is the future of e-book publishing?

5.1 The case study: Dynamic publishing——JIN JIANG
JIN JIANG original literature website, which was founded in 2003, has become the largest literature website in China. According to the statistics from the official website, there are 5,000,000 registered users, 3,000,000 registered writers and over 5,000 writers who signed contract with her. Additionally, over 30 famous publishing houses in China establish working relationship with her, including Author Publishing House, Chang Jiang Press, Spring literature Publishing House etc. Until now, there have been over 200 novels are published successfully through JIN JIANG. Her daily visits are more than 40,000,000, ranking top 1000 globally and top 100 among Chinese websites.

The analysis of website management
General speaking, JIN JIANG creates an operating model with the help of Customer Relationship Management (CRM). Particularly, JIN JIANG injects new thinking and the specific situation in China into website management. First of all, the brand is characterized
by “original literature”, which is relevant to a kind of self-publishing. In other words, she provides equal opportunities to everyone, if he/she enjoys writing and intents to share publicly. On one hand, free accessing to the website stands for a revolution in publishing world. On the other hand, “zero thresholds” attacks numerous literature lovers’ attentions and creates new conceptions such as “mass literature” or “popular literature”.

Apart from original created content and easy accessibility, building up good relationship with a lot of publishing houses, to some extent, is the most important point contributing to her success. About why the website is able to work with so many mainstream publishing presses, the basic reason is the popularity, which stands for large amount of visits, considerable advertising profits and numerous resources. In order to maintain the popularity, JIN JIANG is improving herself all the time, including perfecting website design, frequently changing the style, constantly integrating resources, exploring new functions. For example, posting directly in the website is charged by how many words typed. Meanwhile, she has a forum according to the function of website. However, interaction there is totally free of charge. Therefore, at very beginning, people are encouraged to post their fictions in forum where professional staffs review these contents regularly, then pick up excellent works, contact with authors, and suggest them to send their works to the website finally because they can contact with publishers directly. (The process for writers, see picture 1.) Accordingly, for readers, they are completely free to interact with the authors no matter where they are (website or forum). However, not all the readers are able to enjoy the whole content, especially those which are going to be published into paper version. Thus, in this case, several key sections are always locked, only available for VIP.

Discussion
Nowadays, too many e-book websites are fighting for limited market share. However, the reality is not as perfect as imagine because e-book website does not only mean the platform where electronic content can be uploaded or downloaded freely. More specifically, e-book website is like an agency or bridge connecting readers and physical book publishing, although it can do some publishing work as well. In my opinion, the key point of the success of JIN JIANG is creating a way to establish a wonderful relationship with printed-book publishing houses. Therefore, JIN JIANG is able to upgrade herself rapidly in enhancing content quality. Furthermore, it changes the stereotypes of “fast food culture”. In other words, “fast food culture” is not equal to poor quality which cannot stand the time test.
More importantly, in order to avoid copyright confusion, cooperating with physical book industry seems to be a smart choice. When the e-content is printed out, it will be easily protected by some traditional copyright protecting methods, and some added value marketing methods such as the enclosed author signature. At the same time, traditional book industry will benefit from the popularity of e-book industry. Thus, undoubtedly, the combination of the two is really a win-win solution.

**Conclusion: they should be the perfect couple**

“The perfect couple” does not come from this journal. In fact, Richard Hooper created the term of “a media marriage” in his journal published in 1986. This journal introduces an emerging phenomenon: e-book publishing that can be seen as the outcome of digital technology and predicted that the combination of two should be the right way to go. Comparatively, this journal is more focusing on the negative aspects of e-publishing including confused copyright, unstable editing standard and the conflict of profits distributing. Finally, the analysis of JIN JIANG website should be the great model to resolve these problems. How to integrate target readers, sponsors, and market explorers is not an easy task. Media workers do have the obligation to keep discovering, researching, and practicing. Of course, JIN JIANG model is not universal to suit for all countries due to the different cultural background. Nevertheless, if it could inspire our thinking properly, that would be the greatest value of this analysis. Above all, e-book and printed book should be a perfect couple.

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iPad Invades the E-reader Market

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Abstract

With the popularity of the e-book, the market of its reading device, e-reader, is growing rapidly as well. Regarded as a great commercial opportunity able to bring huge profit, the e-reader market has become a hot field that many manufacturers are rushing to join. To date, Amazon’s Kindle has been a representative of current mainstream e-readers. However, the coming of the Apple iPad now looks set to invade this market. This paper will first address the current status of mainstream e-readers by examining its representative, Kindle. Then, it will focus on a new digital device, which can be used as an e-book reader, the iPad, through analyzing its main features, and make a comparison between it and the Kindle. Meanwhile, it will discuss the impact that the iPad brings to the e-reader’s future development.

Keywords

E-READER MARKET • IPAD • KINDLE

The first decade of the new century witnesses one digital wave upon another. After video, image and music, now it is the book to be digitalized. Nowadays, the e-book becomes more and more popular. With the pace of the e-book’s rising, the associated hardware and publishing carrier, a device for handheld or mobile reading (e-reader) inevitably emerged to the public.

A report conducted by the analysts of DIGITIMES Research (Kuo & Chan, 2010) shows that e-reader shipments were only 700,000 units in 2008 all over the world. However, the growth rate is about 445% in 2009. Just in the 4th quarter of 2009, 1,620,000 units were sold. This report estimates that in 2010, the global sale volume of the e-reader will be 9,300,000 units, indicating that the e-reader market is entering a growth period indeed. Being regarded as a great commercial opportunity which can bring huge profit, e-reader market has become a hot field that many manufacturers are rushing to join. Due to fierce competition, the manufacturers are rapidly improving the technology of their e-reader. Nowadays, the e-reader becomes increasingly popular, because it is getting more and more convenient and easier to use. On the present market, the mainstream products, represented by Amazon’s Kindle, are widely using e-paper and e-ink technology. This kind of e-readers mainly focus on providing readers the same reading experience as same as the printed
book, which are designed to be similar to the printed page in appearance with a black and white screen. However, while people are gradually familiar with and accepting this kind as the standard mode of the e-reader, iPad’s coming appears to be about to impact the mainstream mode of e-reader and invade this market.

This paper will first address the current status of mainstream e-readers by examining its representative, the Kindle. Then it will focus on a new digital device, the iPad, through analyzing its main features, and make a comparison and contrast between it and the Kindle. Meanwhile, it will discuss the impact the iPad brings to the e-reader’s future development.

The Current Status of the Mainstream E-reader

As mentioned above, although the e-reader was not invented for a long time, the speed of its development is in a high level due to the rat race. Currently, there are dozens the e-reader manufacturers in this race, such as Amazon, Sony, Condor Technology Associates, iRex Technologies so forth. Among them, the Amazon’s e-reader—Kindle, has had the best performance in this market to date. This section will take the Amazon Kindle as an example for observing the current status of mainstream e-readers in aspects of technology and marketing.

Amazon Kindle

Amazon Kindle is a professional e-book reader device aiming to provide users with a convenient and an exceptional reading experience with the ability to wirelessly download books, blogs, magazines, and newspapers and to be similar to the physical book in shape and size. Originating in 2007, at present the Kindle family has three members: Kindle, Kindle 2 (replacement of Kindle), and Kindle DX (the complementary product of the Kindle). Although the exact sales number was not released by Amazon, according to some estimates based on official statements, observers have pointed out that by the end of 2009, there were about 1.49 million Kindle devices sold, equaling 60% of market share (Ratcliffe, 2009), which gives the Kindle the dominant position in this market as the best representative of the e-reader.

In terms of technology generally adopted by every member, Kindle uses E Ink® electronic paper display that features 16-level gray scale, providing readers with a paper-like visual experience without eyestrain for extended reading. The size is as same as the most magazines, and the weight is even lighter than an ordinary paperback. It uses 3G
Wireless network to access internet, download books, periodicals or read blogs from Amazon’s website without a computer connection. Based on Kindle and Kindle 2, Kindle DX enlarges the display screen from 6” diagonal to 9.7” diagonal with higher resolution and auto-rotating function, which offers sharper and more natural images and suits books that also contain pictures. Additionally, the capacity of the Kindle DX’s built-in memory doubles its predecessor’s, from 2GB to 4GB, which equals 3,500 books in storage. (Amazon.com, 2010)

In terms of marketing, as a professional publishing company and the world’s biggest online bookstore, Amazon possesses inherent superiority of content delivery with over 480,000 e-books. Amazon also offers Kindle’s users free wireless access to download resources from the content provider. Meanwhile, the price of these resources is much lower than their printed version. The typical e-book price including some New York Times Best Sellers and new releases is only US $9.99 in the Kindle store. As well as this, thousands of literature classics are provided to Kindle’s users for free. Moreover, there are 110 kinds of newspaper and 39 magazines can be subscribed to in the Kindle store at less than half the price of their printed version. The price of Kindle with standard configuration is US $259, while the price of Kindle DX is US $489. (Amazon.com, 2010)

**The iPad is Coming**

Announced in January 2010 and shipped on 3rd April (WiFi modal only, WiFi+3G modal were shipped on 30th April), the iPad is a touch-pad tablet computer developed by Apple Inc. Early before the iPad was officially announced, the information that Apple would launch a new kind of device including an e-reader function attracted huge attention from the digital industry and consumers. This attention has already converted to sales. More than 300,000 units were sold when iPad was shipped on the first day (Wortham, 2010). Additionally, according to analyst from BMO Capital’s Keith Bachman, the estimate of the iPad sales would be 7,200,000 units in fiscal 2011. (Elmer-DeWitt, 2010) How does iPad have the power to charm so many fans? Revealing the main features of the iPad in detail may help to find the answer.

As with Apple’s other digital products, the iPad has a simplified and more fashionable appearance, adopting cutting-edge technology. Although being classified as a tablet computer or being regarded as “larger-sized iPhone” by many digital industry delegates, as Steve Jobs, the CEO of Apple described, “iPad creates and defines an entirely new category of devices” (Apple Inc., 2010) which will be independent of the traditional computer and
the mobile phone. In fact, the iPad combines almost all functions of a Netbook computer and a smartphone for internet browsing, media consumption, entertainment, contacting with others and content creation.

The design of the iPad upholds the tradition of Apple products—simple fashion. The screen is 9.7” diagonal which is slightly smaller than a magazine. There is only one Home button below the screen, which takes users to the Home screen, as does the iPhone. In aspect of performance, unlike Apple’s conventional computer, the iPad runs iPhone OS rather than Mac OS, which is “generally regarded as one of the most successful operating systems designed for use with touch-screen devices” (Bell, 2010). Although iPhone OS can only run one application at a time, it is still the most proper operating system fitting for devices like the iPad which specializes in mobile use. For CPU, the 1GHz A4 chip inside the iPad is “custom-designed” by Apple itself. With this “extremely powerful and power efficient” chip, the iPad runs faster than any other touch-based device and could get up to 10 hours of battery life on a single charge. The iPad can wirelessly access the internet. Over 150,000 applications are available for users to download from the app store, among which the iBook app is unique one for the iPad. (Apple Inc., 2010).

**The Ipad as an e-reader**

On the iPad’s release to the press, when showing off the iBook app to the public, Mr. Jobs said, “Amazon’s done a great job of pioneering this functionality with the Kindle. We’re going to stand on their shoulders and go a little further.” (Yarow, 2010) This statement places the iPad on a “direct collision course” with Kindle and shows Apple’s ambition to invade the e-reader market. Moreover, a recent survey (Wauters, 2010) on tweets after the arrival of the iPad indicates that the most favorite iPad application is the iBook (Figure 1), which also demonstrates that the iPad has the capability to be a satisfactory e-reader. This section will examine the iPad as an e-reader by comparing with Kindle to point out its merits and drawbacks in this competition.
The most notable is the display screen of the iPad. The iPad has a 9.7”, 1024x768 high-resolution Multi-Touch colorful screen. Unlike Kindle’s e-ink display that aims to bring out the visual simulation of words on a paper page, the iPad adopts LED-backlit IPS (in-plane switching) display technology, which has a 178° viewing angle, ensuring the user can view the images almost from any plane angle with high color reproduction. Meanwhile, with the slight touch of a finger, it can show the content in multiple orientations. When reading e-books, when you want to flip over a page, you can sweep the screen gently, and the animated page edge follows your finger’s position and speed simultaneously as it curls, just like a paper page. This touch screen interactive and digital simulating technology provides readers with a real manipulating experience as in a printed book, which likes in “3D” (three dimensional), far more than the visual level. Moreover, with the functions of zooming illustrations and playing video or animation, the iPad may redefine the e-book, not only the digitalized printed book, but also the multi-media book. However, while the large color screen brings vivid image, it also causes problems. First, though the slab is only 0.5” thin, it is 1.5 pounds in weight, equaling 2.5 times of Kindle’s, which is too heavy to hold in one’s hand for extended reading. Second, the LED-backlit screen may reflect light in the sun or in high-intensity light and is easy to lead to visual fatigue.

Besides display, the iPad offers three choices of flash storage, 16GB, 32GB and 64GB. Even the smallest one is far larger than Kindle’s largest the DX. Further more, the iPad has two ways to access internet. One model gets online in Wi-Fi hot spots. The other model can either use Wi-Fi or AT&T’s cellular 3G network. But WiFi hot spots can not be searched everywhere and 3G network need to be paid per use. In contrast, Kindle’s free wireless network seems more attractive.
When it comes to content aspect, though Apple does not have the inherent superiority like Amazon as a publishing company has, in consideration of Apple’s successful performance in digital music publishing, no one would doubt Apple’s ability of gathering resources. Actually, Apple has already developed a strong bond with content providers for books and other reading materials. Before the iPad’s official shipment, Apple promised to increase the price of e-books and to raise the rate of profit sharing for publishers, which was welcomed by content providers who believe the price set by Kindle store is too low to get profit. Now, the most famous American publishers such as Simon & Schuster, Hachette, Macmillan, Harper Collins and Penguin have already sold their e-books for iPad through the iBook store. (Sun, 2010) There are about 60,000 e-books available in iBook store, including today’s best sellers, and also many of them are free. The typical price is about US $14.99, higher than Kindle’s, but these books are in color and multimedia. In addition, many influential media like the Reuters, Wall Street Journal, Newsweek and Time have become iPad’s partners as well. New York Times even designs an e-newspaper particularly for the iPad, which can constantly update the news titles, mingled with graphics, videos, readers’ comments and links to other sources. (Sun, 2010) On the whole, although at present the content of the iBook store quantitatively falls behind the Kindle store, the quality and innovativeness are more attractive to users.

The prices of the iPad vary by the storage and wireless modal. The lowest price (for 16GB WiFi modal) is only US $499, just US $10 more than the top-level Kindle DX which only has 4GB in storage. A recent University of Georgia study shows that, “nearly all respondents balked at the Kindle DX’s $489 price tag for reading a newspaper” (Whaley, 2010). From another angle, while US $489 might be too much for a single functional e-reader, a little bit more for a multi-functional device that can do a lot more may be worth the money to many consumers.

**The Impact iPad Bring to Future E-reader**

Through analyzing the iPad and comparing it with Kindle, we can see that as an e-reader, although not perfect, the iPad still does an outstanding job in technology innovation and market performance. Whether the iPad will terminate the mainstream e-readers like Kindle or not, it is sure that the iPad will bring impact to this market, which may lead to the evolution of future e-readers.

Generally speaking, influenced by the iPad, the future development of the e-reader may split up into two ways in order to meet the different demands of consumers. First one is
based on the prototype of the iPad to increase technology content. In this way, e-readers
tend to use color screen, be multifunctional, and provide multimedia entertainment
rather than simply mimicking traditional reading. The other way for those e-readers who
stick to cater the users that only have interest in reading books, is to reduce the price of
them. Although in a short term, the price of the iPad is much higher than ordinary single
functional e-readers like Kindle (US $ 259), the emergence of updated generation and new
business modal would lower the price of this kind of products not in a long time. Take
another Apple’s product, iPhone, for example. The initial price was US $ 599, higher than
the iPad, but after three years, after updating, now the retail price of iPhone 3G is only
US $99, and even for free when signing up with some telecom operators. Since the iPad
cooperates with many other service providers including telecom operator, it is probably
duplicating the iPhone’s price strategy. Therefore, from a long-term point of view, it is
never too early for purely single functional e-readers’ manufacturers to consider fixing a
more competitive price for their products.

It is just several weeks after the iPad’s shipment, but its influence on the digital industry
appeared early in the time that Apple released its plan to create this device. Since it is
Apple’s first device possessing the iBooks application, the impact it brings to the e-reader
market particularly deserves practitioners’ concern. To the overwhelming majority of
consumers, the iPad’s coming to join the competition of the e-reader market not only
means we have one more choice when selecting a device for e-reading or for other digital
activities, but also means we will enjoy higher technology and a lower price for a more
exciting experience.

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E-books and the Ownership Myth: The Limitations of Digital Rights Management on Consumers

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Abstract
The concept of a major corporation being able to erase an item that has been legally purchased, removing all evidence of prior ownership and leaving an individual with only the memory they had purchased it sounds like a scenario from George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four. However, this scenario is very real. In the digital world of e-books and e-readers, ownership is not what it used to be. The installation of Digital Rights Management and other tools have restricted an individual's ownership rights. The most controversial example of this lack of true ownership occurred in 2009 when Amazon remotely deleted copies of purchased e-books from people's Kindles, without their knowledge or consent. So what does ownership mean in the world of e-books and what role do DRM systems play in limiting an individual's rights?

Keywords
E-BOOKS • DIGITAL RIGHTS MANAGEMENT

Introduction
The line, “But where did that knowledge exist? Only in his own consciousness, which in any case must soon be annihilated” (Orwell 2000, p.37) is a chilling example of the world in which Winston Smith lived in George Orwell’s Nineteen Eighty-Four. Thank goodness it is only fiction – right? One would like to believe so. However, in the case of Amazon's Kindle, this scenario is only too real.

After an incident in 2009 when consumers discovered Amazon had the power to remotely remove purchased material from their Kindles, the real nature of ownership in the e-book world came under scrutiny. In this article I will explore the concept of ownership in the digital realm with a focus on the question: Do we really own the books we buy electronically? I will also focus on the key example of the incident involving Amazon and George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four.
How Digital Rights Management Affects Ownership

As products such as books become digitized, systems are also being created to control and/or limit how these products are used. These systems fall under the general term Digital Rights Management (DRM). DRM systems can be used by the product’s publisher, copyright owner, author and even the hardware manufacturer (Becker et al 2003, p.4). So, in the case of e-books, DRM systems can restrict what technology a person can use to read their e-book, whether or not a person can print or copy material from the e-book, and if that e-book can be passed on to another person. Basically, every aspect of an e-book can be controlled and restricted through the use of DRM.

Quite controversially, Amazon uses DRM in regards to e-books purchased for the Kindle. And unfortunately, there is no clear black and white list of DRM systems used by Amazon and its e-book publishers. There are many different facets to Amazon’s use of DRM, and knowledge is still quite vague (D’Andrade 2009a). Despite appearing to purchase an e-book, in fact an individual is actually only paying for a license. This means that effectively an individual does not own the e-books they are paying for. These licenses thus prevent an individual from using their e-books in the same fashion they could use their hard-copy books.

With hard-copy books the first sale doctrine allows a person has to sell or rent the copy that was originally purchased (Buchanan 2008). For example, if you bought a copy of *Pride and Prejudice*, you are legally allowed to lend that copy to a friend or to resell the copy at a second-hand bookstore. In the case of Amazon’s e-books, the reader does not have this same right. Effectively, the reader is allowed to read their electronic version of *Pride and Prejudice* as much as they want, but they cannot share this copy with a friend or resell it when they don’t want it anymore.

The loss of first sale rights for libraries in regards to e-books is particularly a problem.

Without lendability, e-books become supplementary to any print version required for archiving and interlibrary loan. When the market evolves to a point where a print version is not also available, libraries will need to have the capability of “loaning” and archiving e-books (Snowhill 2001).

Weighing the benefits and limitations of DRM

Digital Rights Management systems have arisen in the digital realm as a method of protecting the rights of the author, publisher, copyright owner; basically the people who make money off the sale of products. DRM systems are meant to be the industry’s main
protection against illegal distribution of content. This concept in itself is not a bad one (Masnick 2009). It is fair to assume that an author should be paid for the work they have created. Editors, marketing teams, publishers, proofreaders and designers also need to be paid for the work they do on the product. Hypothetically, if profits declined significantly due to illegal distribution of content then these people cannot be paid and the industry would suffer significantly (Dykstra 2002). DRM systems also maximise profits for various manufacturers and parts of the industry as they limit the devices and ways an e-book can be accessed, meaning that if a consumer has one sort of e-reader then they usually have to continue to purchase certain e-books that are supported by their current platform (Dykstra 2002).

From a market perspective, DRM systems are hypothetically supposed to drive higher sales, because they are meant to limit pirated copies and prevent file sharing of e-books (Starling 2006). However, this perspective is fairly limited as when it comes to trade publishing and e-books, a significant number of people purchasing them are technology savvy and disagree with the restrictions of DRM systems and are thus hesitant to purchase products with these systems in place.

Furthermore, the fact remains that most of these systems actually restrict the consumer more than what occurred in the analogue world. Most arguments against the use of DRM have found that these systems, instead of protecting the business end, unfairly limit the consumer (Masnick 2009). This restrictive control of intellectual property seems to be moving backwards instead of forwards as technology progresses, and not just in the realm of e-books. Social commentator Cory Doctorow argues that the industry benefits of DRM are significantly limited because by locking a consumer into a proprietary platform, that business is actually locking itself into a DRM platform as well:

Imagine if, in addition to having control over what inventory they carry, [the big box stores] also carried your books in such a way that they could only be shelved on WalMart shelves, they could only be read in WalMart lamps, running WalMart light bulbs. Imagine the lock-in to your customers and the lack of control over your destiny that you have signed up with if this is the path you pursue. Well this is in fact what you get when you sell DRM'd eBooks or DRM'd music — in order to play back that DRM format, in order carry, manipulate or convert that DRM format, you have to license the DRM. The company that controls licensing for the DRM controls your business to the extent that your business is reliant on this. (D’Andrade 2009b).

As in the music industry, there is always the opportunity to circumvent DRM systems by illegally downloading e-books. In the digital realm, this is going to be a problem for the
foreseeable future. However, in the case of e-books which are still relatively new in the mass market, trade publishing industry, the majority of consumers don’t want to illegally download their e-books.

Technology is going to outstrip, outdevelop [sic], and outsmart all rights-management strategies. But most people aren’t looking for a way to cheat—they’re looking for a way to comply with reasonable business practices and pricing models (Dykstra 2002).

However, many feel that the current restrictions enforced by DRM systems are grossly unfair and strip consumers of rights they’ve had with hard-copy books. Thus, they are turning to alternative methods such as illegal downloading – or boycotting e-books altogether – as a way to reject the current system.

There is also the concern of mass compatibility. Currently, there are several different formats that e-books are published in and in most cases these formats can only be read on certain devices. This means that a consumer cannot transfer the files from one device to another (Doctorow 2010). An e-book they have on their computer may not be compatible with their e-reader, their mobile device, etc. While ideally, the best outcome for the consumer is to create universal compatibility of e-book formats and devices, this may not occur for some time, if at all. Again, the main restricting factor is the market. Why should a technology provider push for DRM interoperability when it could mean that other technology providers might benefit? (Mooney 2001)

Compatibility is something that Amazon is working on. They have recently made Kindle software available for free download for PCs, Macs, iPhones, Blackberries and iPads (Amazon 2010). This free download means that e-books purchased off Amazon can be read without owning a Kindle. However, if a person owns a competing e-reader such as the Sony Reader they cannot read e-books bought for a Kindle.

Case Study: Amazon’s Kindle and the Nineteen Eighty-Four Incident
On 17th July 2009, Kindle consumers were shocked to discover that copies of e-books they had purchased, including George Orwell’s Nineteen-Eighty-Four had been deleted from their e-readers. Amazon’s explanation for this phenomenon was that the company that had sold the e-books did not actually have copyright approval to do so and so legally Amazon had to remove this content from sale (D’Andrade 2009a). But consumers were aghast
to discover that Amazon not only had the power to remove products from their website, but also the ability to remotely remove products that had been rightfully purchased by innocent consumers. ‘It’s like having Barnes & Noble sell you a book, charge your Visa and then three months later change their mind, credit your card and demand their book be returned’ (Johnson 2009). Furthermore, prior to this incident, Kindle consumers were not aware that remote deletion could occur.

There is nothing about copyright law that required these deletions -- if Amazon didn't have the rights to sell the e-books in the first place, the infringement happened when the books were sold. Remote deletion doesn't change that, and it's not an infringement for the Kindle owner simply to read the book. ...Nor, for that matter, does Amazon reserve any “remote deletion” right in the “terms of service” (D’Andrade 2009a).

While Amazon had stated they would be changing their policy so that copies downloaded by innocent consumers would not be removed if a similar incident were to arise in the future (Johnson 2009), the fact still remains that Amazon has the power to remove content -- whether they choose to use it or not. And it is this option that is most concerning. Similar to the totalitarian government ruling Oceania in Nineteen Eighty-Four, it was the threat of being watched that kept people in line. They might not be watching you right now, but they have the power to do so. ‘It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all the time. But any rate they could plug in your wire whenever they wanted to’ (Orwell 2000 p.5).

Also, an individual can only read the e-books purchased for their Kindle on their Kindle. If an individual's Kindle broke, they would have to buy a new one (or an iPhone) in order to read the content they had purchased (Hartley 2009). Furthermore, a person can only read their e-books while they still have a relationship with Amazon (Louis 2009). This means that if a person had originally owned a Kindle, but then decided they wanted to swap to Dymocks’ Iliad, they would no longer be able to access their e-books.

There have also been cases where a person has had trouble re-downloading copies of e-books they have purchased. The difficulty with new technology is that is quickly being upgraded to new versions and a lot of people like to have the newest version of a product. Also, as previously stated, their Kindle may need to be replaced for one reason or another. However, a person is limited to the amount of times they are licensed to download a copy of an e-book they have purchased. Currently, a person can download their e-book an unlimited amount of times on a single device, but only downloaded onto six or seven devices (Cohen 2009). However, the number of devices an e-book can be downloaded to is
determined by the publisher and thus can differ between publishers.

The main concern for customers of Amazon and owners of its Kindle is the current lack of consistent and clear information on the company’s use of DRM. For example, a person cannot know how many devices they can download their e-books to before they purchase the book (Cohen 2009). Furthermore, on the Amazon website, there is no clear list of restrictions, limitations or the powers that Amazon has in controlling and/or removing content available for the consumer to peruse. A customer can read the terms and conditions, but as a lot of the restrictions of the DRM systems are publisher-specific and thus change. There needs to be a universal understanding on the rights of the individual in regards to DRM.

Conclusion

To conclude, the concept of ownership in a digital era is murky at best. With the current practice of DRM systems, multiple incompatible formats and devices, and a lack of clear information available for consumers to understand their rights when it comes to e-book ownership, the digital society has a long way to go before the rights of the consumer and protection of intellectual property is ensured. Amazon’s ability to remotely delete legally purchased content from an individual’s Kindle clearly highlights the flaws in the current system. Considering literature plays a significant role in our society’s cultural heritage, it is imperative that the integrity of book ownership is not lost in the digital realm. Currently, in quite the Orwellian fashion, ‘who controls the past ... controls the future: who controls the present controls the past’ (p37). If companies such as Amazon have the power to remotely remove e-books from devices, what else could they do? Furthermore, if the boundaries of ownership became clearer, and the rights of the reader balanced with the protection of intellectual property, then it can be suggested that the e-book market would prosper. One would hope that society will not placidly accept the loss of ownership when it comes to e-books, otherwise Orwell’s depiction of humanity’s cultural demise may not be so far-fetched.

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Online publishing: extensions and challenges of traditional journalism

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Abstract

Whether digital publishing is going to end or enhance the traditional publishing industry is always a debate. In particular, the growth of online publishing exerts greatly impacts on traditional journalism. The increase in online publishing brings about various changes for traditional journalism, such as increase in democracy of information and interactivities of audiences, as well as decrease in cost of publishing. In the meantime, challenges of profits loss and legal considerations will occur. In this article, positive changes of traditional journalism will be illustrated, while the challenges of business model will be discussed through dispute between Rupert Murdock and Google. How do the traditional and digital publishing defend their own interests? Moreover, this article tries to seek a better balance for traditional journalism and the growth of online publishing. How can they reach a win-win goal? This article focuses on both transformations and challenges of traditional journalism, and looks for a better partnership of both new and old media.

Keywords:
TRADITIONAL JOURNALISM • ONLINE PUBLISHING • CHANGES• CHALLENGES.

With the increase of usage of the internet and available digital technology, traditional publishing industry has been changed by digital publishing in a large degree, particularly by the growth of online publishing. The debate around whether it is an enhancements or a killer is never going to end. Some believe that the traditional newspaper is dead and journalism is over (Gant, 2007). However, this is not the case. The growth of online publishing brings various positive changes for traditional journalism in terms of increasing democracy, participatioin of nontraditional journalists, as well as other alternatives. Meanwhile, it challenges the traditional journalism in several perspectives, such as the business models and legal considerations. This article mainly concentrates on the changes and challenges, which are brought by the growth of online publishing. The case of the dispute between Rupert Murdock and Google will be discussed in the challenges section. Moreover, the conflicts between traditional journalism and the growth of online publishing would be balanced in the further digitalisation process.
Before go further, some definitions should be clear in advance. In this article, the traditional journalism is considered as traditional press and televisions, such as newspaper. A nontraditional journalist refers to an amateur or a citizen journalist, who does not participate in professional training. This is completely opposite to a traditional journalist. According to Morris (2006, p.5), “electronic publishing is making the content of the journal (the full text of the articles) available online.” Thus, in this article online publishing is considered as journals and news, which are published electronically based on the Web platform, and some of them have both printed and electronic formats.

The growth of online publishing

The traditional journalism, such as newspaper publishing, has been in a transformative period. Previously the traditional journalism and journalist was considered as a gatekeeper of information (Gant, 2007). However, everything has been changed after emergence of digital publishing. According to a survey, there are almost 90% of journals and news available online, and the number is increasing (Morris, 2006, p.25). The free accessibility of information via the internet is one of the keys. In addition, the internet provides an opportunity for everyone to be a producer and a consumer on the online platform (Marshall, 2009). Both of them have accelerated the development of online journals and news. Thus, associated with the assistances of the internet and digitalisation, the online publishing is increasing rapidly.

Transformations

Emergence of Nontraditional journalists

As the popularisation of free Web platform, “anyone with a computer and internet connection could own a press.” (Gillmor, 2006, p.24). Everyone could be a nontraditional journalist. A traditional journalist is professional and well-trained. Compared with traditional journalists, a nontraditional journalist could be any citizen or netizen, who is interested in and participates in the journalism. They use weblogs and other social network websites to publish or post their reports and opinions over current issues. At present, the majority of mainstream media are owned by large corporations. The interests of companies will be the first consideration when they publish news, then followed by the public interests (Gant, 2007). With the participations of nontraditional journalists, more voices could be heard, particularly from marginalised communities. Online platforms such as blogs have become an alternative way to access the news and democratic opinions (Gillmor, 2006). Thus, the alternative news formats have made the democracy of news increased.
Furthermore, nontraditional journalists play an important role in breaking news, natural disaster reports or other global events (Gant, 2007; Gillmor, 2006; Holliman, 2007). Traditional journalists could not get the first-hand materials by themselves while the nontraditional journalists could offer the complementary information, such as the news of 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Before the news of the 2004 tsunami had been published, traditional journalists had to consider the information from nontraditional journalists, who could have great first-hand materials for reporting (Holliman, 2007). This is a kind of combination of news. In relation to another instance, before the BBC reported the 2003 Iraq war, audiences were asked to offer useful materials for help (Gillmor, 2006, p.121). During the process of reporting, diverse materials have been employed from witnesses and victims, such as photos, videos and stories. Thus, the online formats of journals offer alternative sources to fit up limitations of traditional journalism.

**Diverse changes**

Additionally, the growth of online publishing also brings over other positive diverse changes of traditional journalism. One is the effective data management and decrease of cost. The most important feature of online journals and news is electronic, which makes data digitised and reduce the redundant cost. Second, the alternative formats of works have been enriched (Ingham & Weedon, 2008). The traditional publishing is limited by the framework, while the online journal could be more visual attractive and colourful. Moreover, most types of traditional publishing have regular publishing time, such as early morning or afternoon, comparing to the more flexible time of online publishing. The nature of digital information decides that it can be worked in a continuous process while the paper-base medium is static (Liu, 2008). That will result in employing more information in a cross-platform media sphere. Thus, traditional press are likely to adjust themselves and develop online versions.

**Question of quality and trust**

However, the developments of online publishing have several questions over the quality of information. The use of blogs or other online platforms by nontraditional journalists is claimed as personal press. According to a piece of research in 2005, 81 percent of professional journalists did not accept bloggers as journalists (Gant, 2007,p.33). Furthermore, majority of nontraditional journalists are not familiar to the public, whereas most of traditional journalists are known by public. According to an American poll in 2005, most of respondents could recognise the name of journalists (Gant, 2007,p.1). In contrast, some of bloggers are even anonymous. The tangibility and authority are important for trust (Liu, 2008).
However, public interest is another key of journalism. According to a survey, more than 80 per cent of respondents considered online journals and information as significant sources and news (Gant, 2007, p. 32). In addition to the changes as been described previously, combination news is increasingly common with the associations between traditional and nontraditional journalists. Traditional and nontraditional journalists are partners rather than competitors. As Gillmor (2006) pointed out, trust and quality should be considered as essentials for both traditional and nontraditional journalists.

The growth of online publishing brings numerous changes while it causes a quantity of challenges. The traditional journalism is not only the gate keeping of information, but also a business for profits at the same time. Due to the trend of digitalisation, increasing newspaper contents and its journal articles are free and available online. That really challenges and tends to kill the traditional business model of publishing. According to Gant (2007), the business models of news organisation have been destroyed and reorganized during the revolution. Thus, press media itself and journalists both face a “brewing tempest” (2007, p. 144).

Challenges
Traditionally, there are two main revenue streams of press. They are classified advertising and subscription, which comes from circulation and other retail sells (Gillmor, 2006). However, the model has been changed. Nightingale (2007) pointed out that profits of classified advertising are minimised by online competitors. At present, the traditional journalism adjusted itself to integrate with the online platform. The contents of news could be consumed in both online and offline. There are various zero-cost choices for people, such as free usage of search engines (Davidson, 2009). That results in a quite strange situation that online version is free while printed version is paid. for No one knows an appropriate business model for the combination of online and traditional publishing (Klinenberg, 2005). Additionally, the traditional media has to deal with a mess, which is unraveling the business model (Gillmor, 2006). It is a huge competition between mainstream traditional media with new media. The big media corporations would fight with the new media and try to take control, seeking better business models for their industries. Thus, the disputes between Rupert Murdoch and Google follows.

Battles between Murdoch and Google
Murdoch announced that his News Corp is going to charge fees of accessing online content by middle of 2010 on August 5th, 2009 (Chhor, 2009). That means free available
online contents will be limited in the future. Murdoch declared that digital distributions offer increasingly possibilities of obtaining information except free access (Clark, 2009). Furthermore, Murdoch believed that good quality of journalism can not be simply linked by search engines for profits (Chhor, 2009). Search engines have compromised the benefits of traditional journalism, especially newspapers. Murdoch's media empire suffered 3.4 billion profits losses, including 14 percent of advertising revenues lose in his British newspaper (Clark, 2009). In relation to Google, as the biggest search engine, it brought 16 million advertising revenues in 2007 (Meyers, 2009,p.78). When conflicts of interest occur, the battles would never go end. Murdoch has been strongly against those news aggregators that illegal share news contents without any payment. He has intended to build up a “pay wall” for his media empire.

Regarding to Murdoch's criticisms, Google responded an updated program based on the previous “First Click Free” program on its official blog. In this program, publishers are able to limit the browsers. Browsers can not read more than 5 pages per day without registering and subscribing. Their first click is free access to the websites, but the cost of additional links is dependant on publishers (Cohen, 2009a). Alternatively, it is free for headlines and some leading paragraphs of articles. If the users are interested in the content, the search engines would bring them to the original websites (Cohen, 2009b; Sweeting, 2009). This is a good method to gain more potential consumers for publishers. However, according to a report of the BBC News (2009), Murdoch did not support that is a fair use. He still believed that Google cannot use the headlines and partial paragraphs of articles as its search results (Murdoch may block Google searches, 2009). Afterwards Google posted another announcement. It indicated that Google respects publishers, if they want to get out of Google news and search engine. Google would accepts that, but Google will keep going and try its best to help users to find out materials which they are required (Cohen, 2009b). It seems that neither of them is going to surrender or win, but Murdoch is so brave to take more risks than Google.

According to Google official blog, more than 25,000 publishers are in Google news due to the large number of clicks and opportunities (Cohen, 2009b). Furthermore, Scott (2008,p.35) noticed that 77.27 percent of the global search engine market was held by Google in 2008. Marshall (2009) pointed out that Google increased 58% searches from 2008 to 2009, and shared more than two third global search market. It is clear that Google is dominant in global search engines. Its effects and power could not be underestimated. Additionally, to gain public attentions is much more significant than anything else. Thus,
it is not a good idea for publishers to simply block Google, and keep their contents out of Google.

In fact, deeply rooted in the challenges of online publishing, it is all about “how to monetise” appropriately online content (Davidson, 2009). That is the obvious reason why Murdoch wants to block Google. Murdoch shows his confidence in providing better online contents to attract public such as scoops (Clark, 2009), but charging for accessing online contents is not an entirely same model as selling of traditional publishing. Traditional publishing should consider their audiences first and segmentation of target market carefully. The Financial Times and the Wall Street Journal could be successful models. However, according to analysis by Hitwise (Tancer, 2009), if the Wall Street Journal website blocked Google, it will lose more than 25 per cent of its traffic. Moreover, it is likely to lose up to 44 per cent of new readers who pass through Google (Tance, 2009). Instead, the Wall Street Journal website uses a partial-charging model, which charges part of information to access while free available for others. People would like to pay for information, which is in relation to financial recommendations, sharing tips and other analysis (Chhor, 2009). The value and quality of contents and the scope of paid news are more important. Regarding to a report in The Times, websites of The Times and The Sunday Times will begin to charge £1 a day or £2 a week in June (Worth, 2010). Although this payment is reasonable, pay meet for online contents still requires quality of journalism. When the quality online contents do not reach a certain standard, readers would like to search for another alternative instead of purchasing. Furthermore, in order to gain more profits, traditional publishing could consider other agencies to enlarge their circulation. The telecommunication would be a good partner, particular the mobile data services. According to a project of European Information Technology Observatory (EITO) (2010), the mobile data services will increase 16 percent and up to 141.5 billion Euros. This is a huge exploitable market for traditional journalism.

The possibility of developing new business models is increasing with digital revolution. Journalism and journalists have to address survival difficulties to fit up pressure of new market transformations. The advancement of traditional journalism would be more diverse. It could collaborate and gain more profits with the new media. Thus, the online publishing is an extension of traditional journalism rather than a killer.

**Balance of the New and the Old**

The emergence of the internet provides more possibilities for traditional journalism, while
traditional journalism offers roots to online contents. In relation to changes aspects, the frame work of news working process has been reconstructed. It has multi-platforms, so journalists could switch their working models across different platform freely. The relationship between traditional journalism and increased online journals and news is not always adverse. They could be a cooperative partner relationship instead. The rise of nontraditional journalists would complement and inspire the traditional. Both of them would participate and contribute to the coverage of public interest. Moreover, NewAssignment.Net, which was launched in 2006 and with two media financial supports, is a good project to encourage the cooperation and collaborations between traditional and nontraditional journalism (Gant, 2007,p.142). This project shows the trend of how to work effective with traditional and nontraditional journalists. This project results from public demands and the trend of development. The key of balance between the traditional journalists and nontraditional journalists is cooperation.

In addition, the profits of both traditional and new media are decided by market and consumers rather than the one of mainstream media. Murdoch is going to block Google via “pay walls”, but he cannot deny the importance of search engines. The “New” media, which refers to Google, could not develop without assistances of “Old” media, which refers to Murdoch’s News Crop. Murdoch mentioned that good quality news is costly during his interview (Chhor, 2009).The paid online content is to admit the value of news (Worth, 2010). That is why Google was blamed by Murdoch. Thus, to balance both of them, Google should realise the quality of information would feed back its News and search engine, while News Crop should have an appropriately system of paid and unpaid online contents. Furthermore, the traditional media should be more active and creative for developing their partners. Both of the old and new media should enlarge the previous range of partners and seek for the win-win purposes.

Conclusion
The process of digitalization leads the transformations of traditional journalism as well as increasing online journals and news. The changes and challenges, which come with the transformation, provide various discussions around journalism industries and journalists. The increasing online journals offer a web platform for developing participation of nontraditional journalists. Furthermore, the most challengeable task is to search appropriate business model. The dispute between Rupert Murdock and Google shows the conflict of interest between big traditional media and news media corporations. The conflict could not be easily resolved, if Murdoch and Google do not consider deeply with
importance of search engines and quality of online contents. The cooperation between both new and old media would be the best options for balancing. The “Old” should understand the possibilities, which come from “New”, while The “New” cannot survive without high quality and high standard of sources, which come from “Old”. Thus, the new and old media would be cooperated and strived for the better interests.

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Online journals` emerge--the audience choice

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Abstract
A digital and networked economy gives the opportunity to audiences to share opinions, define and valuate news, interactive in groups in a digital world by using internet. In response to this development, a kind of collaborative network, which is based on the citizen journalist or online journalist, has significant growth. For instance, digital journal.com, such sites allows regular citizens to contribute, by the use of blogging, uploading images, embedding videos from other sites. In particular, it has breaking news about international stories including the 2008-2009 Israel-Gaza Conflict while the rest of the mainstream press were not allowed in the region.

This article will use the digital journal.com as a case study, focusing on the comparison between online journals and the traditional mainstream journals in terms of several specific elements, for instance, news angle, news quality and sources. It will focus on the involvement of the citizen journalist and the wildly use of digital creation, such as blogging and uploading images. Meanwhile, I will critically evaluate the competitive features of the online journal through the lens of a specific, geographically bounded case study. I argue that in a digital economy, online journal as a competitive production will threaten the traditional mainstream journal significantly and even assimilate it, especially the way of reporting news. Nevertheless, I will examine how the online journals or citizen journals are shaping the news and information as well as the strategic adaption of the traditional mainstream journal.

This article is based on approximately 20 relatively articles and researches as well as the analysis and evaluation of the website--digital journal.com and other traditional mainstream journals.

Keywords
CITIZEN JOURNALIST • ONLINE JOURNAL • TRADITIONAL • BLOGGING • COMPETITIVE

Introduction: The foundation of the online journal

When the 2008-2009 Israel-Gaza conflict happened, digital journal.com as an international online journal, has reported this clash timely while the other mainstream presses
were not allowed to entry the region (Sameh, 2009). In this case, comparing with the traditional mainstream journals, “digital journal” as an online journal plays an irreplaceable role in reporting the international breaking political news because of its particular competitive features based on the internet technology. It discloses a fact that the development of online journals is gradually growing and trying to create a new media landscape which may pose a competitive threat for the traditional printed media in future (Henry, 2005). At the beginning of its foundation, online journal was not familiar and accepted by the public because the printed journal has dominated the main market for a long time. The traditional printed media owns its vested target audience and cultivate a mature market (Deuze, 2006). Majority of people is accustomed to reading newspapers or magazines in their daily life. In contrast, the size of the market for online journal is small. Otherwise, online journal can only be operated and delivered via using internet. However, with the development of the network technologies, more and more people gain the easier access to the computer and internet. Average nine tenth of American families have at least one computer in by the end of 2009. The rapid development and acceptance of the network technologies, which allowed the mass distribution of news and information to large, increasingly homogeneous audiences, is now giving the power to digital journals, as well as the individuals (Christine, 2007). Based on the internet technology, online journals simply the way of reporting news and create a new way of media communication. Compared with the traditional printed journals, news and information can be gathered and reported much broader and more timely due to the particular feature of the online journals—participant of individuals and the usage of internet technology, such as blogs and online books. In other words, the internet and computer technology is now changing the way of reporting and gathering information and lots of online journals truly represents the new breed of web 2.0 applications for online media (Janelle, 2010). Therefore, the online journal was rapidly recognized by the audiences and it creates a new media landscape because of the technological affordances for the future (Christine, 2007). In addition, as I mentioned previously, online journal gives the chances for the individuals to contribute that generates a new communicative form based on web sites. In contrast, the traditional journalism jobs are dwindling due to the expansion of the online journalism and the restraint of the network technology (Brian&Berry, 2004). The online journal challenges the prevailing printed journal in this context. Particularly, the online journal allows non-trained journalist to report news, such as citizen journalist, such particular feature of digital journal enriches the context of quality news and breaks the regional boundaries while reporting news. Meanwhile, the online journals simplify
the way of collecting and distributing news because of the internet technology. They also provide more freedom and interaction between the readers and the writers.

The introduction of “www.Digital journal.com”

Digital journal.com is a successful case in the online media revolution. It is an international news network which runs like a newsroom and thousands of citizen reporters participate in reporting news from 140 countries across the world (Digital journal.com). In this content, citizen journalist (citizen reporters) refers to the public who plays an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information (Chris&Shayne, 1995). With the development of the internet technology and the evolvement of global citizen journalist, online journal is growing significantly since 2006. Both professional and non-trained journalists are engaged in contributing for the online journal in a digital nation. The news sources are gathered worldwide by citizen journalist or professional journalist and then formulated via internet. Digital journal.com utilizes the internet technology appropriately ensures the content is accurate by using quality-control mechanisms (Digitaljournal.com).

Digital journal web site is updated frequently with approximately 100 articles per day. Otherwise, it has quantity quality breaking news around the world. In January 2010, digital journal.com declared the establishment of a Board of Advisers (Digitaljournal.com). The reputation of this web site is constructed by its competitive features as well as the irreplaceable elements. The competitive and irreplaceable features for the digital journal or online journal can be concluded in many aspects. In this article, I will critically evaluate several particular aspects which refer to the news quality or news angle, the involvement of the citizen journalist and advanced media technology. Otherwise, in some particular context, I will use Digitaljournal.com as an example to analyze these aspects.

More and timely interaction between writers and audience.

The traditional printed journals operate based on the editors’ power, it means that only editors have the right to decide and filter news based on a kind of knowledge, this knowledge refers to which kind of news the editors or the organizations want you to know (Daniel, 2010). The news are artificially selected and edited by few of people, this over-controlled
system of the printed journal is likely to miss high-valued news. Consequently, filtering the news manually is directly responsible for the narrower news’ channel as well as the limitation of the quality quantity news. Otherwise, especially in some media-controlled countries, some traditional printed media conducts themselves as a PR companies for its backed organizations or governments, they favour of a government’s policy rather than release the truth for the public. Gradually, they inherently neglect the demand of the public and the news worth. There is a long social distance between the traditional media and the audience. In short, traditional printed media goes far away from the communicative and informed principle of the journalism when they are highly controlled by certain people. However, the fact is that audiences are keen to know more original and authentic ideas. News value and news angle lose their crucial position gradually.

In contrast, unlike traditional printed media, online journals lacks of the traditional editors which also give the rise of unfiltered ideas and the first-hand news. This is because online journals, such as Digital journal.com creates new technical based writing genres by the internet website technologies, enable the widely utilization of the blogging and forums (Thao, 2006). Blogging and forums, which is generated based on the internet technology, are enable the readers and the change their ideas on a virtual platform which overcomes the spatial and temporal restriction. For, example, a reader can post his views as soon as he finishes reading an article in Digitaljournal.com by updating comments of the original article. It means that online journal establishes a closer relationship between the reader and the writer due to its technical feature. In addition, the internet technical feature enables both professional and non-trained journalists to contribute, non-trained journalist as the audience previously now have the chance to change their roles to writers in a digital nation. Given the blossom of the citizen journalist, the size of the market for online journals is growing larger.

At the beginning, the mainstream printed journal is attempting to seek the audiences’ common interest in order to attract the publics’ attention, in this term, digital journal benefits from the internet technology which plays an initial role in building a bridge between the reader and the writer. This is because the online journal makes it possible that un-trained individuals are involved in a media realm. As the audience knows what they really want to know so they can drive the direction of newsworthy to an efficient way within a digital nation. In other words, readers now have the right to evaluate the newsworthy and report the news from their basic angles. The audience is shaping the channel of gathering news and reporting news. In addition, the online journal runs like a virtual news room, the
digital editor plays a role in co-operation between the reader and writers, the principle to select news is based on the news accuracy and news angle. The power of certain editors is minified. In order to gain the click ratio and keep its competitive, online journal is focusing on the high-valued sources and particular news angle which is attractive enough to get audiences' attention. With more and more audiences' journalist or non-trained journalist (citizen journalist) involving, the news source and news angle are leded in a right way by the individuals' choice.

In a digital nation, readers are able to add and edit comments as soon as they finish reading one piece of news based on the online written format which is also the most significant feature for the online journal. Online writing genre is beneficial to create a closer relationship between the audience and the media, in a media realm, this closer relationship refers to a connection between the reader and the writer which is built up by the computer network technologies. Hence in the online journal, reader can add any comments and reviews to a piece of news without filtering and the writer can read these comments nearly at the same time by using internet. The comments from the audience are important and the first-hand feedback for writers. While writers can find clauses and capture the readers' mind based on these first-hand sources. In this way, the journalist can find fresh and timely news angle which is closer to the audiences' attention and write the really demanded news.

In conclusion, online journal is an access for audience to shape the way of reporting and collecting news from their own angle, it offers the news that audience are interested in and discovered incisive news angles. This is a significant feature as well as the most competitive element which distinguishes digital journal from other traditional printed journal.

**The use of visual context**

Compared with the traditional printed journal, digital journal is characterized by the use of internet technology, which is also the most significant feature of the digital journal. In terms of the internet technology, the using of multi-media and visual enriches the context and consummates the format of the online journal (Dhirana&Alyson, 2006). The use of multi-media or visual makes digital journal more attractive and detailed in a narrative way. For example, *Digital journal.com* has a great deal of images related to particular articles, when readers finish reading one article, they can click the link in the right side of this article, then the pages will jump to a new page directly with a lot of related images.
Such link chain constructs a narrative visual context. The online journal uses the visual context to cultivate a new communicative format—an image-oriented format which can enrich the context of the article and make the description more vivid in a narrative way. In short, online journal is changing the way of transmitting information and establishing a narrative way of reporting information in a digital notion.

By means of the link chain, which is established based on the internet technology, readers gain the access to more information related to the article which they are interested in, they can click a link under one image and then jump into another online journal which has the similar information as they are reading, it is more faster and easier for reader to comprehend the background information and compare the relative information in a different context. It means that within a digital world, people can get massive relative information easier from variety online journals which indicate different voices and news angle based on the internet technology. Therefore, internet technology gradually develops the online journal into a comprehensive and multi-culture encyclopedic dictionary by this way. The using of visual or multi-media makes the digital journal more effective and valuable.

In addition, through the internet click ratio and the followed comments, the digital editors or journalists are easier to fix on the most favorable journal. The comments give the journalist best feedback which provides them an access to discovered their potential target readers’ group. This is because through reading the comments, the writers can ensure which kind of people are interested in their reports and their opinions, while listening to the audience is important for journalist. Generally, different kind of journals will focus on different areas and have different literary forms. Therefore, finding a target readers’ group is essential for any journals. The fact is that online journals are easier to find their target reader’s group comparing with traditional printed journal due to the internet technology.

Digital journal gives the way to citizen journalist.

Firstly, citizen journalist refers to the individuals of the public who have interest and motivation of collecting, reporting and analyzing the news and information. According to Mark Glaser (2006), a freelance journalist, points out that the concept of citizen journalism is that people without professional journalism training are able to create, contribute via using the tools of high-technology and global distribution of the internet. For instance, non-trained individuals can snap a digital image of a newsworthy event which happens in
their city and post it online directly and immediately.

The expansion of online journals gives the chance to such non-trained group. Through the report of 2008-2009 Israel-Gaza conflict, it proves that the evolution of citizen journalist brings significant advantages for the online journals, because of the government interference, the citizen journalist in this region are able to report a piece of news of this conflict timely and posted it online while the other mainstream journals are not allowed to entry this region (Sameh, 2008).

Firstly, citizen journalist strides over the boundary of region. This is because citizen journalists are not employed or paid by certain organizations, the operation system of digital journals is based on the internet technology which makes globalize communication possible. So individuals can snap a digital photo and gather information then write a piece of news to report event that happens in their city via internet. While some countries and governments are powerful to interfere and control the media coverage, with the citizen journalist included, when some sensitive event happens in a media controlled region, individuals can post a report online so people around the world can acquire the information through browsing the digital journals online. The most notable example is the 2008-2009 Israel-Gaza conflict report by Digital journal.com, while the rest of mainstream printed journals are not allowed to entry this region, the citizen journalist in this region is able to contribute via internet (Sameh, 2008). This is the reason that citizen journalist makes the digital journal more competitive.

Secondly, citizen journalist is a kind of representation of public audience. According to an Australian Centre for Independent Journalism investigation, Crikey found that during five weekdays in September 2009, more than 50% of stories analyses in ten Australian newspapers were driven by some form of public relations or promotion. To put it another way, less than half is independently initiated reporting (Alan, 2010). Citizen journalist comes from the group of audience, they collect and report news based on their news sensitive and news angle, the news angle originated from the readers’ point. It means with more and more citizen journalist involvement, the way of reporting and gathering information is shaping by citizen journalists—the audience. Particularly, citizen journalists are survival due to the development of digital journal because online journal gives individuals the power to write story non-exclusively. For example, citizen journalists used to gather information based on the affairs they are interested in, a postgraduate student may write something related to university’ financial problem and post it to the economic category in a digital journal, this report will be more closer to a readers’ angle and also represented the audience voice.
However, majority of people are suspicious of the involvement of citizen journalist is the death of journalism. They hold an opinion that non-trained individuals contribute motivated and mostly unpaid, digital journals adopt most of the reports from citizen journalist which poses a threat to the existing traditional journalist work (Jaron, 2009). Freed from the huge investment, online journal runs with much lower financial foundation compared with the traditional printed media. Meanwhile, online journal is becoming more and more competitive due to its lower margin coast and higher margin profit. The most significant benefit of the online journal is that all the news online are free open to the public, people are more willing to obtain news and information on the net. Therefore, the circulation of the traditional printed journal is shrinking. The condition for paid journalists is becoming much more difficult because the payment for trained journalist is a significant stress for the traditional press organization (Nicholas, 2006).

In order to compete with the online journal and catch up the development of the digital technology, some traditional printed journals are forced to establish their affiliated online journals and magazine. Such as The Economist and BBC news, their web site quotes the article which comes from the original printed journal. Even though some mainstream journals do not open a formal online journal, they have other online advertisements or promotions to attract the audiences’ attention. However, most traditional journals still resist the new market due to the invested interest and the risk-averse nature.

**Conclusion: A global news sharing atmosphere**

Before the emergence of the digital journal, even though there are lots of channels to share and acquire information globally, for example, people can book a foreign magazine or online journal or buy some outdate ones, such kind of newspapers or journals are not timely and less newsworthy basically. However, the emergence of the digital journal creates a simply way for the global readers to share and acquire information quickly and timely even freely via internet. In this context, online journal can be seen as a tool for sharing information globally. It is not related to the news angle or news value in this context, online journals are utilized as a communicative channels which provides massive valuable information. The most significant feature of online journal is the reliable on the internet. Internet can be seen as a vector and the information is a carrier which collaborates on the global communication system. Firstly, information is collected by the individuals and is formulated as a piece of news or feature story, it can make a assumption that without the human involvement, the
computer as a vector is able to screen and categorize the information automatically via the algorithm. In this point, online journal is an information congregation and offers a simply and free way for readers to share and acquire information around the world. Furthermore, digital journal is a part of the globalization and is improving the information transparency and capacity which can not be displaced by mainstream printed journal.

Digital journal also gives us a question that if we are getting the accurate and ethical information via reading the online journal, because it is difficult for digital journal to be balanced and ethical. In addition, the citizen journalist needs to analyze the news sources deeply and develop original sources independently.

Reference


The New Journalism: Weblogs as News Sources

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Abstract:
Thanks to search engines on the Internet, searching for a particular topic will often lead us to weblogs in addition to more traditional sources of news. These weblogs are written by individuals and amateurs, with no editors and not necessarily with any journalistic training. These weblogs, or the more common abbreviation of the word: blogs, often debate, inform and presents topics that the mainstream media also deal with.

Many traditional “old school” journalists would deny the fact that blogs can be regarded as journalism. But as this article will argue, blogging can indeed be regarded as journalism. It will investigate whether or not the blogs can be trusted as reliable news sources; furthermore, the article will argue if the blog community has contributed to a more transparent journalism within the big media corporations.

The article will be based on academic sources; however, it will also be using examples from blogs to validate the findings.

The research of this article, if successful, will make journalists, bloggers and the audience more aware of what sort of impact the bloggers have had on the traditional media. Especially for journalists the findings can be resourceful, as today’s journalists might have to adapt different techniques than those of the journalists that have worked with more traditional sources of news, such as print and TV.

Keywords:
WEBLOGS • JOURNALISM • MASSMEDIA • MEDIA • NEWS • TWITTER

12 June 2009 was meant to symbolize change for many Iranian citizens. This was the day the opposition leader and former prime minister Mir-Hossein Mousavi went up against the sitting president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in the Iranian presidential election. Many reform friendly citizens thought Mousavi would win; however, as the next day came and the election results were presented, it turned out the opposition leader had been thoroughly defeated. The anger and tension in Iran rose as it turned out there were accusations of election fraud, and even the European Union and western countries like the US and Great Britain amongst others, were hesitant to congratulate Ahmadinejad with the victory
Hundreds of thousands of citizens gathered in the streets of Tehran and protested, as they were fed up after having lived through a totalitarian regime for three decades. After the first day of the demonstrations, violent videos emerged of the protesters and police clashing. As a result of this, the government made the decision to ban all foreign media covering the “unauthorized” demonstrations (Desta & Sayah 2009). This way, the international news agencies and journalists could not cover the bloodshed about to happen in the streets of the Iranian capital.

Nevertheless, all over the international media there were fresh pictures and minute-by-minute updates on what was happening in the demonstrations. The technologically updated Iranian citizens used their mobile phones to film, photograph and write on weblogs and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter (Leyne 2010). The international media picked up their stories and broadcasted them all over the world.

An anonymous Twitter user wrote shortly after the election: ‘We have no national press coverage in Iran, everyone should help spread Moussavi’s message. One Person = One Broadcaster. #IranElection’ (Stone & Cohen 2009).

The events that unfolded in Iran in 2009 are representative for what is called online grass root journalism, or participatory journalism. This form of Internet-based media of communication has emerged over the last decade first and foremost through the web log, or the more common abbreviation of the word, blog (McCullagh & Broache).

Haas (2005, p. 387) defines blogs as ‘particular forms of websites that allow ordinary citizens, among other things, to discuss political issues and events by posting links to and comments on other Internet-based materials, including other weblogs’. In addition, blogs always have their entries in a reverse chronological order, with the most recent posting on the top of the page (Gillmor 2006, p. 29).

There are many different types of blogs; however, this article will focus on the news or public affairs blogs.

It has been widely discussed whether or not blogging can be regarded as journalism, and many traditional “old school” journalists would without doubt cringe by the notion that anyone can be regarded as a journalist; nevertheless, the emergence of news and public affairs blogging in the previous years cannot be overlooked either by media corporations or the news audience. Although the ever über-cool and technologically updated magazine
Wired gave one big yawn at the blogs and declared them passé already in 2004 (McIntosh 2004, p. 385), not knowing that six years later the blogs would be standing stronger than ever.

In the online community bloggers perform several roles. Bloggers are active participants in the grass root journalism that emerges when traditional media does not perform its own role or when the current media cannot cope with the urgent situations, as in the example from Iran. Also, blogs written by professionals about their industry contribute with in-depth and knowledgeable information; furthermore, bloggers serve as gatewatchers and media critics for the mainstream media, making sure the journalists are doing their job properly. Together all of these things can be defined as participatory journalism (Bowman and Willis 2003, p. 9).

The traditional media, such as hard copy newspapers, radio and television, have until the uprising of the Internet and the blogosphere (the universe of blogs) been the main gatekeepers of raw news; hence, their responsibility is to go through all the potential news stories, decide what is newsworthy and in the end manage to compress this into a limited space, either in print or on air. However, in the online environment space is not a problem, as cheap electronic storage invites for more Web pages to be added and more raw information is available to the consumer; therefore, minor issues with limited audiences can be covered in addition to the major news stories that attract a larger audience (Bruns, p.3).

Gillmore (2006, p. 26) argues that for the past century or so there has been two types of communication, “one-to-many (books, newspapers, radio and television) and one-to-one (letters, telegraph and telephone)”. Now, however, the emerging new technology of the Internet has changed this to many-to-many and few-to-few; hence, any ordinary person can reach a substantial audience through their blog. For instance, the tragic 2004 Boxing Day tsunami in South-East Asia was covered by a great amount of professional media; however, there are the blog postings of tourist pictures and videos that are vividly recalled from the tragic day (Gillmore 2006, p. XIV). Opposed to the international media, the tourists were present at the exact time the tsunami washed ashore on the coast lines of South-East Asia, and while it would take a somewhat long time to get the journalists in place, the people in the affected zone kept on filming and taking pictures before uploading it online. Journalists John Schwarz wrote in the New York Times just two days after the disaster, “For vivid reporting from the enormous zone of the tsunami disaster, it was hard to beat the blogs” (McIntosh 2005, p. 386).
Keshvani and Tickle note that “The consumer is turning producer as the affordability and ease of operation of digital recorders, still cameras and DVCs emboldens non-journalists to record and transmit coverage of news events” (2001, p. 5). So as in the example from Iran, without these new technologies the blogs, we might never have learned the exact truth about what happened those days in the streets of Tehran.

Nevertheless, grass root journalism is not only applicable in the cases where the mainstream media fail to be present, observers also see the significance of bloggers for their ability to present alternative, niche and independent news reporting on an everyday basis. The mainstream media has a centralized, top-down approach to news reporting and regardless of the fact that some media institutions might have started up on idealistic grounds, they need to be run as businesses which are supported by advertising and market forces; thus, they value profitability and have to make gatekeeping decisions based on that. Blogs on the other hand, facilitate a decentralised, bottom-up approach to news reporting as bloggers turn consumers into active news producers; hence, they value egalitarianism, subjective points of view and colourful writing over profits (Haas 2005, p. 388. Lasica 2003, p. 71).

However, blog entries are written by citizens not necessarily with any journalistic training and all blogs are not necessarily doing serious journalism. Lasica (2003, p. 71) argues that “no one should expect a complete, unvarnished encapsulation of a story or an idea at any one weblog”. However, blogs, as with any new participant of the mainstream media, need to build up a reputation amongst its publics. If the blog feeds its reader with well linked, trustworthy and credible news, the author of the blog will build trust and audience will therefore return (Lasica 2003, p. 73. Regan 2003, p. 69).

Bloggers also serve as gatewatchers, which means that the blogger writes a piece that summarises the information he or she has found by numerous news sources, while at the same time linking to all of these. The blogger positions him or herself as a secondary source, but guides the reader to all the different takes on a particular story. As Bruns (2005, p.5) argue “Therefore, as the term implies, gatewatchers keep a constant watch at the gates, and point out those gates to their readers which are most likely to open onto useful sources. In other words, gatewatchers fundamentally publicise news (by pointing to sources) rather than publish it (by compiling an apparently complete report from the available sources)”. 
Also, blogs serve as guard dogs for the mainstream media and a number of “watchblogs” have been set up to follow the media and make sure that the journalists are doing their job properly. For instance, during the 2004 presidential campaign, the editor of The Times' Chicago Bureau in the US, Jodi Wilgoren, had involuntarily gotten a blog named after her: The Wilgoren Watch. An anonymous blogger followed her every step on the Times, with the main purpose of “deconstructing” her coverage of the presidential candidate Howard Dean. The blogger later stated that he did it because of the mistreatment the presidential candidate Al Gore got from the media during the US election in 2000 (Smolkin 2004, p. 41. Johnson and Kaye 2004, p. 622).

Regular news and current affairs blogs, and not just necessarily watchblogs, also make sure that the journalists do their jobs properly. As every good journalist knows, “there is always someone out there who knows more about the news story than you”; nevertheless, before the Internet and the blogosphere existed, the reader would have to get pen and paper and write a letter to the journalist about errors in a news story. Today, however, a blogger can just type down a few lines about the errors on her or his blog before the unfortunate journalist is outed online.

As BBC columnist and visiting lecturer in the journalism school at City University in London (Lasica 2003, p. 73) Bill Thompson states, “every journalist now knows to expect comment and criticism from the blogosphere, and those who might once have cut corners by not checking facts or cutting and pasting phrases from other people’s work should now find their lives less comfortable” (Thompson 2005).

In addition, many blogs also follow up stories which the mainstream media has rejected; thus, forcing the media to pick up the tread again. There are several examples of when this has happened, but perhaps the most well known is the case of the former American Republican Senate majority leader Trent Lott. In 2002, when he was still Senator, Lott made remarks at an official event that the world had been better off if segregationist and former Senator Strom Thurmond had won the presidential election in the US in 1948. In the mainstream media this sparked little or no interest, although there were several reporters who heard what Lott said; however, it did not go unnoticed by the bloggers, who a short time after the official event had Lott’s racial comment on their agenda. It started with an entry on the blog “TalkingPointsMemo”, and in a short time the news was circulated among thousands of blogs across the US. The bloggers kept the story alive for days, before the mainstream media picked it up; nevertheless, it ended with Lott having to resign his position as Senate Majority Leader later that year (Gillmor 2006, p. 44. Haas
Meanwhile, not everyone agrees with the fact that blogging can be journalism. Ever since the blogosphere arose, the debate between the two stances have been fierce. Rebecca Blood, author of “The Weblog Handbook”, puts it this way: “...is blogging a new form of journalism? Frankly, no.” (Blood 2003, p. 61). She argues that what the bloggers are doing is just “water cooler-talk”; hence, they find something someone else has reported on, and then comment on it. Furthermore, Blood believes that bloggers are doing research, not journalism, while searching the web for supplementary information (Blood 2003, p. 61). Also, blogs are not viewed as journalism as the blogs are in a space where facts and accuracy of stories cannot be checked in the same way as it would have been done in a professional newsroom; hence, unattributed rumours, hype and lies can easily be spread in the blogosphere (McIntosh 2005, p. 387).

Banning and Trammell (2006) have studied the perceptions of the credibility of blogs, and their findings are that it tends to depend on who is being studied. The study of Internet users in general discovered that they rate blogs as either moderate and or low sources of credibility, as blogs do not follow traditional news values such as fairness, balance and objectivity. Nevertheless, experienced Internet users rated blogs more credible than less experienced users, which suggest that more experienced blog readers consider blogs credible as they are familiar with the purpose of blogs and the style of writing.

Nevertheless, many traditional journalists are still sceptical towards bloggers, viewing them as amateurs with little skill to attribute to the profession. In contrast, many bloggers view the mainstream media as hierarchical and arrogant, and that they focus more on the financial aspect of publishing news than researching and breaking new stories (Lasica 2003, p. 71).

In the latter years however, the mainstream media have seen the value of blogs, and the engaging effect it has on the readers; consequently, several online media organisations have given their journalists the freedom to blog within the organisations name to recapture journalism authority. The journalist blog, or j-blog as is the common abbreviation, is a combination of a column, a news story and a journal; hence, it allows the journalist to give a more personal perspective and also interact with the audience (Robinson 2006, p. 65). J-blogs are popular because “they allow the reader to see the journalist as a human being, connecting with them without the stiff, imperial voice that turns so many young people off. And most blogs allow – indeed thrive on – reader interaction” (Pohlig, 2003, p. 25).
So to some extent, the mainstream media has reached out to the blog community, and instead of avoiding them, they are trying to take them up in their sphere. On almost every major news story the blogs offer alternative perspectives, in-depth analysis and sometimes even first-person accounts. As Wendland (2003, p. 94) notes, the blogging consists of ‘news that is happening now almost in real time – not filtered, edited, or delay delivered, as with traditional media’.

Therefore, when it comes to mainstream media and blogging it does not have to be an either-or choice as the two opponents thrive on each other; the transparency of the blogs have made the news organisations more interactive and accessible. Blogs will probably never take over for the traditional news media, as it is important to also have professionals with all the ethical and professional standards news organisations have built up over decades, and for some, even centuries (Lasica 2003, pp. 73-74). Nevertheless, the blogs offer insightfulness, alternative opinions and they are keeping the mainstream media on the tip of their toes to perform their best. In many ways, the blogs does not challenge the dominance of mainstream media, but instead the bloggers helps strengthen their dominance (Haas 2005, p. 394).

Dunlop (2003) summarises the rise of the Blogosphere with wisdom: “To some people, weblogs (blogs, as the word is almost universally abbreviated to) are a geek hula-hoop, a fad that will pass once the novelty wears off; a bit fun, but nothing to get too excited about. To others, they represent a rebirth of participatory democracy, a new form of journalism, and even the home of the new public intellectuals.”

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Why online news could influence printed newspapers

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Abstract
The development of the digital technique has enriched people’s lives and made the world smaller, and Goston Bachelard (cited in Hassan 2008, p. 109) said “six thousands beans fit into one”. This article will focus on the differences between the traditional printing paper and the digital version, and reasons why the electronic newspaper can influences the traditional printing newspaper.

Online news is undoubtedly growing with a faster speed and it has been another powerful media versus with printing newspaper. As the World Wide Web (WWW) is invented, people could know almost everything they want to know online. From important and explosive news to tiny things in communities, countries and the world, they could know online without stepping out their doors and buying newspapers. Before the invention of internet, the sources of people’s information mainly rely on the newspaper and broadcasting. However, there is a trend that online news is going to supplant the traditional printing newspaper after the increasing popularity of it.

Online news has many channels to diffuse the information, such as video, audio, online advertisement and online newspapers whereas the printing newspaper just has the physical form of words and pictures. That means the online news like a capsule which contains various functions to attract people’s curiosity and interesting. Furthermore, most of online news are free and people do not need to pay for it. Due to the multifunction and ‘zero’ costs of online news, printing newspapers are forced to make the reform for struggling with the online news. Before the online news comes out, most of printing newspapers are black and white. Now, almost every newspaper has changed into colourful version and made cheaper caps in subscribing the newspapers for grasping more market shares. Some of the news companies even send out the free newspapers in the big events, festivals and activities for advertising. Daily Telegraph, for instance, sent out the free newspaper to people at the Easter Show’s exit doors. Some of the newspapers send out the free newspaper everyday for occupying the market and their incomes totally rely on the advertisement, such as MX. Although printing newspapers make lots of changes and reforms to compete with online news, online news is still threatening it extremely and having the ambition to swallow it.

In short, the electronic newspaper is welcoming its prosperous period, although the printed version is still keeping the dominant position in the publishing industry.
Keywords
ONLINE NEWS • PRINTED NEWS • IMPACT • INFLUENCE • SOURCES

Introduction
Information is the basic element in the developing process of humanity’s civilisation and social progressing. From ancient time to present, society cannot move forward without the information. In other words, information is coming up ever since the humanity is created in the world. The information carriers could be stones, clothes, bamboo, papers and internet (digital information). Online news, which has moved from the margin to a central role in the overall landscape of news media, is a strand of the information (Preston 2009).

This article is going to deal with the reasons why online news could impact the traditional printed newspapers and to analyse my own surveys about online news and printed newspapers.

The reasons why online news could impact the printed newspapers
Since the emergence of the internet, online news is gradually becoming the most powerful competitor for the traditional printed newspapers. A huge number of readerships have transferred from printed newspapers to online news, and the printed newspapers’ circulation has apparently decreased. Thus, rivals of news companies are not only from the same industry, but also from the online news.

The different angles and news sources between online news editors and printed news editors lead to different effects
Online news editors have more extensive news sources than printed newspapers editors. Online news editors can not only focus on the important events in the world or in their own countries in terms of politics, business, finance, entertainments and sports, etc, they can also spend their more energy on trifling, but interesting things. Almost every individual is a news source for online news editors, because every person has his or her own stories. In addition, these editors could get the news from online communication platforms, such as MSN, blogs and so on. If these information are useful for editors, they can reproduce them as the online news with certain norms and values. For instance, blog, which is one of the most significant communicative platform, defined as ‘a frequently updated website consisting of dated entries arranged in reverse chronological order so the most recent post appears first...’ by Walker Jill (cited in Mark Deuze 2006). According to the mass
communication networks, which is defined as a type of communication using media to distribute sound, text and images among an audience by Jan van Dijk (Dijk 2006), the blog can satisfy the readers’ information eagerness. Blogs include textualblogs, photoblogs, videoblogs and audioblogs, etc. Bloggers could put the news on his or her home pages and these information are opened for every viewers. Online news editors could visit these blogs and make some discussion with other viewers about the posts, and they often can get the valuable information from it.

Unlike online news editors, printed newspapers’ editors greatly concentrate on the most significant events and they do not care about the tiny news. Furthermore, they cannot easily put the news which are from MSN or blogs on newspapers though these news are true and important, because printed newspapers’ editors pay more attention on the authority of news sources.

Thus, these two kinds of editors have different angles and sources for selecting information. Online news has various information and it can attract readers easily. Conversely, the news sources of printed newspapers are sometimes constrained.

The influence of low costs of online news on the printed newspapers

Cost is the primary element that people have to think when they are purchasing and selling. Almost ‘zero’ costs of online news have beaten the printed newspapers extremely. Global economy is suffering the recession, and people want to save money as much as they can. Most online news is free that people could enjoy it only if they have a computer. They do not need to pay anything for it. They do not need to buy and take a pile of papers in their hands. They could access to the online news with computers without expenses. With the development of 3G technology, most of mobile phones have the online news function and most of telecommunication companies provide the free online news.

Conversely, people have to spend money for buying the printed newspapers. The price of buying a single newspaper is different from the subscription for the whole year or half year. Therefore, most readers prefer to subscribe rather than buy a single one. However, although the cost of subscription is cheaper than buying a single piece, it cannot compete with the ‘zero’ cost of online readings. In this emergency situation, printed newspaper companies have to maintain the price of newspapers though the costs of printed newspapers are increasing. Nevertheless, this kind of stable price cannot be held in a long period, because the news companies have to obey the market rules and they are forced to hike up the prices. They know that they will lose a number of clients if they raise the prices, but
if they still hold the lower price which cannot get the profit and even cannot earn back the cost of making newspapers, they will die directly. The Sydney Morning Herald, for instance, the price has increased from 1.40 dollar in 2009 to 1.50 dollar in 2010. Due to the price increasing and patchy economy, the circulation has slid down apparently. According to the Australia Audit Bureau of Circulation report, it indicates that the Australia’s main newspapers circulation has decreased 2 per cent from the November of 2009 to February of 2010. Comparing with the same period of last year, the national and regional newspapers have lost 400,000 copies.


The influence of advertisements at online news on the printed newspapers

Furthermore, making advertisements at online newspapers is also an important element for influencing the printed newspapers. Almost every newspaper has provided the online newspaper version for readers. Along with the prevailing of online newspapers, advertisement at online news is pervasive in people’s life, especially for business people. They gradually transfer their reading habits from printed newspapers to online news. This is because the businessmen’s aim is to get the high profits with the low costs, and making advertisements at online news is an effective method for satisfying their aims. Online news unlike the printed newspapers that have to be printed by many procedures, it only needs to be designed and created by computers. There could be two or three sentences for describing a product or only a picture to show viewers what the product is. If readers are interested in, they could click the hyperlink or the picture of this product to see more about it. If viewers are not interested in, they could ignore it directly. That is to say, there is much information under the small hyperlink. Thus, the online news could cover thousands of advertisements in a home page. Besides that, businessmen could also observe the clicking rate about their advertisements and they could know how many people have focused on the products and whether the products are popular. However, the newspapers have limited space to cover all the details of the product, and it can only make a brief introduction about it. Printed newspaper cannot even make a statistic about the advertisements efficiency for businessmen. Therefore, printed newspaper is gradually losing advertisement contracts. Readers could often see that editors of printed newspapers have to use half a page of paper to demonstrate only one advertisement. Even the editors make an advertisement pamphlet attaches with the newspaper and this pamphlet is issued only one or two times a week. The aim is to collect enough advertisements contracts for covering the printing costs and get
tiny profits. The Sydney Morning Herald, for instance, there is a real estate advertisement brochure insert in the middle of the newspapers and all of this brochure is advertising for real estate. Readers could get it for one or two times a week, but a number of readers never browse this kind of advertisements and they throw it to the rubbish bin directly. Thus, this is kind of loses and waste for these real estate companies, because their expenses on advertisements do not address the target customers completely and effectively.

**Different materials lead to the different functions of these two kinds of newspapers**

The materials for constructing two kinds of newspapers are different. The printed version is made of paper whereas the electronic version is published on the web. Online newspaper could be updated immediately. If there were some urgent news, the online newspaper would be published in minutes. However, the printed one has to be written, typeset, published by the printing machine and distributed. After all these processes, maybe it has spent at least one day and to some extent the news on the printed version is less up-to-date than the electronic one. If there are important events, online news can make the tracing report and display to viewers what is happening whereas the printed newspaper have to report it on the next day. To some extent, the news which are printed in newspapers have not been the news. This is because most people have known by online news. American president election, for instance, is a significant event not only for America, but also for the world. It's true that people could watch it on TV, but TV report is not available for people who are not living in American. Therefore, online video tracing report is the only method to know the results if they want to know as soon as possible.

Furthermore, online newspaper could be more attractive and interactive by the functions of video and audio. Video is a multi-media software which could provide viewers with words, actions, colours and picture. The events which have happened could be reappeared by video as well. No more other medias have these functions to compete with it. Stuart Cunningham and Graeme Turner (Cunningham and Turner 2006) points out 'the winds of change seemed to derive not from the new forms of technology themselves (such as cheaper video equipment or home computer editing systems), but the underlying shift from analogue to digital forms of reproduction'. There is also true and bogus news. Paul Brighton and Dennis Foy (Brighton and Foy 2007) say “in an ideal world, the news would be a true, valid, accurate and reasoned account of what happened. In the real world, it is rarely thus'. In order to stimulate the circulation, news companies create or assume non-existent stories as soft news which means human interest stories often in an ‘involved,
personal and colloquial style’ (Jucker 2007), such as entertainment newspapers. Although people doubt it, there is no evidence to collapse these fake news. However, the video can satisfy viewers’ needs. The news reported by the video can not only tell readers what has happened, what is happening and what will be happening, it also can persuade readers that the events reported by the video are true. With these two functions, especially for explosive news, people are propelled to surf the video to find the truth. During the 911 Attack, for example, people were intrigued and desired to see the moment of clash on video, especially for those who do not believe 911 is a truth. Nevertheless, the printed newspaper could only have words and pictures to provide information.

The influence of four online models on the printed newspapers

The application of four models, which are the Subscription Model, the Advertising Model, the Transaction Model and the Bundled Model, has supremely pushed the industry of online news. This is because these four models bring the nonstop profit to the businessmen who are engaging in the online news industry. Subscription Model is the same as the subscription of printing newspaper. The difference is the package of online subscription is larger than printing one. Reader could spend less money to exchange the large quantity of information and knowledge. Advertising Model has been discussed in the third part of this essay. Transaction Model means that the online newspapers like a bridge which connects the buyers and sellers. It has the potential transactions, like advertisements at the electronic newspapers. Bundled Model means that the cooperation between two online publishing entities for pursuing the highest profits. (Kahin and Varian 2000.)

My research about the utilisation of online news and printed newspapers

I did a survey with 100 people about the online newspapers and the traditional printed newspapers. My survey questions are:

1. Which one do you prefer, online news or printed newspapers?
2. If possible, could you please explain your choice?
3. Do you think online news will surpass and replace printed newspapers as the mainstream media in the future?
4. Do you think the multi-functions of online news make your life easier?
5. Which kind of news brings you more information?
According to the survey, 65 people prefer online news whereas 32 people like printed newspapers, 1 person like both kinds of newspapers and 1 person does not like either of these two kinds of newspapers. 43 people gave the definite answer that online news will surpass and replace the printed newspapers. However, more than 50 people think that maybe online news could surpass the printed newspapers, but printed newspapers cannot be replaced by online news. This is because reading printed newspaper is a life style and people could read it on buses, trains and ferries. Most online news supporters think online news is easy to access and eco-friendly, whereas printed newspaper supporters think printed newspapers are portable and less strain on eyes. Approximately 76 people think that the multi-functions of online news make their lives easier, because there are many life-related information and the information are vivid when they are demonstrated by these functions.

From the results of this survey, it is easy to find that of online news have attracted a large number of readers.

**Conclusion**

From this essay, it concludes that the online news is going to be more popular than printed newspapers, because it has many merits which have surpassed the printed newspapers and it makes people’s life easier. However, according to the survey, the printed newspaper cannot be supplanted completely by the online news, maybe they will have the same status in people’s lives in the future.

In my opinion, the best way to develop these two kinds of news is the effective combination of them. Maybe this combination could achieve the equivalence and avoid a fierce slaughter between them.

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Online and Offline Newspapers
Readerships and Features

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Abstract
According to a study that Nielsen did for the Newspaper Association of America, the online audience for newspapers was growing twice as fast as the overall Internet population was growing (Mathewingram.com 2007). Many America newspapers companies are now abandoning print type to focus on the online websites. With the high speed of new media production and the assistance from Web 2.0 techniques, the balance between online and print readerships changed substantially in recent years. In 2008, online readers comprised more than a third of all newspaper readers while two years before only fewer than a quarter of newspaper readers viewed them online. In my article I intend to explore the development of newspaper readerships during this decade. I will also examine the features of newspapers both online and print as well as the building of online newspapers communities, with examples such as weblogs and citizen journalism. In addition, I plan to compare differences between online and offline newspapers by analysing their statuses, contents and layouts, and those reading habits which have impacts on different readers from different age groups including Generation Y (born 1977 or later), Generation X (born between 1965 and 1976), Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) and Silent/Greatest Generations (born before 1946).

Keywords
NEWSPAPER READERSHIP • ONLINE NEWSPAPER • FEATURES • ONLINE COMMUNITIES

According to a study that Nielsen did for the Newspaper Association of America, the online audience for newspapers was growing twice as fast as the overall Internet population was growing (Mathewingram.com 2007). With the high speed of new media production and the assistance from Web 2.0 techniques, the balance between online and print readerships changed substantially in recent years. Someone even predicted that the print newspaper business would totally disappeared after several years. Numerous studies have been carried out during this decade to figure out whether this anticipation is true or not. In contrast, although the prosperous development of online newspapers readership do exert a remarkable effect on print newspaper readership, but the majority of researches found that online and offline newspapers might have a complementary relationship rather than against with each other. In this article I intend to compare and analyse databases from
various studies which based on changes of newspapers readership in recent years. Also I will explore the crucial features of online newspaper readership as well as the building of online communities in the process of viewing online newspaper, with some typical online activities and phenomenons such as citizen journalism like Korean website OhMyNews and the widespread use of weblogs. Furthermore, to what extent do the thriving online newspapers impact on print newspaper industry and the possibility for both business modalities survive in the future.

Online and Offline Newspaper Readerships

Based on a research by the House of Lords Select Committee on Communications, the number of British adults reading a national newspaper had experienced a 19 percent decline from 1992 to 2006 (House of Lords(HoL) 2008). In addition, the circulation of national newspapers in UK fell from nearly 13.2 million in 1995 to just over 11.1 million in 2007, a reduction of 22 percent (Freedman 2010, p.37), while British local newspaper circulation dropped from nearly 48 million in 1989 to 41 million in 2004, 15 percent decline in total (Williams & Franklin 2007). But this dropping tendency is not a common phenomenon in terms of the other countries such as Italy and Sweden, both kept a stable newspaper circulation between 2000 and 2006. Also, the print newspaper circulation was growing up from 2002 to 2006, 25 percent increased in Poland, 54 percent increased in India, and 16 percent in China (Freedman 2010, p.189). Hence, it cannot be said that print newspaper readership has been influenced severely by the online newspaper relied on these statistics.

Another study related to relationship between online and print newspapers called Austin study (Chyi & Lasorsa 2002) analysed six regional, local and national newspapers readerships both online and offline. The result was that about 50 percent online readers of regional and national newspapers also read the print format of these newspapers, and 83 percent of local newspaper's online readers read both formats. This study indicated that online readers of a newspaper's online edition were more likely to read print edition of the same newspaper. It seems to have a partial overlap among online and print editions, rather than a hypothesis that online edition was the substitution of print edition. As Chyi and Lasorsa (2002) believed that “print penetrations were not reduced among Web users, and readers of a particular newspaper's online edition were more, not less, likely to read that same newspaper's print edition” (Chyi & Lasorsa 2002). As for why people read both
formats according to Chyi’s survey, 18 percent of people said they read online newspaper when they do not buy the print one, 11 percent of people said they viewed different editions for time limit (Chyi 2006).

Similarly, a research which was focused on online newspaper impacts on U.S. print newspaper circulation also found that the increase of online edition had small effects on print format’s circulation (Cao & Li 2006). In their view, the first reason is because the most of online newspaper readers were used to reading print edition as well; the second reason is because the absence of Internet access in particular places and situations, such as outdoors environment, leading people to read print edition instead; the third reason is due to majority of online newspaper contents are the same as its print edition, and most of newspaper companies consider Internet newspapers websites as complements of their offline newspapers. As mentioned by Barnhurst (2002), the Internet newspapers “reproduced the substance of their print editions in a way that relates similarly to readers.” The last reason is related to personal reading habit preferences especially for those old people who are keen to print formats.

On the other hand, the proportions of online and offline newspaper readerships have distinctive differences among various age groups. In the Pew Research Center’s news media consumption survey (2008), 16 percent of Generation Y (born 1977 or later) read print newspaper only, or read both the Internet and print formats; 14 percent of Generation Y read Internet newspaper only or read both editions. When it comes to Generation X (born between 1965 and 1976), 21 percent of them read print newspaper only or both online and print newspaper; 18 percent of them only viewed online edition or both. The other age groups including Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) and the Silent/Greatest Generations (born before 1946) have higher print edition rates than the younger, about 42 percent of them read print newspapers in 2008. From this survey it is evident that younger people are more likely to read online newspapers than the old. A study by Brown (2005) found that 44 percent of the youth age between 18 and 34 in the survey viewed online news websites while only 19 percent of them viewed print newspaper everyday. In my view, one of the major reason is because young people are more frequently using Internet services than the old, so they are easier to access online news websites to browse news contents; the second reason resemble Brown’s (2005)version young people prefer ‘news on demand’ which means they want to ‘control over their media, instead of being controlled by it’. In other words, young people like to select their own interests topics through diverse Internet news sources not matter large-scale newspaper websites or small-size personal weblogs.
The third reason is related to immediacy of online newspapers, young people would be willing to take less time to get newest information from news sites since the Internet news can be updated instantaneously by websites’ editors.

Besides, there is a version considering different newspaper sizes have dissimilar readership variation. A survey found that about 30 percent online readers for newspapers with 250,000 circulation or higher said they spent less time on reading print edition after browsing online edition of the same newspaper. While only 20 percent online readers who read newspapers under 250,000 circulation said they read less print newspaper (Fitzgerald 1999, p.123). From this research it seems that people would rather view online editions of large-scale or well-known newspapers rather than those smaller one. As mentioned by Martin and Hansen (1998), ‘The Wall Street Journal’s online news service’s success in attracting subscribers may very well be because of the reputation the newspaper has across the country’.

Differences between online and print newspapers

Most of online newspapers are considered as subsidiary parts for their print editions rather than independent entities. Under this circumstance, the mass of online newspaper contents are copied from its print format. Chyi and Lasorsa (2006) regarded this phenomenon as shovelware, which means publishing whatever is in the print edition in online website without any unique contents. According to the databases from a research, the average percentage of original content of online newspaper was only 13 percent(Tankard & Ban 1998, p.179), it can be inferred that online edition seldom has its original contents compared to its offline edition. Hence, in the premise of the same contents, price and accessibility, people prefer to choose print newspaper rather than online edition. So it is difficult to charge for online newspaper unless online format has its unique attraction and original contents distinguished from print format.

In addition, readers seems to have content preference in terms of different formats. In light of New Media Federation’s survey, people still prefer traditional media for information such as weather, entertainment, sports, and general news, and they most prefer to view entertainment news on print newspaper (New Media Federation 2002). Another research by Mensing and Greer (2006) concluded that online edition had more international news and news related to crime and accidents. Conversely, print edition had more focus on political news and stories about health, education, technology, and sports (Mensing & Greer 2006, p. 287).
Moreover, the layout of online newspaper sites is completely different from print newspapers. Because at online home page readers can see all of the news headlines and select what they intend to view by clicking the hyperlinks of the sites, while print newspaper’s front page can only contain a part of top news headline of that day. So it is easier to search for a specific information just using several click on online news websites. Another characteristic of online newspaper mentioned by Mensing and Greer (2006) is that due to the limit size of computer screen, ‘space to prominently highlight important stories is much smaller online than in print’ ((Mensing & Greer 2006, p.284). In other words, online news contents’ structures are more compact than those on print format.

**Features of Online Newspapers**

Generally speaking, online newspaper has three distinctive characteristics compared with its print counterpart. The first feature is immediacy, since that online news information can be update continuously at any time when print newspaper have to wait a few hours before publishing. The second identity is the utilisation of multimedia, including audio, video, animation, graphics and games. The third character is interactivity, referring to its ability to carry out two-way communication between online readers and online editors or journalists. Rosales (2006) considered online newspaper can maintain a ‘non-linear story’, which means the online audiences can ‘control over the sequence of what he or she wants to see and hear’. Also, audiences can engage in online activities based on news stories ‘in the form of playing a game or exploring an animation’ (Rosales 2006, p.4).

One of the typical example to indicate multimedia application of online newspaper is Takebackillinois.com, a website offering an interactive game for online readers to play and make policy decisions such as balancing the budget or allocating governmental resources. Although the main purpose of games are for entertainment, it lead readers to have deeper thought about a specific topic and spark their interests to news contents. In Rosales (2006) view, games turn media consumers into actors, offering ‘experience, action and rules’ to readers. Another example is Chicagocrime.com, which associated the Google maps functions with Chiego’s crime statistics. Website visitors can fix on a particular place and receive crime proportion at nearby areas. The diverse application of multimedia features on online newspapers sites has been described as ‘Experience journalism’ by Rosales(2006), since online editors can not only post text on the website but add various interactive materials online, providing a brand new experience opportunity for visitors.

When it comes to the interactivity feature of online newspaper, online newspaper enable
a two-way communication between consumers and producers, while most of print format only has one-way communication. A new version called ‘citizen journalism’ emerged with the development of online news businesses. As mentioned by Gillmor (2004), ‘Every citizen’s a reporter, journalists are not some exotic species, they’re everyone who seeks to take new developments, put them into writing, and share them with others.’ This is a fundamental definition of citizen journalism. To be specific, a popular Korean news website called OhMyNews.com is a typical case of citizen journalism. This website allows readers to post stories about their community. Anyone can upload their materials after signing up, there is no limit of space for people post news on the site. The site’s editors will evaluate the news stories submitted by readers and then post them on the sites if the news meet requirements. Similarly, Gothamgazette.com, a New York news site also make use of citizen journalists. Readers from the different regions of New York are asked to submit tips, stories and comments, after that site’s editors would examine and then post good stories on the website. In addition, MyCNN.com offers a ‘Create Your Own Newspaper’ service based on readers’ personal interests and details. In practice most consumers arrive at a more informal method of sourcing their daily news on the web. On the other hand, weblog is another crucial component of online news format. Weblog links multiple websites and blog postings and enable readers to comment on the original post, forming a small-scale online discuss community on a specific topic. Weblog’s function is described by Rosenberg (2002) that it ‘add something new to our mix, something valuable, something that could not have existed before the Web’; also he believed that the rise of weblog can ‘expand the media universe’ rather than ‘the death of professional journalism’ (Rosenberg 2002, p.75). Nevertheless, some argued that most of weblogs were worthless and not qualified as new medium formats. The managing editor of TimesOnline.co.uk believed that ‘ninety-nine percent of blogs were extremely dull or of very marginal interest’ (Thurman 2008, p.146), and the head of BBC News Interactive said ‘there are a lot of very mediocre blogs out there’ (Thurman 2008, p.146).

The most distinctive feature that online newspaper superior to offline newspaper is its ability to enable readers to engage in two-communication. A news site can be considered as a public forum, collaborating online readers together and creating communities based on news contents. Such communities overcome the age, gender, economic factors and geography constraints, helping people having similar interests to unite and discuss specific topics together. Besides, in Ye and Li (2006) view, online readers can have further interactions with editors or journalists through email or online forums on the sites, while journalists can develop news stories and add new contents on website (Ye & Li, 2006).
Conclusion

Based on previous studies regarding to online and offline newspapers readerships as mentioned above, it can be concluded that online readership has experienced a growth during this decade, while the variations of online and print newspapers readerships are distinct country to country; an overlap seems to exist between online and offline newspapers readerships, and the majority of online editions are supplementary portions in terms of their print editions because of the shovelware effect, namely online news contents are nearly the same as print newspaper; newspaper readers have different content preferences in light of two editions; age is an important factors for readers' reading preferences with online and print formats; the distinctive features of online newspaper enable readers to engage in two-way communication on the Internet.

As Benson (2010) mentioned, that challenge for future newspaper business is threefold: ‘The first, to maintain and even strengthen the autonomy of core mainstream media, whether public or private; second, to maintain and expand diversity at the margins; third, to figure out ways to connect the two’ (Benson 2010, p.199). With the thriving development of citizen journalism and weblogs, two-way communication become increasingly important for readers and journalists. Readers can select what they want to view through Internet and even have the authority to write their news stories online. On the other hand, editors and journalists can get instantaneous feedback from readers and then update news story immediately online. Chyi and Sylvie (1998) thought that online newspaper should provide unique services to readers distinguished from print edition, such as ‘two-way communication, searchable databases, real-time data transmission, hyperlinking, and multimedia presentation to overcome intermedia competition’ (Chyi & Sylvie,1998).

Actually, both online and print newspaper should maintain their distinctive advantages to attract readers interests such as providing larger proportion of their own original contents. Moreover, remediation is one of the vital factors for both online and print newspapers businesses survive in future, since remediation ’ensures that the older medium cannot be entirely effaced; the new medium remains dependant on the older one in acknowledged or unacknowledged ways‘ (Bolter and Grusin, 2000).
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Online Journalism: Recycled News or Innovative Reporting

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Abstract
Over the years journalism has become faster, more frequent, widely reached and increasingly open to public participation. Despite the developments in technology and the emergence of different news modalities, the traditional newspaper format has always remained a strong and reliable source of information to the public. This paper will look at how the emergence of online journalism has affected the way news is reported and how the public use online sites as a source of reliable information. Focusing on how online journalists reported the Haitian earthquake in January 2010, the paper will argue that online journalism enables for more public participation and interactivity with its users. It will also argue that online news has the ability to report natural disaster stories quicker than print media. Drawing on theory from journalism studies, the paper will pay particular attention to traditional print media, corporate online news sites and participatory journalism news sites. It will apply a comparative analysis of stories in print and online articles. Essentially, the research will consider whether the online medium allows for 'breaking news' and innovation or whether it is merely recycling and re-producing traditional news in a different format.

KEY WORDS
HYPERTEXTUAL • ONLINE NEWS • TRADITIONAL NEWS MEDIA • USER-PARTICIPATION • INNOVATION • JOURNALISTIC INTEGRITY

Introduction
The technological evolution has been in place for hundreds of years, long before the introduction of the World Wide Web and the Internet. The way in which people have consumed news has evolved with increasing technological development, dating back even before the invention of Gutenberg’s printing press, which paved the way for the production of the traditional printed newspapers. Before the age of the internet, the public relied on journalists to write about newsworthy events and journalists relied on their editors and newspaper proprietors to establish whether their stories were newsworthy enough to be published. Joan Connell (2003) comments on how, since the rise of the blogosphere, this ethos has changed:
Before the Internet revolutionised public discourse there was only one sure way for a person to become a pundit: get a job as a journalist and hold forth the pages of a newspaper, magazine or broadsheet organization... [now] anyone with something to say [and who] has access to the right software can be a publisher, a pundit and observer of events. Connell, J 2003 (Quoted in Allen, S. 2004: 88)

Connell speaks about how the digitalisation of reporting has transformed the way people produce and consume news, she discusses how the ordinary public can now become involved in the process of making and publishing news that is personal to them. No longer do they need to solely rely on an organisation to determine what is or is not relevant.

However, although the rise of digital journalism provides more of a voice for ordinary citizens, there is concern that the validity of the news and accountability of the government may decline. Alan Rushbridger (2009) argues that by reducing the barriers of access to publishing, questions of trust and ethics will become increasingly important. He explains how traditional journalists are trained to challenge the government, acting as the ‘forth estate’ - journalists acting as a watchdog over political, judicial and religious affairs - and if this trend is to continue though the digital age of participatory journalism and bloggers, they need to uphold these responsibilities.

There is also the issue of technacy (the technological skills required for online journalism) that is now involved in being a journalist. Indeed, An Nguyen (2008) has argued that although the technical skill involved in online news has accelerated its innovation, at the same time the uncertainty of this new media has caused for less potential. Essentially, Nguyen argues that better technology does not necessarily mean better journalism.

Director of The Media Centre at the American Press Institute, Andrew Nachison holds a different view and suggests that new technologies provide journalists with greater opportunities to explore different kinds of work and facilitates a richer type of journalism, particularly for those who have become passive of traditional practices.

It might be better journalism... Having all media at your disposal gives you a bigger toolkit. Candidates with skills in multiple media are highly desirable... The chance to do multi-media may make life more interesting for jaded journalists, or people who've been in the business a long time. Nachison, A (2006: 48-49)

Thus, there are many opposing views of the emergence of online journalism; some argue that it provides innovation and increased access to public voice, others hold a less optimistic view that this greater access and technological skill-set may deter from quality
news reporting. There are certain factors which go uncontested however, such as the speed and reach that online news creates (Briggs, M 2008), whereas traditional print news is static and at best only half a day old (Rushbridger, A 2009). It is therefore significant to consider the above arguments in relation to a new concept; reporting natural disasters. Because of the speed allowed in online journalism and different aspects that make it a multi-media artefact, one would expect more quality news reporting of a natural disaster story. However, in considering the issues of trust, access and technacy, this may not be the case. This article applies the above theories to how journalists reported the 2010 Haitian earthquake, by comparing articles from different news modalities.

Method
This paper looked at news reporting of the January 2010 Haitian earthquake in corporate online media, traditional print media and participatory journalism sites. Articles were considered during a 2 week period; from the 12th January (when the earthquake struck) up until the 26th January. A comparative analysis of the news stories was conducted, from various publications, including traditional print news from the Sydney Morning Herald and The Guardian, corporate online news sites smh.com.au and guardian.co.uk and participatory news sites, Now Public, Crikey and Wikinews.

The key factors that were considered in relation to the content of the articles were the use of sources, interviews and written style. For the websites, it was necessary to consider any accompanying pictures, slide shows, videos, sound, interactivity and comment postings, in relation to whether this enhanced traditional print articles or merely recycled traditional news sources in a different way.

Discussion

Content
In all publications, the context of the news stories were similar and matched a specific timeframe; the first couple of days after the initial breaking of the news the content focused on estimates of the dead, injured and homeless. As time went on, the content changed toward reporting aid resources, blame, and human interest. Although these similar issues were reported by all publications, the actual content, angle and written style differed between each publication.

In reporting about aid relief, there was a distinct divide between the content of the Sydney Morning Herald print article, ‘Australians dig deep amid Haiti diplomatic row’ with the
participatory news site, *Crikey*, 'Haiti: which celebs are putting their money where their over-botoxed mouths are?’ The print article conformed to expectations of traditional media, being a watchdog and acting as the ‘fourth estate’ by focusing on government aid and political issues, whereas the participatory site popularised the issue by using celebrity aid as its angle. One could argue that this isn’t anything new – there have always been different styles of newspapers - serious journalism and the popular tabloid journalism (Sparks, C and Tulloch, J 2000). However, the participatory article offers the reader a different experience from simply a different style of news. Firstly, its writing style is presented in short and punchy paragraphs. Jane Dorner (2002) has studied web writing and explains that certain elements make up an effective story for the web, so it is easy for the reader to see on the page. Thus, the longer sentences and quotes that are used in the *Sydney Morning Herald* article would not be effective for the web as it would deter the reader’s attention from the story. This allows more room for quirkiness and attitude in web writing, which is evident in the article from *Crikey*. In considering the first paragraph of this article, the author’s use of Html has facilitated originality and has added to the witty nature of the story.

Haitian-American hip hop artist Wyclef Jean (despite facing some financial woes of his own, foreclosing on his mansion home a few years ago) has raised over $3 million through his Yele Haiti charity and has been personally pulling out dead bodies from the rubble (though *The Smoking Gun* has unearthed some pretty concerning information about the charity and raised serious questions over just how charitable Jean really is).

Writing in html format has enabled the author to play on the words ‘mansion home’ which has provided originality to the story, and the short paragraphs enable it to be read quickly. In Journalism 2.0, Mark Briggs (2008) goes onto explain how readers of the web expect to be provided with direct language, which gives them the essence of the story quicker than if they are reading from traditional print media. However, there is a fear that the sharp and direct language used with online journalism may cause a ‘dumbing down’ of the news and a loss of political and historical context

**Hyperlinks**

The use of hyperlinks – an embedded link which takes you the reader to another webpage, usually relevant to the story - can cause ambiguity for the user if it is unclear where the links may take the reader to. There is a danger here by which the original point the author is trying to portray may become lost in the world of hyperlinks. In the article, 'Salvation Army text to give to Haiti: text Haiti to 45678', from participatory news site *Now Public*, the hyperlink ‘Salvation Army’ seems to allude to the user being taken to the homepage of
the Salvation Army, whereas they are actually directed to a very similar article from News Wire. Mark Briggs describes this significance of hyperlinking in online news;

> It allows readers to “branch off” and click through to other, more detailed supporting content depending upon a reader’s level of interest. Almost all journalism refers to other sources, but online a writer often has the ability to link readers directly to those supporting sources. Briggs, M (2007: 66-67).

Although the author has attempted to credit her source and provide the users with more in-depth information by directing them to Newswire, this detracts the attention away from the original site.

On the other hand, looking at the article from corporate news site, guardian.co.uk, hyperlinks are sparingly used to add further context to the original story. The hyperlink, medecins sans Frontiers (MSF) takes the user to the MSF homepage. Other hyperlinks in this article link to relevant stories from The Guardian website. This is not just recycling other reporter's stories, but using previous stories to build on a new angle.

However, whereas the journalist can expect to control the reader through the most part of their story in traditional print media, the use of hypertext causes a certain loss of control for the author of online news. Ray Tapas has argued that online news allows the reader to choose their own path in the article, which he suggests may cause;

> ... blurring of the distinction between the activities of reading and writing that is characteristic of print and broadcast. This implies a partial loss of control on the part of the author and a corresponding gain of control by the user or reader. Tapas, R (2006: 39)

Although Tapas recognises that the author loses control of the reader, this does not necessarily mean the effect is a negative one; the innovation of hyperlinks provides an enhanced experience for the reader, one which enables them to choose their own knowledge and direction of the story.

**Interactivity**

Perhaps the most significant finding between the news articles is the concept of interactivity that online news provides the reader. Tapas (2006) describes online journalism as being defined by three distinct characteristics – hypertextual, interactive and multimedia. He goes onto describe multimedia as forms of print, still images, video and sound. In the articles looked at in this paper, online stories were more innovative in the way they used
different forms of media to enhance the story, which in turn allows the reader to become more engaged. For example, the Wikinews article, ‘Haiti in Pictures’ told the story of the damage done to the country by using a variety of still images, maps to indicate the magnitude of the earthquake, and a video taken from a helicopter so the user can see the devastation from an Ariel view.

An article from The Guardian’s website, ‘Earthquake in Haiti: Aid starts to arrive’ by Paddy Allen and Paul Scruton (18th Jan 2010), uses an interactive map which allows the user to scroll over the various areas. This subsequently creates pop-up boxes to inform the user what aid has been distributed to that particular area. The print articles looked at are unable to offer this level of interactivity as they are a two-way media and can only publish text and images (Tapas, R 2006). Arguably, this is where print journalists fall short of the rise in online news reporters. The scope to engage with the reader is far greater online as the reader is allowed to choose what information they wish to use and interact with parts of the story. However, the question must be asked; is online news merely recycling traditional news into different formats?

Trust

In any published news article, it is essential to consider the source of information in order to add credibility to the story (Zelizer, B 1995). It is therefore significant to discuss the findings of sources used in the participatory news sites that were considered in this paper.

Although citizen journalism has paved the way for greater access and interactivity (Stuart, A 2006), it was found that the sources used by citizen journalists mainly originated from corporate news sites, traditional print media or Associated Press. This would suggest that citizen journalism is repackaging corporate news into a different format. A relevant example of this is the article from participatory site, Now Public, ‘Haiti’s Prime Minister Declares State of Emergency’. The author of this article cites corporate news site, abc.net.au as their source of information.

In comparing the two articles, the author from Now Public has taken chunks of the original news story on ABC’s website, ‘Emergency Declared as Marines head for Haiti’ and has copied it into the Now Public news site. The only addition is a picture slide-show, and the sources of these pictures are not credited unless the user clicks onto view the large version of the images. By contrast, the article on ABC news site uses eyewitness accounts of the devastation in Haiti, with interviews conducted by ‘people on the ground’.
Robert Berkman (2003) has discussed this concept of reproducing traditional news media onto websites, calling this ‘shovelware’ journalism. He goes onto explain how financial constraints for online journalists – particularly citizen journalists – make it more difficult for original journalism and so much of their information is located from previous published work. Thus, basic journalist practices of investigation may become a concern for originality of online journalism. However, corporate online journalism often publishes news found by traditional print media and vice versa. The concept of citizen journalism however, is to allow those with first-hand accounts of a particular newsworthy event, to publish their experience in their own words. Trust is the very essence of this type of journalism; that the story is being told ‘direct from the horse’s mouth’, so to speak.

There are obvious restraints financially, technically and in terms of journalism training, which have been discussed in this paper, but citizen journalism may actually pave the way for originality, innovation and trust, which has been lost in the economics and politics of corporate news media.

**Conclusion**

It is particularly difficult to conduct an equal comparison across all publications. Financial restraints need to be considered, especially when discussing user-generated websites. Lack of time also prevented the study from looking at a wider range of publications.

On a basic level, this study found that the corporate news sites enhance their print counterparts by taking advantage of the digital aspects of publishing. Arguably, this could be deemed as ‘shovelware journalism; journalists merely recycling traditional news in a different format. By contrast, traditional news offers the reader more ‘on the ground’ journalism, where reporters are interviewing and investigating the story in order to find their own original information.

Nonetheless, it is clear that online news is quickly emerging as an innovative and interactive form of journalism. Online journalism provides the user with a completely different experience to newspaper journalism; it is fast, updated, accessible (to those who have the technology), functional and engaging. Essentially though, there seems to be an emergence of what we may call the ‘fifth estate’ with the plethora of citizen journalists experimenting with online news, told in their own way and by drawing on their own experiences.
The research found that online news, particularly citizen journalist sites, is rapidly developing and enabling an enriched informational environment. Lack of financial loss in terms of production means there is a lot of room for online journalists to experiment, be original and ambitious in their reporting and deliver an enriched communicative experience between the journalist and reader.

In trying to make sense of what the digitalisation of news may mean for the future of journalism, professor Paul Starr puts is that, ‘our new technologies do not retire our old responsibilities’ (quoted in Atton, C. 2002) Thus, journalists may embrace the opportunities online provides for news reporting, but with the plethora of publications and journalists now in the digital sphere, maintaining the idea of trust and originality is perhaps more important than ever.

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Magazine Publishers Go Digital

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Abstract
This paper will focus on the opportunities and challenges presented by the internet and digital media technologies to the magazine publishing industry taking one of the industry’s leading international publishing houses, Condé Nast Publications, as an example. It will examine the position of Condé Nast Publications and its digital division, Condé Nast Digital, in relation to their online presence and influence and compare it with the audience’s perception of the magazines’ online niche. By undertaking a textual analysis of relevant literature, academic journals, websites, publishers’ company information and magazine publishing industry statistics, this article will analyse the future of the print consumer magazine in the rapidly expanding digital world.

Keywords
MAGAZINE • ONLINE • PUBLISHING • WEBSITE • DIGITAL

The introduction of internet and new digital media technologies has had a great impact on the publishing industry and the print media. Every successful publishing business strives for an online presence, with consumer print magazines being no exception. The possibilities offered by the internet seem to be endless and magazine publishers are constantly exploring new ways of reaching their audience and advertisers online.

With the expansion of the consumer magazines’ online presence the question is whether the website, initially set up to supplement the magazine, will take over the printed version. Will the publishers be forced to abandon print publications in favour of online versions in the financially challenging economic environment? Are the readers willing to give up the tactile experience of leafing through a printed magazine in favour of its online counterpart?

This paper will focus on the opportunities and challenges presented by the internet and digital media technologies to the magazine publishing industry taking one of the industry’s leading international publishing houses, Condé Nast Publications, as an example. It will examine the position of Condé Nast Publications and its digital division, Condé Nast Digital, in relation to their online presence and influence and compare it with the audience’s
perception of the magazines’ online niche. By undertaking a textual analysis of relevant literature, academic journals, websites, publishers’ company information and magazine publishing industry statistics, this article will analyse the future of the print consumer magazine in the rapidly expanding digital world.

Magazines in the digital world

A magazine is a visual text that uses “a mix of modalities”, both verbal and visual. Since the rise of the glossy magazine publishers, editors and designers have been focusing on making the verbal element in the form of text and the visual element in the form of layout, image, typography and colour work together to produce the final product. They could experiment with content and elements of design, however they couldn’t go beyond the limitations of print. With the introduction of internet and digital technologies magazine publishers were presented with a myriad of opportunities to enhance their print publications, engage the reader more than ever before and maximise their profits.

The creation of online versions of printed magazines offered publishing houses means of enhancing and promoting their brand, reaching out to a larger audience, often at an international scale, attracting new readers and cementing relationships with existing ones. However, in order to enhance the printed version it is necessary to provide a different experience for the reader. As magazines’ websites don’t usually duplicate the print version in the form of a slide show, setting up online versions presents publishers and designers with new creative possibilities as well as many challenges. Different elements of design could be used to mirror ‘the tactility of the printed product’, argues Patrick Burgoyne. Equally, designers can experiment with the visual presentation of the content by introducing audiovisual techniques that are obviously not suitable for print such as motion imagery in the form of live TV and video clips, sound and music. Most of these elements are now inherent in online versions of print magazines, as well as questionnaires, blogs and newsletters. Moreover, the availability of extended versions of articles online, access to unpublished shots or archives of content from older issues all enhance the online magazine experience. All of the above mentioned tools not only contribute to the engagement of the reader but also give publishers an opportunity to interact, receive feedback and monitor the readers’ activity which is crucial in magazine production.

Striving for online presence publishers also aim to supplement their print advertising sales with online advertising. As setting up and maintaining websites incurs lower

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production costs, publishers can offer advertisers better deals and more creative and interactive solutions with the help of digital technologies.

Condé Nast – pioneers in online publishing

Condé Nast Publications were among the first publishing houses to explore the online niche by establishing CondéNet, that united all of the magazines’ websites under one umbrella, and launching websites for GQ and Vogue magazines in 1995. According to the UK division of the subsequently formed Condé Nast Digital these websites were “designed to complement the magazines, attract new readers and cement interactive relationships with existing readers”.3 Vogue.com became “the world’s first site to deliver daily fashion news and coverage of the international collections”4 and is still one of the most popular fashion websites. CondéNet continued to grow with the increasing numbers of magazines’ websites launched each year as the company’s management realised the scope for development in the online niche in terms of advertising and growing revenue.

In January 2009 Condé Nast announced consolidation of “all its digital assets into a single unit called Condé Nast Digital (CND)”.5 The changes were made in order to increase the company’s control and influence of its digital business and boost print advertising sales by introducing online and print sales and marketing. Today CND defines itself as “the leading creator and developer of upscale lifestyle and business brands online, providing enjoyable, useful services that build upon the heritage of the world’s most prestigious magazines”.6 Condé Nast International Digital numbers 83 websites, 24 million unique users7 generating more than 430 million page impressions every month.8

The company strives to maintain high standards of the digital content by keeping apace of the changes in the digital sphere and introducing various technical innovations. Thus, in 2008, 13 years after its original launch, Vogue.com was re-launched “with the latest technological advances including a magnifier tool, show calendar, celebrity blogs and more video and editorial updates”.9 The same changes were applied to another popular website, Glamour.com, with the addition of Glamour TV.

4 Ibid
6 http://www.condenastdigital.com/about.html
7 http://digital.condenastinternational.com/magazines.magazines.htm
8 http://digital.condenastinternational.com/condenet-international-page.overview.htm
Condé Nast invades digital sphere

However, Condé Nast doesn’t limit its digital aspirations to online presence only. With the appearance and success of smartphones and e-readers the company realised the potential of mobile features and multiplatform content distribution. The new digital technology opened up many possibilities of attracting new readers and advertisers and increasing revenue through the distribution of paid digital content. Thus, Condé Nast was the first magazine publisher to sell the issues as applications, starting with GQ’s December 2009 issue. It is reported that 6,835 copies of the December issue and 15,068 copies of the February issue priced at $2.99 were sold by the middle of February 2010. These figures suggest that selling and delivering content through applications could possibly bring more profit to magazine publishers in comparison to selling the advertising online as readers are more inclined to pay for applications rather than online subscriptions. The company’s plans include launching iPad versions of Wired, GQ, Vanity Fair, The New Yorker and Glamour magazines too.

Condé Nast is continuing its venture into the digital arena by teaming up with the industry’s other leading magazine and newspaper publishers, namely Time Inc., the Hearst Corporation, Meredith and the News Corporation to create innovative common software for delivering interactive versions of magazines to different digital platforms. The development and introduction of the new software is aimed at the unification of digital magazine delivery process as publishers have struggled to adapt and format their content to the new multimedia platforms over the past years. The consortium is planning to sell their new product by setting up a digital store similar to iTunes. According to the group “in addition to entirely new magazine and newspaper reading experiences, content selections may ultimately include books, comic books, blogs, and other media”. One of the most important features of future software is that it will be optimised for advertising which is crucial for publishers.

Challenges faced by print magazines

It is evident that with the advance of the internet and new digital technologies magazine publishers, including Condé Nast Publications, have been losing their readers to blogs, smartphones and e-readers. A considerable drop in advertising sales for print publications associated with the world financial crisis contributed to the unstable position of magazine publishers. Thus, with the increasing numbers of readers going online for entertainment

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and information, magazine publishers are forced to adapt to the changing environment by venturing into the digital sphere. In digital culture this process could be described as remediation, in which “old media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media”.

Even though magazine publishers are greatly challenged by the growing demands of the digital world it is arguable whether the print magazine will cease to exist. Readers continue buying print versions of magazines which could be proved by the hundreds of thousands of magazine titles that exist worldwide. A digital version cannot fully replace the printed magazine since it is transient, it is impossible to keep or collect it. Incessant updates obliterate existing information and few websites offer access to archives. A digital version cannot offer the reader a tactile experience of holding or leafing through a printed copy either. Creative design might attempt to recreate the experience of turning the pages but the feel and the texture of paper, the quality of print, the form, the shape and the very glossiness of the print magazine is essentially lost. For example, one cannot reproduce the sleek look and the golden foil logo on the magazine cover. Moreover, the perception of photography on screen is entirely different from seeing it in print. High resolution quality images used for print are replaced by compressed, smaller versions and could look completely different for each user depending on the calibration of the monitor. In print magazine production colour proofs are made prior to sending any photograph to print to ensure the right hue, saturation and value. Finally, print magazines don’t depend on digital demands such as battery life, they don’t crash as websites or computers do. Therefore, digital content offers the readers a very different reading experience, one that lacks physicality.

**Reinforcing digital assets**

Fully aware of the demands of the digital world, magazine publishers are gradually adapting to the digital sphere by strengthening their online presence and focusing on new multimedia platforms. Still magazine publishers are not planning to completely succumb to the digital world even in the face of the challenges presented to the industry by the world financial crisis. “This economic experience that we are going through has sobered us up considerably,” said Charles H. Townsend, President and C.E.O. of Condé Nast. “To get back to double-digit growth, we have to put our digital assets to work hard. I am hoping that the print business will recover to double-digit growth, but I am convinced that the

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digital business will grow exponentially." Condé Nast is therefore relying on its digital presence in order to steer the business out of recession, yet the company is fully aware of, responding to and investing in the digital sphere.

Conclusion
This article has attempted to assess the opportunities and challenges presented by the internet and digital media technologies to the magazine publishing industry taking the example of one of the industry’s leading publishing houses, Condé Nast Publications. By focusing on the new technological advances in the digital world this paper has examined the response and action of the publisher in question with the attempt to analyse the future of the print magazine in general.

It is evident that websites could be no longer considered simply as an add-on to the printed versions of magazines. Rather, they have evolved in relatively autonomous entities still supplementing and enhancing the print magazine brand but doing so by employing new methods characteristic of the digital sphere. By going online magazine publishers have also faced a number of difficulties associated with translating their brands into the digital sphere. One of the main challenges lies in the development of online content that would reflect and enhance the print brand and its mission statement, yet one that wouldn’t simply replicate the printed version. It could be argued that the major role of the magazines’ online presence is to engage and interact with the reader so as to prompt them to continue buying the printed version. Thus, a magazine website has to justify its online existence by offering content powerful enough to initiate interest in both online and printed versions.

Following the example of Condé Nast Publications it could be stated that magazine publishers have also realised the importance of translating their brands not only to the online sphere but also to the emerging multimedia platforms. As this paper shows, CND has become fully aware of the growing demands of the digital sphere and regards it as potential for business growth and development, offering the increase in revenues rather than a threat to the print magazine. Thus, print magazines and their digital versions, existing online and as digital multimedia platform based versions, will most probably exist in parallel, evolving the existing brands by taking them to a new level, as well as supplementing and enhancing each other and providing the readers with new magazine experiences covering both print and digital space.

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Fashioning Magazines in the Digital Realm

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Abstract
In an era of increasing digitisation of the mass media, the supposed struggle between print media and the online realm is continually being debated. Magazines, like other forms of printed media, face many challenges, but also have the opportunity to utilise the Internet in new and unforeseen ways. This article seeks to examine the way the fashion journalism industry has been directly affected by the Internet, creating both opportunities and problems for the print based magazine. With reference to Australian Vogue and other fashion magazines, this article will explore ways in which magazines have to successfully extend their brand into an online counterpart, creating broader communities and a global presence. Using a mixture of empirical research and academic evidence, this article will also consider the ways in which online blogs and multimedia capabilities have changed the magazine publishing landscape, and what the industry may have to do to survive and thrive.

Keywords
MAGAZINES • FASHION JOURNALISM • ONLINE WEBSITES • NEW MEDIA • BLOGS • VOGUE

For the last 100 years or so, magazines have enjoyed enduring popularity as a truly mass medium. Women's fashion and lifestyle magazines, in particular, hold considerable wide market appeal.

One of the important features of lifestyle magazines that makes them worthy of discussion is the rather paradoxical trend over the last few decades for an ever-increasing range of niche markets, at the same time as some titles have become global grands in a way newspapers never have. Lifestyle magazines such as Vogue or Cosmopolitan are now known through much of the world. (Campbell, 2004).

Indeed, magazines such as Vogue have become such iconic figureheads for fashion and lifestyle journalism that they have been exported and appropriated into local markets worldwide. Vogue, arguably the most famous high fashion magazine in the world, originated in New York in 1892, and these days the masthead has local versions in the USA, UK, Australia, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Holland, Japan, China, Korea, Brazil, Greece, India, Russia, Mexico, Portugal, Taiwan, Turkey and Latin America region.
Yet, despite this expansion into new territories, magazines overall have suffered declining rates of readership and circulation. According to FIPP’s annual *World Magazine Trends report*, Australian magazine circulation figures dropped 1.9% from 2008 to 2009. While there are certainly a myriad of different media types that compete for the busy consumer’s attention in the 21st Century, many would argue that the relatively new medium of the Internet has played the largest role in the decline of magazine sales. Historically, this is nothing new. When one newly emerging media takes hold, it is natural that older forms of media will be affected. Even the television era of the 90s had its impact, argues Janice Winship. ‘By the late 1990s for example, weekly women’s magazines were selling upwards of 5 million copies per week in Britain, from a peak of over 9 million sales in the late 1950s.’ (Winship, 1991 in Campbell, 2004).

While the expanding network and constantly improving digital capabilities of the Internet may have moved audiences online, magazines have had little choice but to embrace convergence. ‘Publishers today are expected to maintain an online presence’ (Ingham & Weedon, 2008), and those that don’t dedicate a portion of their resources towards capturing an online audience, risk appearing outdated in the highly competitive marketplace. Bob Cameron, former editor-in-chief of *Woman’s Day* and the *Australian Women’s Weekly* argues that, ‘Darwinian theory always rules in the media jungle. The weak perish, while the strong and innovative adapt and prosper. Today this means fully embracing the new media but not at the cost of the old.’ (2008).

Magazine editors therefore need to carefully balance out the content between print and website versions of the magazine, without compromising the quality of either. Cameron goes on to state that,

> Successful print-to-web brand integration is a daunting and costly challenge for publishers, particularly as Internet content appears to be free to a consumer (after buying hardware, software and paying the service provider), while a magazine often costs more than two cups of coffee. (2008).

There are a couple of issues at stake here. One, is the content – how do magazines provide enough fresh content for their magazine every month, as well as providing updated content on their website, particularly when Internet users demand new content on a regular basis? It is surely a challenge both in terms of economics and resources. Two, if magazines are offering content basically for free (at the cost of Internet access) to consumers, how do they convince readers of the value of buying the printed magazine every month?
Some magazines, such as Australian *Marie Claire*, have managed to strike a balance between their website and magazine content by offering teasers on their online site – an excerpt of an interview here, a couple of images of a fashion story there. This is presumably a way to drive curious readers offline and into newsagents. *Vogue* Australia has a section dedicated to the magazine, offering a brief summary of the current issue’s main stories, keeping the long form features strictly within the confines of the print version’s pages. It seems that magazines need to be careful about replicating their print content online too heavily, and must offer something new or different to the online user. When you consider that a website competes with millions of other sites, and users are often just one click away from jumping ship, the challenge becomes obvious.

Nevertheless, there is much potential for online delivery of new content. Ingham and Weedon discuss the ways that ‘Online offers the opportunity to deliver quality specialist material in quantity’ (2008). If we view magazines as ultimately limited to what they can deliver to their audiences every month – a limited number of feature stories each month, a limited number of images per page, a ratio of editorial pages to advertisements, then websites provide a solution to the problem of space and form. ‘Articles and images which have been curtailed by the dimensions and advertising compression demanded within the print version, are allowed free rein within the online version’ (Ingham & Weedon, 2008).

Even the image, which is central to a magazine’s identity (arguably no more so than within the glossy pages of a fashion magazine), can be expressed in new creative forms using Flash. A revolving set of images on the home page can give the formerly static image new life, creating a dynamic story that resembles the motion of flicking through a magazine’s pages.

In many ways the website *vogue.com.au* should be the perfect companion piece to the magazine – offering additional pictorial content that would not usually fit inside the magazine, and keeping archives of cover images, fashion show images and videos. The *Vogue TV* section allows users to access specially designed video content such as highly stylised behind-the-scenes cover shoot stories. These videos combine music, interviews and footage, and offer insight into the production of a magazine shoot. For the fashion conscious individual, these videos provide depth and added value, and for publishers they serve to promote the magazine brand by bringing it to life.

While many media commentators have been keen to place the printed magazine in direct competition with the Internet, McGann argues that ‘it should not be a question of pitting
one medium against the other but of understanding the specificities of each’ (McGann in Hayles, 2005). Indeed, in the case of Vogue, the vogue.com.au website has the potential to help the magazine understand its readers even more and to further sharpen the quality and relevance of its editorial content. Erica Bartle, ex-managing editor of Girlfriend magazine, and Girl with a Satchel blogger, believes that a ‘magazine’s own website is the new testing ground for idea fertility.’ (2008). Thus, instead of viewing websites as the secondary offering to the central magazine, with the website feeding directly off the magazine’s content, there is an opportunity for a two-way communication process between magazine and website.

Vogue forums, a hugely popular section of the vogue.com.au website is a pertinent example of just how valuable the website can be for a magazine editor or publisher. The forums, which allow registered users to discuss topics such as their daily shopping purchases to recent fashion shows, have proved so immensely popular that Vogue now includes a section dedicated to the forum discussions in the magazine each month. Editor-in-chief Kirstie Clements often posts questions to the forums, which are used as a barometer for what is popular. Clements even asks users to vote for cover girls – a particularly savvy move in light of the fact that it is the choice of cover star (and image) that usually sells a magazine.

While the forums offer prospective market insight into readers for publishers, and a shared community for fashion lovers to trade information and ideas, they also call into question issues of privacy and censorship. It is not known to what degree the innocuous commentary made by users is protected by privacy agreements, and to whom exactly the information belongs to. It would certainly be invaluable to marketers and advertisers.

Vogue also received recent criticism after Clements disclosed the fact that negative comments about advertisers are deleted from the website. This moderation of commentary has been defended by vogue.com.au editor Damien Woolnough, who argues that it’s not censorship, but instead a question of protecting the magazine. ‘There is vigorous forums debate, but we still do have to moderate the forums and it is not a matter of being ‘fashion’s Big Brother’, we are making it a safe place to debate issues and we look at posts when it comes to legal issues and defamation.’ (SMH, 2010).

Because the forums are such a popular section for advertisement due to the high levels of traffic (according to Nielsen Net ratings for May 2009, the site has one million unique visitors each month), Vogue is in many ways succumbing to the modern day conundrum faced by magazines – how to protect editorial and brand integrity, whilst appeasing the
advertisers, who generate a large portion of a magazine’s revenue. While other popular Australian magazine websites such as marieclaire.com.au have stipulated that they do not moderate negative user comments about advertisers, there is still a level of moderation being exercised. Jackie Frank, editor in chief of Marie Claire says that, ‘We only censor if it’s offensive, slanderous or puts us in a position to be sued but a forum is meant to be an open forum.’ (SMH, 2010)

It’s not just the pressure of online content delivery and the challenges that come from moderating their online communities that magazines are faced with. The globalisation of the fashion industry is never more evident than in the manifestation of countless blogs and fashion-centric websites, that serve to disseminate news, content and information. Prior to the Internet, fashion magazines were the sole portal for their niche audience, but these days the online realm has been able to create worldwide communities that are only bound by those who have access and those who do not. The Internet has now gained an incredibly strong foothold on the fashion industry, thanks in part to its immediacy of delivery, and multimedia capabilities. As Erica Bartle explains,

The idea that magazines are unique in their ability to create communities of like-minded people is being challenged by online social networking sites such as Facebook, image-sharing sites like Pikke.com and blogs. Although most magazine editors would challenge the credibility of anything on the net, the immediacy of online content has meant glossy editors have to redefine their offerings, as everything new – formerly the domain of the mag – is now old in seconds. (2008)

The fashion industry’s constant pressure for the new lends itself brilliantly to the form of the Internet, where updating of websites and blogs is regular, and news can be delivered at lightning speed. As a result, the pace in which trends and styles are spread is staggering. In many ways the Internet can be seen to have democratised access to fashion too, with online shopping allowing users to purchase high-end couture from almost anywhere in the world. Sites such as Polyvore.com even allow users to imagine themselves as stylists, by cutting and pasting images of clothes and models to create a ‘look’ not unlike those seen in magazine fashion pages. Furthermore, fashion blogs and the rise of celebrity blogging sensations such as Scott Schuman of thesartorialist.com, 13 year old Tavi Gevinson (who sits front row at fashion shows, amongst fashion editors) of thestylerookie.com and Bryanboy of bryanboy.com, have led some to suppose that the once-totalitarian rule of magazine editors is now being challenged.
High fashion magazines have always relied upon the ‘expert’ or knowledgeable opinion of its editors and contributors. In particular, ‘fashion magazines like Vogue distinguish themselves with an authoritative, all-knowing voice’ (Bartle, 2008) that readers listen to. While bloggers promote themselves as ordinary people, magazines have historically been viewed as trustworthy opinion leaders. One problem with fashion editors, is that often their fashion-forward views appear to have lost touch with readers. Because the ‘One recurring feature of lifestyle magazines is a focus on aspiration’ (Campbell, 2004), the fantasy of fashion magazines, with their uber-skinny Photoshopped models, and exorbitantly priced clothing often does not lend itself well to everyday reality.

Bloggers, who are often on the outer edges of the fashion industry have perhaps gained popularity for the everyday quality of their musings, making them more accessible to readers. Mark Deuze suggests that blogs are presented in a manner that is,

more similar to the way we think and act in everyday life – behaviours that can be typified by a paradox between inconsistency and chronology – than, for example the, the kind of narrative offered through newspapers or broadcast newscasts – functioning on the basis of (patterned) selectivity and linearality. (2006).

Their opinions on the media and the industry can also serve to voice those of the consumer. Erica Bartle believes that bloggers have a critical function, acting as ‘a filter between magazine consumers and glossy editors, highlighting hypocrisy and illuminating editorial that might negatively affect the lives of women.’ (2008).

Bloggers are not without their critics too. Many have argued that fashion bloggers are not real journalists, for owning a computer ‘doesn’t transform one into a serious journalist any more than having access to a kitchen makes one into a serious cook.’ (Keen in Stove, 2007). Yet, some journalists do blog, and have managed to turn their blogs into commercially viable enterprises by hosting advertising on their site, so this view seems overly generalised.

Some magazines, such as Australian Grazia, seek inclusion on the blogging phenomena by including blogs written by their journalists on their website or by presenting their stories in blog format with the stories presented in reverse chronological order. It is a strategy that is supported by the American Press Institute, who says that, ‘To stay afloat, media companies must reimagine storytelling forms to vie for consumer attention...and they must react to the consumer’s creation of content with awe and respect.’ (2005 in Deuze, 2006).
Vogue Australia is yet to include any blogs on their website, which suggests a reluctance or underestimation of the influence of the blogosphere on fashion reportage. The absence of any blogs on their website is a curious one, especially considering that the UK and US Vogue sites both include contributions from popular style bloggers such as Scott Schuman of thesartorialist.com and even pictorial blogs, or style diaries from popular celebrities or models. While the success and popularity of a fashion magazine’s website does not rest wholly on the inclusion of blogs, they do help present an image of a magazine that is in touch with contemporary trends in journalism and media.

In conclusion, the Internet, and all of its offerings should not be seen as a direct competitor to print based models of publishing. It is important to consider the ways in which ‘The magazine is a living, evolving medium that, at its best, is thrilling and invigorating both to consume and to create’ (Losowsy, 2007 in Bartle, 2008). Magazines will have to evolve with the digitisation of media, and use their websites to underscore their creative power. While there are many challenges to online integration, a magazine needs to embrace the new media otherwise it will lose touch with its audience. The Internet offers boundless possibilities for magazines to deliver great content, and pleasurable experiences that will serve to reinforce the power of the magazine brand and ensure its long-term survival.

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Pirates or Criminals?

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Abstract
Is it the faceless nature of digital piracy that makes it so widespread? The relatively low risk of getting caught? Are people who illegally download music simply immoral cheapskates? According to several studies, the factors identified as influencing the decision to illegally download music include income, risk perception, ethics and peer influence. I propose that the culture and architecture of the Internet is inherently biased towards open access – that it is a medium designed to facilitate sharing and copying, and to resist governance and restriction. As such, traditional ideas about intellectual property and copyright become extremely difficult to enforce, and perhaps even redundant.

Keywords
PEER-TO-PEER • PIRACY • MUSIC • COPYRIGHT • DRM

Introduction
Peer-to-peer file sharing is a practice that is growing in popularity despite enormous effort by governments and the music industry to put a stop to it. This phenomenon is frequently dealt with in mainstream media, as well as in academic journals and studies, with the focus most often being on prevention, or eradication of what is known as piracy. I will look at some examples in both mainstream media, and in academic studies, in order to illustrate that the more traditional preventionist ways of discussing piracy are flawed and irrelevant. Flawed in the sense that there is often a misrepresentation of the consequences of piracy, especially with reference to its effects on artists; and irrelevant because the measures recommended don't work to stop piracy they simply alienate the public who engage in this practice.

Background
Music piracy is not a new phenomenon – ever since the introduction of the cassette player in the 1970's people have been making illegal copies of music. But it was the advent of the Read-Write CD, along side the proliferation in home computing, that really made an impact on the music industry. The combination of the simultaneous improvement in home computing and the development of MP3 technologies meant that near-identical
copies could be made quickly and cheaply (Janssens, Vandaele and Vander Beken, 2009). The result of this was a rise in physical piracy – the reproduction of copyright-protected materials to sell on the illegal market. Furthermore, the MP3 format meant that music files could easily be sent or shared over the internet, which in turn, saw the development and rise of peer-to-peer file sharing technology. While the impact of physical piracy on the music industry is significant, it is peer-to-peer file sharing that is proving to be far more devastating to the music industry.

Piracy in mainstream media

The effects of peer-to-peer file sharing on the music industry are well documented. An estimate by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) states that music sales declined from $13.7 billion in 1998 to $8.5 billion in 2008, and it categorically blames music piracy for this (Sinha, Machado and Sellman, 2010). In Australia, according to statistics from the Music Industry Piracy Investigations (MIPI) website around 2.8 million people engage in illegal downloading, with the average pirate downloading 30 songs a month, which totals to a ‘staggering 1 billion songs being illegally traded by Australians per year’ (MIPI, 2010). In addition to income loss for music labels, other consequences include loss of employment, reduced income for artists, a decline in the number of music retailers, less new releases and less investment in marketing and advertising (Cudrado, Miquel and Montoro, 2009). Sangeeta Shastry argues that based on a study completed in Paris earlier this year, which focused on piracy in the music, film, television and software industries, that continued downloading could put over a million people in the European Union out of work by 2015 and ‘240 billion euros worth of European commerce could be wiped out by 2015’ (Shastry, 2010). It is characteristic of news articles and industry organisations to present information about piracy in this way – using huge numbers like 240 billion euros or 2.8 million people – without actually contextualising them. What does it really mean that 1 billion songs are being traded in Australia per year? Does it mean that the industry lost a billion songs-worth of income? Was it a billion different songs, or the most popular songs, downloaded repeatedly?

Shastry, like all critics of piracy, also mentions the long-suffering artist, telling us that the musicians, actors and artists have the most to lose from illegal downloading – though interestingly no figures are provided on that point – just a plea to the reader’s conscience. ‘We should change the word piracy,’ said Agnete Haaland, president of the International Actors’ Federation, ‘To me, piracy is something adventurous, it makes you think of Johnny Depp. We all want to be a bit like Johnny Depp. But we’re talking about a criminal act.'
We’re talking about making it impossible to make a living from what you do’ (Shastry, 2010).

In fact, very few artists are able to make money from what they do, and this precedes the internet. The musicians who do make money, do so because of mass marketing by record companies. The internet had the potential to change this by lowering the costs of distribution and promotion. In the mid-nineties a large number of internet music providers, such as eMusic.com and Napster started competing for better ways to distribute music, but the traditional market (record labels) succeeded in shutting them down (Lessig, 2001). Nowadays record labels continue to criminalise large segments of society by suing people who download music, and the mainstream media is so intent on re-telling this particular story that it never actually addresses the question of who the pirates are. Well, the pirates are among us. If we are to believe MIPI figures they make up about 8% of the Australian population (MIPI, 2010), and these stories are not deterring them.

**Piracy in academic writing**

If piracy is so blatantly wrong and immoral and so damaging to the process of creativity, why do so many people insist on doing it? Statistics indicate that the number of people engaging in piracy is increasing (Lessig, 2009). So why is it that more and more people are taking part in this illegal an immoral practice? While the media doesn’t really address this, it has been the subject of numerous academic studies, albeit most commonly from a business or marketing perspective, often with the aim of using their findings to make recommendations to the music industry and to governments. Following, I will look at three such studies, their conclusions about why people pirate and their suggestions.

Manuel Cuadrado, Maria José Miquel and Juan D. Montoro, in their article ‘Consumer Attitudes Towards Music Piracy: A Spanish Case Study’ seek to ‘identify attitudes towards music piracy, group consumers according to their attitudes and profile these consumer groups’ (Cudrado, Miquel and Montoro, 2009). They looked at buying pirated CDs as well as downloading and file sharing, though they specified that it was the online piracy that was by far the most prevalent. Their study was a survey 1,282 respondents. Of those, the 80% who admitted that they had obtained music illegally, were further divided into three groups: the unaware (who see no legal or ethical problem with what they are doing), the semi-aware (aware of the illegal nature of their behaviour, but attach no ethical importance to it), and the aware (those who are aware that their behaviour is unethical and illegal). Overall, their conclusion is that consumers are unlikely to change their practices.
Based on their study, and the unlikelihood of a return to previous consumption practices, they recommended that music labels should be more creative and innovative in terms of what they produce, and in managing their relationship with the public. For example, they should focus more niche genres like folk or ethnic, as well as offering more live shows and merchandise. They also suggest different price packages targeted at different consumers, and “an effort to communicate the superior value of original formats” (Cudrado, Miquel and Montoro, 2009). However, given that they concede that most people do pirate, and have no moral qualms about it – and furthermore that this situation is unlikely to change – their recommendations seem weak. They suggest that the music industry has to “reconsider its business strategies”, but ultimately they are convinced that nothing will, in fact, stop piracy.

Another study, entitled ‘Estimating the Willingness to Pay for Digital Music’ looks at the ‘stick vs. carrot’ strategies for deterring pirate behaviour. Chiang and Assane note that even though ‘carrots’ - economic incentives to buy rather than download illegal copies – are proven to be effective, ‘sticks’ are still the most common strategies used by media industries and governments. These ‘sticks’ include litigation, pre-movie warnings about the use of piracy, TV commercials (Chiang and Assane, 2008), and increasingly, government actions such as the new Digital Economy Act in the UK. Another of these ‘stick’ strategies is Digital Rights Management.

Digital Rights Management (DRM), is a term used to refer to technologies that are designed to control how consumers can use digital works (Sinha, Machado and Sellman, 2010). The benefits of DRM for the music industry, are obvious – it makes it difficult or impossible for users to copy or convert files. For consumers, the benefit is a moral one – they are able to legally purchase digital music files, as opposed to downloading them illegally. However, the disadvantages of DRM for users are, firstly, that it could restrict (to a greater extent than what is allowed by copyright) their use of their purchased music; as well as in some cases, tracking consumers’ usage of certain files (Sinha, Machado and Sellman, 2010). Another interesting point about DRM is that, unlike copyright, it never expires (Lewis, 2008). The effect of DRM technologies is that record labels are alienating the consumers who were willing to pay for music, and potentially driving them towards piracy.
Chiang and Assane go on to say that positive actions must be taken to increase the probability of legal purchase. They call this factor an individual’s willingness to pay (WTP), and using data from their survey they speculate on how to increase this, looking at factors which will increase legal purchase, not just factors that influence piracy. It turns out that factors that influence WTP are much the same as those that influence an individual’s willingness to pirate – mainly income and risk perception, and to a lesser extent, ethics (Chiang and Assane, 2008).

Putting their results into economic terms, ‘reducing piracy entails reducing the net value of participating in the illegal market or increasing the net value of participating in the legal market, or both’ (Chiang and Assane, 2008) – a combination of the ‘carrot’ and the ‘stick’. They also argue that increasing awareness campaigns about the negative effects of piracy will influence a consumer’s WTP for digital music, and they point to the increase in the market for legal sales of digital music as hope for copyright.

What both of these preceding studies have in common is the conviction that the current music industry model is sound, albeit in need of some tweaking. They do not consider that the business model is outdated, and only continues to exist because of strong support from legal systems and governments. They both look, to some extent, at what drives members of the public to pirate, but don’t consider that this behaviour is becoming the norm, even
though the practice is getting more and more widespread.

The third study is that of Shoshana Altschuller and Raquel Benbunan-Fich entitled ‘Is music downloading the new prohibition? What students reveal through an ethical dilemma’, which considers the possibility that not only business models, but maybe even the law may have to change.

As technologies evolve they create discrepancies between the way things are and the way the law expects them to be, leaving society in a muddle, trying to reconcile the two. What remains to be seen in whether the discrepancy in the case of music downloading becomes extreme enough that the law changes to accommodate the increasingly prevalent behaviour, or whether new business models will emerge to bridge the gap between legality and reality’ (Altschuller and Benbunan-Fich, 2009).

They compare the current situation of digital piracy to 1920s prohibition of alcohol in the United States, in the sense that the law does not reflect the social norms. ‘Society seems to be repelling its own behavioural guidelines’ (Altschuller and Benbunan-Fich, 2009). They look at the ethicality of an action as being distinct to the legality of it. The matrix that they use in their survey offers four possibilities – actions that are unethical and illegal, actions that are legal and ethical, and the illegal-ethical, unethical-legal variations. Similarly to Cudrado, Miquel and Montoro’s study their results show that even though half of their group said that downloading was unacceptable, most of them did it, and recommended doing it. The difference between the two studies is that Altschuller and Benbunan-Fich consider that the results to indicate a discrepancy between the law and ethics.

The legal-ethical matrix is somewhat similar to the organisation of findings by Cudrado, Miquel and Montoro, but it differs on the important point of their conclusion. While Cudrado, Miquel and Montoro use the legal-ethical framework to figure out the best way for record labels to market music to consumers, especially to those who have a mix of legal/ethical opinions on the subject of piracy, Altschuller and Benbunan-Fich consider the possibility that not only the business model, but also the law might be flawed.

For example, the Digital Economy Bill, which on the 8th of April this year passed into law in the UK could be considered one of these flawed laws. It has been heavily criticised, due mainly to its graduated response scheme, which calls for repeated copyright offenders to have their internet connections suspended. The Act was justified by a report called ‘Building the Digital Economy’, which in turn has been criticized for presenting questionable statistics provided by the industry itself (Richmond, 2010). It is also problematic in that
the government won’t exempt universities, libraries or businesses offering free wi-fi, which would leave these organisations vulnerable to the same penalties (Meyer, 2010). One of the UK’s three biggest Internet Service Providers has vowed not to co-operate with this legislation, calling parts of it ‘draconian’ (Arthur, 2010). This is a clear example of the law being hopelessly left behind by societal norms. When even businesses like ISPs don’t consider file sharing a criminal activity, nor do the majority of the public, the government becomes almost helpless to stop this.

The typical discourse on music piracy, be it media or academic, focuses on loss prevention for the music industry. It is usually only as an afterthought that the artist is mentioned, and then in such a way as to appeal to the conscience of the potential pirates. But are musicians that much worse off in the digital age? As argued by Lessig (2001), the internet initially held great potential for artists who were previously bound to record labels. Digital technologies make it possible for people to make music, promote it, and distribute it, in such a way as to almost avoid the necessity of record labels. In the BBC program, The Virtual Revolution, British rapper Master Shortie explains how he uses social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and Myspace to promote his work, and collaborate with other musicians and producers. He is part of a new generation of musicians that understand their audience. Unlike some major record labels, Shortie realises that for the new generation of internet users, downloading music is a norm. They won’t be persuaded to change their ways, and punishing them will just alienate and criminalise them. He explains that rather than making music ‘for free’, artists have to be more creative about how they earn their money. He suggest solutions like playing more live shows, including extra tracks for people who buy CDs and paid downloads, or first refusal to show tickets – alongside free downloading, not instead of it (The Virtual Revolution, 2009). As Broussard states, musicians ‘might profit more from an enhanced reputation based on “borrowing” of his or her works than from rigid demands for immediate compensation’ (Broussard, ).

**Conclusion**

Over the last ten years governments and music industries have been engaging the public in what Lawrence Lessig calls the Copyright War (Lessig, 2009). But by passing passing oppressive legislation and introducing restrictive technologies to control what they see as piracy, they are alienating and criminalising the public. Peer-to-peer file sharing is an integral part of how we have come to communicate in the digital age, and we need laws that reflect this.
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Legal P2P File Sharing is Possible: 
A Case Study of ‘Spotify’

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Abstract
Internet and peer-to-peer (P2P) technology changed the way of music creation, delivering and consuming. To a large extent, it affects the entertaining life of the users and brings many benefits. It also provides more opportunities for artists to publicize their music effectively. Record labels resist P2P by arguing that P2P file sharing is morally wrong and economically damaging to creative industries. (Currah, 2006) However, there is evidence that the legalized P2P file sharing would increase the overall size of the market of media and entertainment.

Spotify is a peer-to-peer music streaming service and application software from a Swedish company. It is changing the habit of music downloading and making music enjoyment easy, instant and funny. More importantly, it is the initiator who makes P2P technology application legally.

Spotify, as the initiator of legalizing P2P technology, paved a way for other P2P servicer provides to compete legally in music industry. This article will discuss this topic from a sociological point of view using text analysis.

Key words:
P2P DIGITAL FILE-SHARING TECHNOLOGY MUSIC SPOTIFY

Introduction
P2P is a distributed network architecture which popularized by file sharing. It changed the structure of human interaction and enable people to become both suppliers and consumers of Internet resources. It is also changing the way of music distribution and enjoyment. However, whether P2P technology breaks copyright law or brings benefits to the world has aroused broad controversy.

This paper contributes to examine the impact of P2P music sharing on consumers, artists and record labels. Through the illustration of ‘Spotify’ to reveal that legal P2P file sharing as the future of creative industry is possible.
The emergence of P2P and music sharing

Peer-to-peer (P2P) is a distributed network architecture composed of participants that make a portion of their resources directly available to other network participants, without central domination. It changed the structure of human interaction and made people become both supplier and consumer of Internet resources. (Schollmeier, 2001). People not only enjoy the resource online but also upload the content to their hard disk to share with other users. P2P changed the client-server modality and it replaces centralisation and hierarchy with distribution and collaboration. In other words, it replaces centralised control with responsibility and freedom. (Pascu, 2007) Traditionally, the exchange of resources and services between computer systems is done using Client-Server techniques. A Client-Server system is one in which there is a dominant computer (the Server), that is connected to several other computers with less control (the Clients). In contrast, with P2P systems, there is no such dominant server; control is decentralized. Bauwens (2005) claims, ‘in a P2P system, the use of hierarchy and centralization serve the goal of participation and many-to-many communication, and are not used to prohibit or dominate it.’

Napster is an example of this kind of P2P system. It has a centralized directory (actually several) that describes how files reside in Napster. It is also the most famous example of the application of P2P network in music field. It started in 1999 when an 18-year-old college student, Shawn Fanning, left university after the first semester of his freshman year to work on the Napster software. Napster’s winning idea was in giving P2P, for free, to the masses. According to Fanning, consistently over 800,000 people were using the system simultaneously (Matthias Book, 2000). Research found that 85% of the college students in the USA used Napster to enjoy online music in 2002. (Gil, 2010).

However, due to the huge growth in file sharing, the Recording Music of America (RIAA) sued Napster for ‘engaging in or enabling, facilitating or assisting others in the copying, downloading, uploading, transmission, or distribution of copyrighted musical work or sound recordings protected by copyright or state law without the express permission of the rights owners.’ (Malin, Fowers 2009,p718–722) As a result, 250,000 songs were forced to remove from its P2P community. But Napster 2.0 was reborn as a paid service only available to the citizens of USA.

Napster paved the way for decentralised peer-to-peer file sharing networks, many new P2P networks emerged, such as Gnutella, Gnutella2, eDonkey2000 and Bit Torrent, etc. P2P opened a broad music world to music funs. With P2P technology, users can upload and download through P2P software to trade mp3 or AVI files of their favorite songs and share
with other users. They can download an entire music CD in several minutes because it is based on the cooperative sharing of thousands of individual users. For many computer-literate people, downloading music is a much faster and more convenient way than buying CDs from website or stores.

**P2P music sharing and its influence**

**P2P and Consumer**

P2P file-sharing opens a new music world to users. It is changing the entertaining life of users and brings them many benefits. Firstly, consumers can sample the music before they buy. Especially for the listeners who tend to buy albums from strange artists, they can sample tens of thousands music worldwide just by P2P software or website. P2P music database is abundant to satisfy various needs, users can search musicians, songs or other key words to get the music at any time.

Secondly, the price of the CDs is far too pricy compared with the decreasing cost of production. P2P music sharing makes music fans’ dream come true, they do not need to buy CDs just for one or two songs. Enjoying music becomes more economical.

Thirdly, they can also save the time of seeking for the album that is not available in stores instead of enjoying various songs by sitting in front of the computer. Due to the different market coverage situation, some places cannot get CDs of some artists, but P2P file sharing offer every music fans the equal chances to enjoy the music the preferred. Demographic factor will not the limit situation anymore.

Many other aspects should be took into account as the motivation of using P2P file sharing, such as MP3 ownership, supplementary entertainment goods, as mentioned by Andersen and Frenz (2007). In their report, they also summarized the advantages brought to consumers based on P2P technology:

‘Owing to diffusion of technical change, it is far cheaper, as it reduces the costs of intermediation and allows consumer’s greater choice over listening patterns; facilitating the growth of demand-driven patterns of consumption thereby enabling greater consumer participation, and more interactive modes of consumption.’

Apparently, most customers hold a supportive attitude towards P2P file sharing. CBS News conducted a public opinion survey which represented that ‘58 percent of Americans who have followed the issue of sharing music files over the Internet consider it an acceptable
practice in at least some circumstance,’ (Cosgrove, 2003). Digital rights management examined the policy of curb copyright infringement is unacceptable by consumers because the restrictive usage.

**P2P and Artist**

File-sharing illustrates possible opportunities for successful pre-sales promotion and stimulate the motivation in purchasing.

Online discussion and communication enables artists to receive feedback from listeners and to match the ‘accuracy’ users when sale albums. Artists can also improve their music according to the feedback of the listeners and which in turn leads to greater consumer satisfaction.

P2P file sharing provides a broad platform to publicize the reputation of artists by exploring potential market and fans. Artists can become more popular through music sharing and discussion forum. It is also beneficial for the propaganda and cutting the advertising budget.

In terms of music creation, P2P file sharing has opened the door to creative ideas. It is sparking new forms of creativity. For example, the so called ‘rip, mix, burn’, musicians can mix cultural or historical records from different sources and genres into their work, disseminated through P2P networks. (Lasica, 2005)

P2P music sharing cannot prison the enthusiasm but spark inspiration of creation. Musicians also show optimistic attitude to P2P music sharing. For example, Jeff Tweedy of the band Wilco says ‘If people are downloading our music, they’re listening to it. The internet is like radio for us.’ ‘I don’t want potential fans to be blocked because the choice to check out our music becomes a financial decision for them.’ (Wired.com)

**P2P and Record Labels**

There is significant data representing that the decline of music sales coincides with the widespread of P2P file-sharing. The U.S. music industry enjoyed healthy growth during the 1990s, shipments increased from $7.2 billion in 1990 to a high of $14.6 billion in 1999, dropping thereafter to $8.5 billion in 2008. (Goel, S., Miesing, P&Chandra, U, 2010)

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry in their study covering 16 countries estimates that over 40 billion music files were illegally download on file-sharing networks in 2008, representing a digital piracy rate of about 95%. (IFPI 2009)
The overall attempt of record labels is to sue the providers of file-sharing software, such as Napster 1.0, to maintain the vested interest. Currah (2006) claims that ‘In this case, they constructed an ethical code of practice surrounding digital content----that P2P file sharing is morally wrong and economically damaging to creative industries.’ The record labels also built elaborate public awareness and educational campaigns to prevent people from using P2P, as they advocated avoiding pornography, viruses and spyware.

However, whether the declining of CDs sale industry profits is affected by P2P file sharing is ambiguous. P2P file sharing is different from physical piracy and the decline in record sales has a complicated reason. (Andersen, 2007). It is argued that because of the created new sectors, overall of earning of the music industry is increase. More specifically, besides the record company, there are many other channels can get profits, such as radio advertising revenue, musical instrument sale, live music sector, music retail sectors, portable digital payers, to music publishing (IFPI, 2006a) Therefore, the so called ‘demise of the music industry’ is highly controversial.

Andersen and Frenz (2007) explain that the reason of record sale declining is complicated, such as excessively high prices of CDs, excessive mark up, standardized quality, decline in purchasing power for luxury goods, lower degrees of choice, etc. They also mentions that while sales of recorded music have been on a declining trend since 2002, the sales of digital content have been on a notable increase by 60 per cent since 2006. Ironically, Currah (2006) claims that ‘the legalized P2P file sharing would increase the overall size of the market for media and entertainment, through the accurate matching of supply and demand and through sparking new forms of creativity.” On the other hand, because digital music is just an intellectual thing and people cannot possess and collect as same as CDs. Digital music do not have the storage property as CDs. Therefore, it is not always true that people would buy music if they didn’t share files. That is to say, there is no theory or standard to evaluate the people who share digital music online will not be the consumers who buy CDs.

Legal P2P music sharing service-----Spotify

Spotify is a peer-to-peer music streaming service and application software from a Swedish company. It is changing the habit of downloading music and making music enjoyment easy, instant and fun. It is also the initiator who makes P2P technology application legally and allows users to share songs by copying the link of a playlist or a track and sending it to their friends.(Spotify.com)
There are several revolutionary characteristic of Spotify. Firstly, the habit of downloading music has been changing. The media stream player is replacing the traditional habit of downloading ‘Because the music plays live, there’s no need to worry about waiting for download and no big dent in your hard drive. You can listen at any time, no matter where you are, through your computer or your mobile phone’ (Spotify.com) Users are no longer downloading things, if they can use a link to access the music and share with their friends. The record firms hope it will force the illegal downloading out of internet; therefore, the album leak accident will not post any threat to the sales (McCormick, 2009).

Secondly, Spotify is user friendly and free. It is funded by paid subscriptions and advertisements played periodically by the Spotify player at intervals between songs. Alternatively the user can pay a monthly fee of €9.99 and change the status to ‘premium user’, which means they can enjoy more qualified music as well as no advertisements in the client window or between songs. (Spotify.com)

Thirdly and most importantly is that it enables users to enjoy P2P music sharing legally. Spotify is the initiator to legalize P2P technique. They have deals with all the major record labels to ensure that all artists who have music on Spotify are properly paid. A cooperating pattern is built, which is allocating profits reasonably between labels and artists.

Hargrave (2009) in his article mentions that Spotify’s Andreas Ehn says:

“We can’t divulge too much about revenue shares, only to say that it’s based in part on click volumes and that we’re committed to compensating record companies and labels fairly,” “The music industry is losing money and is looking at new ways to create revenue streams, of which we are one. Music fans don’t want to act illegally, but they want to have everything at their fingertips instantly. The best way to compete with that is to come up with a better product, which gives them everything music piracy can offer and much more besides, while also compensating the labels and artists.”

Conclusion: Legal P2P file sharing is the trend

This is the age of technological revolution. Music is created, delivered and consumed by new ways based on Internet and P2P technology. The logic of the market and dynamics of technical innovations should not be against; therefore, advanced new technologies cannot be suppressed simply just because they threaten vested industry interests (Kozul, UNCTAD, 2007).

Actually, the growth of the online music industry is creating new business opportunities. As analyzed above, global consumers, music industry and artists can benefit significantly.
from the new P2P file sharing technologies; therefore, it should be facilitated and legalized, rather than hindered.

Spotify is a good legal music-sharing model that sets up a cooperative relationship among labels, artists and consumers. The company uses contract to ensure profits reasonably allocated with labels and artists and it is also changing the habit of downloading music. As the initial application of legalized P2P technology, it paved a way for other P2P servicers with successful cooperation modality in music industry. In addition, the copyright laws was created many years ago, it may not adapt to the recent technological advancement and should not be used as a standard to restrict the proliferation of P2P technology. Overall, P2P music sharing, as a phenomenon following the trend of advancement of technology, should be accepted and improved legally.

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A new cinematic aesthetic: The effect of the digital revolution on the construction of the ‘real’

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Abstract:
The art of filmmaking, in all of its workings from production to exhibition, is a form of publishing. This article examines how information and communication technologies (ICTs) in film have assisted in the construction of a new genre of cinematic realism in world cinema. Through a case study of the film ‘Ten’ directed by Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami, research will show how the emergence of digital film technologies alter traditional perceptions of production and post-production, and to a lesser extent distribution and exhibition. Moreover, the emergence of digital production technologies has provided independent filmmakers with the means to create a true, realistic aesthetic.

Keywords
DIGITAL FILMMAKING * CINEMATIC REALISM * DEMOCRATISATION * PRODUCTION POST-PRODUCTION * EDITING * SCREENING * IRAN * INDUSTRY * ABBAS KIAROSTAMI

‘The year 2000 will salute the advent of a cinema free of the artificialities of montage, renouncing the role of an ‘art of reality’ so that it may climb to its final level on which it will become once and for all “reality made art”’—a final prediction from the film theorist Andre Bazin as written in his obituary, 1948 (Matthews: 1999)

In its purest form, cinematic realism as written by Andre Bazin is the ‘total and complete representation of reality’ and what is ‘found in the space between reality and [the] transcendental spectator’ (Manovich: 2001: 187). This article will provide an analysis as to how the emergence of digital technologies in filmmaking can take the ideals embedded in the concept of cinematic realism to create a representation of the socio-cultural discourses that circle society. Through a theoretical framework of the nature of cinematic realism coupled with the technological advances in film production and post-production from the digital revolution, this article will use a case study of Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami to reflect this theoretical framework. It will focus primarily on his uses of digital techniques to create a representation of ‘real’ Persian narratives in his landmark film Ten. Andrews argues:
the very notion of world cinema is about empowerment: about people telling
their own stories rather than simply accepting what Hollywood and its
clones offer. Digital cameras, because they’re comparatively small, inexpensive,
portable, versatile, and able to record and store images in far greater
quantities and in a far wider range of conditions than other cameras, play a
crucial role in that empowerment" (Andrew: 2005).

With the advent of digital production streams there is a shift in the aesthetics of world cinema towards a reality-based story-telling medium. Thus the emergence of digital techniques has created a new genre of digital world cinema with the support of well-established directors utilising digital techniques.

**Theories of cinematic realism**

There are a number of perspectives on the definition of cinematic realism and Bazin’s argument — in comparison to such theorists as Comolli or Bordwell and Staiger — is the most idealistic. His thoughts are based on the notion that there is the need to have faith in the image and faith in reality; that the depth of field pioneered by directorial powerhouses such as Orson Welles gives the spectator the opportunity to freely explore the space in the filmic image (Bazin: 1967). Bazin’s theory is being used in this article as a theoretical framework because he sees the filmic image in its most naked form; a simplistic and idealistic view of the abilities of an image in depicting reality, in turn isolating the image from external forces which may affect its purity.

In the current climate of filmmaking it is important to engage with alternative definitions that expand on and offer new viewpoints on the movement and what it offers to the aesthetics in world cinema today. Manovich discusses Comolli’s take on the nature of cinematic realism when he states it aims to ‘reduplicate the visual’ by maintaining and updating its realism (2001: 186). This is done through the effect that is created by ideologically determined additions and substitutions of technologies and techniques (2001: 186). Moreover, Bordwell and Staiger as written by Manovich support the perspective that the discourses that saturate the institution of film industries affect the way an image is shot by the director and the way a film-goer consumes the image and its meaning (2001:186). This is exemplified by the current need for film industries to be efficient, offer product differentiation and evoke a certain standard of quality.
Applying this to digital production flows in filmmaking, these explanations that engage with the nature of cinematic realism must be considered when contemplating a new aesthetic that has come about in world cinema. That is to say that digital filmmaking and techniques assist in ‘reduplicating the visual’ because it is a technology addition that filmmakers have access to that in turn creates a new kind of image. In addition, the politics of film industries and festivals at large have the ability to affect the way a film is shown and an image relayed to an audience. For example, the Cannes Film Festival in 2000 chose to screen Iranian director Samira Makhmalbaf’s *Blackboards* that tells the story of Kurdish teachers who attach blackboards to their backs and seek students to teach in the midst of the Iran-Iraq War. It can be deduced that there were underlying reasons for this selection as talks on US foreign policy regarding the situation in the Middle East were at their peak. The selection process of film festivals can indeed echo the socio-political discourse of the time. In effect this is what the audience wants to see and what is most relevant at the time. Essentially, the external socio-political factors that affect the way a digital image is shot, the way a narrative unfolds, and how a film is viewed challenge Bazin’s idea that the cinema will eventually be ‘reality made art’. Moreover, it must be considered that there can be a ‘reality made art’; however there must be an engagement with external factors that contribute to the image’s construction and the way it is seen.

**Digital production and post-production in the construction of the ‘real’**

One definition of digital cinema is a ‘technical phenomenon whereby films can now be originated, edited, and distributed through digital/ electronic media and also the kind of cinema that has come to be through those changes’ (Ganz and Khatib: 2006: 21). Today, live action can be recorded on film or video or directly in a digital format (Manovich: 2006: 5). So what are the changes from filming on celluloid to digital recording? McKernan offers a definition of digital that see it as a way in which computers process information and reduce this information into 0’s and 1’s (2005). Digital recording provides higher quality images through scanning periodic samples of information along an image wave and translates it into code (McKernan: 2005). The ability to reduce quantity through digital compression makes it easier to process, copy and edit images.

Unlike video formats that use vertical resolution, digital formats make use of horizontal resolution (Wheeler: 2001). With the emergence of digital cinematography, footage can now be stored in electronic files, providing a way around the costs involved with keeping negative prints. In addition, shooting in a digital format promotes an entirely new realm in the recording of footage. In traditional filmmaking, the relationship between the person
looking through the camera and the subject resulted in the replication of one, single gaze. Ganz and Khatib focus on the idea that when shooting in digital there is a zone rather than one angle. They write ‘...there are often multiple cameras, and second, because there is feedback and crossover between the area behind and in front of the camera, space in digital drama is vague’ (Ganz & Khatib: 2006: 22). In essence, the digital image lingers. When we look at that image in its clarity, we notice spatial qualities and dimensions previously overlooked in film, thus affecting the way we consume the image. This is exemplified through the digital techniques utilised by Abbas Kiarostami, as such this will be discussed later in the article.

With the introduction of digital production techniques, the post-production process in traditional filmmaking has been reshuffled. Instead of post-production taking place at the end of the filming there is now the ability to view, cut and rework the files automatically after they have been shot and this opens new possibilities in the world of editing footage. As supported by Ganz and Khatib, ‘... a transformation of the traditional organisational structure of film production enable[s] pre-production, production, and post-production to occur simultaneously’ (2006: 24).

Moreover, the introduction of non-linear editing systems — a contemporary editing system that allows access to any particular frame within a digital clip with a click of a finger by the editor — offers new opportunities in the filmmaking process. Celluloid is expensive, moreover cutting it and wasting it means wasted money. With open source editing programs such as AviSynth, access is provided for persons previously restricted by traditional externalities cemented by old editing techniques and programs.

The way in which digital production and post-production techniques provide the facilities to create a certain ‘cinematic realism’ comes down to the aesthetic that shooting on digital creates and the relatively low costs in production. These costs do depend on the kind of camera that is being used, but the point to be made here is that with the introduction of digital video, every filmmaker has access to recording equipment to create an individual aesthetic (McKernan: 2005). Digital video, with its hand-held quality, offers a realism that the beauty of celluloid overlooks. Filmmakers with low budgets to work with can multitask by becoming cameraman, screenwriter, director and editor. The possibilities have indeed been opened up in the form of digital production and post-production for filmmakers to materialise their visions.
The audience reality

It must be noted that access to digital techniques and the ability to make films does not necessarily guarantee an audience, and this supports Bordwell and Staiger's argument that discursive practices that operate in film industries affect the way an image is made and consumed. The expertise and experience of the filmmaker and their reputation in the industry determines whether a film is seen. The politics of film festivals see a biased selection process undermine the democratising nature of the digitisation of film. Dabashi discusses the film festival's obsession with exoticism and nativism, insofar as the inclusion of Iranian films in international film festivals and their appropriate exotic narratives as a societal and politically-charged decision (2001: 245). Thus there is an uneven selection process that promotes methods of exclusion and inclusion. In addition, the costs involved in widespread digital exhibition also hinder the accessibility of digital films to an audience to an extent. Production houses still need to ensure efficiency as business; meaning they need to charge exhibitors similar prices for digital film files (Currah: 2003).

Essentially, digital distribution and exhibition techniques are still saturated by the profit-making business that encapsulates film festivals, production houses and mainstream cinemas. However, the ability to tap into the independent, regional exhibition modes is still underway with the advent of satellite technology. Moreover, what is significant with the emergence of digital media is that traditional modes of distribution have come into question. The internet is the first contender in the fight for distribution change. As written by Lugmayr, ‘The YouTube phenomenon is a very good example: people just grab a digital camcorder, setup a mini home studio and start publishing their material themselves’ (2008: 2). The ability to upload content to the internet provides independent filmmakers with the tools to screen their films without partaking in traditional modes of distribution. However, the ability to screen feature films is fairly limited on digital media sites and this exhibition model is mainly suited to short films, which are a significant part of world cinema industries particularly the Iranian industry.

Persian Dogma: the work of Abbas Kiarostami and what is ‘real’ in Ten

To contextualise Kiarostami’s films it is important to look at the history of the New Wave of Iranian cinema. After the revolution in 1979 Iranian cinema garnered international acclaim. This success has been attributed to the availability of digital cameras and a reformist government who were prepared to embrace cinema as a culture-making medium (Vaziri: 2002). With similarities to Italian Neo-realist cinema of the 1950s, the Iranian New Wave cinema has produced many successful Iranian films. A tag of excellence has
been bestowed on renowned Iranian filmmakers through their inclusion in film festivals around the world, particularly the Cannes and New York Film Festivals. Iranian New Wave directors who have made their mark on the international stage include Abbas Kiarostami, Mohsen Makhmalaf and his daughter Samira, as well as recently jailed Jafar Panahi. Panahi was incarcerated for allegedly making films against last year’s presidential election in Iran. This outlines the heavy censorship laws imparted on Iranian filmmakers and the pressures for filmmakers working within Iran to filter their political views.

Moruzzi comments on the nature of Iranian cinema when she writes ‘Post-Revolutionary Iranian cinema has attracted critical attention abroad while constituting a vibrant focus on cultural, narrative and technical experimentation at home. In the politically restrictive context of the Islamic Republic, film has become one of the key ways that sensitive topics are broached in civil society’ (1999: 52).

As with the Danish Dogma movement that coincided with the emergence of the digital revolution that focused on cultural truth and minimalism by separating itself from traditional Hollywood aesthetic, so too has Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami in his multitude of films (Badley et al: 2006). A shift in the Dogma movement to social realism has in turn mirrored a shift to cinematic realism in Kiarostami’s Iranian cinema. While there are differences between the two aesthetics, most notably the ensemble characteristics and ‘disability as subversion’ techniques in Dogma films, there are some inherent similarities between the two. Risk-taking, ‘Do-It-Yourself’, hand-held filmmaking promoted by the Dogma movement is certainly evident in Kiarostami’s contemporary films.

The 2002 film *Ten* tells the story of a Tehrani woman who picks up ten different passengers in her van. Her passengers range from her young son, her sister to a prostitute she picks up on the street. The film has ten scenes which make up the non-linear narrative and explores themes of love, pain, womanhood and humanity (Hayes: 2002:1). With its improvisational nature, *Ten* explores deep conversations between the untrained actors that Kiarostami employed and the social goings-on in Iran and in turn provides a commentary on contemporary Iranian life.

Kariostami, through his use of digital cameras permanently affixed to both sides of the van, puts forth aspects of non-linear narrative and realism that promote cinematic realism. By taking his directorial presence away from the non-actors they are free to exhibit their emotions on the film shoot, untouched by Kiarostami’s input and subjective stance. This absence in turn is a ‘reduplication of the visual’, with no authorial perspective interrupting
the shoot. Kiarostami had 23 hours of footage to choose from, aided by the digital camera’s large file capacity (Hayes: 2002: 1). This method of filmmaking invites the viewer to enlist themselves personally with the characters. The fact that the digital camera acts as the silent character in the narrative; the omniscient narrator if you like, a new realistic cinema has emerged through this example. In addition, this humanistic look into the lives of women in Iran provides a viewpoint to see into the social issues and discursive practices in real time Iran. A separation from linear techniques and the beauty that celluloid offers aids in the construction of the ‘real’.

In conclusion...

Andre Bazin may have believed that his wish of ‘reality made art’ had come true through the digital cinema aesthetic. The production and post-production techniques borne out of digital technology have given birth to a new wave of filmmaking, with a focus on the ‘real’, under the umbrella of the challenging societal and political issues that encapsulate world cinema today. This article has discussed the way in which the digital image supports this realism. Through its technology make-up, the aesthetic and the filmmakers who choose to use it to complete their vision, in particular Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami. In turn, a new aesthetic of cinematic production has come forth in the narratives in some very important films. Essentially, the filmmaking process has been democratised, however the screening of films still falls with the politics and discursive practices of film industries around the world.

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Virtual Wealth: A New Kind of Property in China

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Abstract

Ancient Greek created the system of barter for trading between the 9th Century B.C. and the 11th Century B.C. Then people began to use gold, silver and copper as a permanent form of money which later dominated traditional business for hundreds of years. In 1023, the very beginning of Chinese Song Dynasty, the first banknote (Jiaozi) was invited. From then on, businessmen do not have to physically carry coins with them anymore.

Nowadays, thanks to credit cards and online banking systems, people can complete their ‘trades’ without the need to exchange cash physically. That is the buyer and seller can complete their transaction through a virtual world with the aid of computers. As we immerse our daily lives further in technologies, program developers have started to offer virtual communities that enable its users to interact in a social context (e.g. online games). As with most social interactions, users often need a form of bargaining tool, this usually comes in the form of ‘money’. Thus, inevitably, virtual currency a new kind of property is created as a result of this new virtual society.

In this digital age, an increasing amount of people are spending their money over the Internet. China, as the biggest developing country of the world, connected to the Internet with western countries at the same time. However, unlike western countries, the Chinese banking system is still growing and is not fully developed to the extent of its western counterparts. This is especially the case in relation to its online banking system and fully catering to its large population of consumers. As a result, companies have invented a number of virtual currencies to overcome these problems. Thus, China becomes the most suitable research subject for my report.

Tencent, China’s largest Internet community, offers a variety of features including: online forums, chat rooms, and QQ Groups, Tencent’s Qzone (which is similar to My Space) has grown into China’s largest personal Internet space. Virtual products such as QQ Show, QQ Pet, and so forth have been successful in providing entertainment and customization options to users. According to Tencent.com (2010), the number of registered QQ instant messenger users has reached 1.057 million as of September 2009. Tencent users can enjoy their virtual life in this community by making friends, playing online games, go to online stores and so on. In addition, users can enjoy a better virtual life by purchasing ‘Q coins’ to become VIP users. As of August 30th 2008, the number of VIP Tencent users reached approximately 35 million (Lee 2009). Meanwhile the huge virtual wealth owned by them is worth more than 734 million RMB (Chinese official currency).
Together with Tencent, Renren.com and Zhengtu Online are two typical cases of virtual wealth in China. What is the relationship between virtual wealth and real money? Whether virtual wealth should be considered as a part of realistic property or not? Will different kinds of virtual money take place of banknotes one day? In addressing these questions, I will discuss the connection between virtual credits and realistic property and probability of that virtual wealth become a new kind of property by searching for relative academic sources and analyzing the specificity of Tencent, Renren.com and Zhengtu Online.

From a specific view, considering virtual money has the same use as real money. I conclude by proposing that at digital age virtual wealth is a new kind of property.

**Keywords:**
VIRTUAL WEALTH • REALISTIC PROPERTY • INTERNET COMMUNITY • ONLINE GAMES • CATEGORY.

### Virtual Wealth and China

Ancient Greek created the system of barter for trading between the 9th Century B.C. and the 11th Century B.C. Then people began to use gold, silver and copper as a permanent form of money which later dominated traditional business for hundreds of years. In 1023, the very beginning of Chinese Song Dynasty, the first banknote (Jiaozi) was invited. From then on, businessmen do not have to physically carry coins with them anymore.

Nowadays, thanks to credit cards and online banking systems, people can complete their ‘trades’ without the need to exchange cash physically. That is the buyer and seller can complete their transaction through a virtual world with the aid of computers. As we immerse our daily lives further in technologies, program developers have started to offer virtual communities that enable its users to interact in a social context (e.g. online games). As with most social interactions, users often need a form of bargaining tool, this usually comes in the form of ‘money’. Thus, inevitably, virtual currency a new kind of property is created as a result of this new virtual society.

Why are the usages of virtual currencies so popular worldwide, especially in China and what resemblance does it have to its real world counterpart, money? I will seek to explain its popularity by looking at the various characteristics of some of the typical virtual communities popular in China (Tencent and Renren.com) and online games (Zhengtu online) which will draw out the underlying relationship between virtual currency and its real world equivalent, money.
Even though the term ‘Wealth’ is commonly understood by everyone, not many people can accurately explain what ‘virtual wealth’ entails. Firstly, what does the word ‘wealth’ mean? Adam Smith described wealth as “the annual produce of the land and labour of the society” (Smith 1776). In our daily life, wealth can be considered as a control of economic value, such as money, real estate and personal property and so forth (Ferguson 2010). In the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2004), wealth can be categorized into three principal categories: personal property, such as houses and automobiles; monetary savings, such as cash and deposits; and capital wealth of income producing assets, including real estate, stocks and bonds. Therefore, by extension of the above concepts, one would logically conclude that ‘virtual wealth’ would refer to the equivalent items in the virtual community. Examples include various currencies adopted in online games, virtual assets and the property in online communities.

In this digital age, an increasing amount of people are spending their money over the internet. China, as the biggest developing country of the world, connected to the Internet with western countries at the same time. However, unlike western countries, the Chinese banking system is still growing and is not fully developed to the extent of its western counterparts. This is especially the case in relation to its online banking system and fully catering to its large population of consumers. For example, an online game player who wants to recharge for his game account through online bank, need to take his identity card and a certification of his salary to the bank, then wait for 24 hours after the net bank service is activated, finally he can start to play his online game. In addition, the recharge process is also complex, users need to first log onto the official website of the game, then go to the bank’s website, after filling in a series of account numbers and PIN numbers, and then go back to the game website again to complete the recharge service. In summary, the whole process is complex and time-consuming. Meanwhile, it is quite inconvenient for teenager players who do not have a certification of salary. Online bank and electronic wallet service cannot meet consumers’ needs. This led to the invention of a variety of virtual currencies by online game companies and commercial website which run virtual communities to solve these problems. Users can get various kinds of online games repaid cards and virtual rechargeable cards in any Internet cafes, post offices, newsstands, supermarkets, any general stores. These cards are similar like prepaid phone cards, consumers do not need to provide any personal information to sellers; just pay for the cards and then log onto the game website, input the rechargeable numbers of cards, then finish the recharge process. The whole process has been streamlined into a simple transaction ensuring ease of access: cash -> repaid cards -> virtual currencies. In China, there are more than 200 million
Internet users who are active in the virtual communities or playing online games which imply the virtual goods market in China is very huge (Lee 2009). After realizing there are more than 200 million potential consumers in this market, commercial websites and online game companies invite their own ‘currencies’ and sell them as products to users. More than 20 kinds of virtual currencies were created until now.

**Tencent, Renren.com and Zhengtu**

Among the commercial websites and online game companies mentioned above, Tencent (Chinese largest Internet community), Renren.com (Chinese largest online community website among universities) and Zhengtu Online (The Top 3 most popular MMORPG online game in China) are the most popular ones. I will seek to explain the dominant characteristics of each and the virtual currency system at use.

Tencent, China’s largest Internet community, operates a variety of communications and information-sharing services, including QQ.com, QQ instant Messenger, QQ Mail and search engine SOSO.com. In addition, it also offers virtual products such as QQ Show, QQ Pet, QQ Game, and QQ Music/Radio/Live which have been successful in providing numerous multimedia entertainment services to users. The number of registered QQ instant messenger users has reached 1.057 million as of September 2009 and PaiPai.com, Tencent’s online shopping centre has become the second largest Internet shopping site in China. Tencent users can enjoy their virtual life in this community by making friends, playing online games, go to online stores and so on. In addition, users can enjoy a better virtual life by purchasing ‘Q coins’ to become VIP users. As of August 30th 2008, the number of VIP Tencent users reached approximately 35 million (Lee 2009). Meanwhile the huge virtual wealth owned by them is worth more than 734 million RMB (Chinese official currency).

Tencent online currency, Q Coins, can be used to purchase virtual goods, which range from the offbeat, such as virtual pets, and virtual clothing, jewelry and cosmetics needed to be customize online-game characters, to the more mundane, such as more storage space, wallpapers, bigger photo albums and ring tones. Q coins are obtained either by purchase on official website, one coin for one RMB (Chinese official currency), or use mobile phones service to complete the trade, or get prepaid cards in general stores. Q coins can be transformed into game coins for QQ games.

Tencent offers a number of online, multiplayer games through its game portal QQ games. These MMOs include Dungeon & Fighter, a side-scrolling online fighting game,
QQ Fantasy, a 2D online game that incorporates elements from Chinese mythology, QQ Pet, a QQ Im-based desktop virtual pet game and so forth. Game players can get virtual objects, such as weapons, clothes and shoes, special objects which can assistant players get a higher level in shorter time and so forth, by paying for Q coins to Tencent.

Meanwhile, Tencent offers a premium membership scheme, which offers features such as QQ mobile, ringtone downloads, and SMS sending/receiving. In addition, Tencent offers ‘Diamond’ level memberships (Figure 1.1). All of these services rely on the virtual currency- Q coins, actually it already play a role as RMB in this virtual Tencent world.

The Renren Network formerly known as Xiaonei Network is a Chinese social networking site with an interface similar to that of Facebook. It is popular among college student in China. According to Xiaonei (Xiaonei Renren 2010), “as of July 2008, Xiaonei was ‘Chinese largest online community website among universities’ with more than 22 million active users and an estimated 40 million users who have registered their real names.” Thus, Xiaonei is widely considered to be the most powerful student social network service in China, especially among university students. In August 2009, Xiaonei officially changed its name to Renren.com.

Like Facebook, Renren has developed functions to edit profile music and background. Users who want to activate these special services need purchase virtual currency of Renren which is known as Xiaonei Bean. Due to some functions charging users fees, Xiaonei bean can also be used to purchase virtual gifts, commence the Purple Bean Service, exchange for game coins and advertise. One RMB yuan is equivalent to one Xiaonei bean.

Zhengtu is a MMORPG (Massive Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game) online games developed and run by Shanghai Zhengtu Networks. The game is one of the most popular online games in China as of May 2008 by peak concurrent users, with a peak count of approximately 2,000,000 (Koo 2007). The game background is set during historical Chunqiu period (around 300 B.C.) that China is still made of seven different kingdoms, not a unitive country at that time. Every player can be a hero, the king of a specific kingdom, or even the emperor of the whole country. The algorithm of Zhengtu is quite simple: (1) Power means you have a bigger stick than others; (2) Final victory belongs to the most powerful player. However, it is absolutely impossible for player to get best weapons and equipments by completing ordinary tasks. To purchase Zhengtu coins is the only way to be the most powerful player. Just like Q coins and Xiaonei Bean, one Zhengtu coin values one RMB. Players pay for the ‘Magic Keys’ by Zhengtu coins, then use these keys to open
'Magic Treasure Boxes'. Players might get what they desire when they open the first box, however, they may get nothing after opening hundreds of boxes. By this kind of cunning promotion, Zhengtu Networks earned as much as 300 million RMB at the first month after it published (Koo 2007).

As I mentioned above, the virtual currency market in China has more than 2 million customers, as much as 6.54 billion RMB. The huge business opportunities attract more and more people start their virtual business in virtual world. Compare with general players, they are professional. They open a kind of company named assistant company online. Unlike common players, they don't pursue levels and equipments; the product of their company is themselves. When their game characters get the top level, this game account becomes a new product. Other player can purchase powerful or unique weapons and equipments from this kind of company. These assistant companies even offer a kind of service known as 'Agency Service' which means they can play the game as the consumer's agent. Profits come in two main ways: (1) these companies earn virtual coins in the game and then sell them to other players who need game coins. (2) Consumers who prefer ‘Agency Service’ or buy a game account can complete the trade through C2C online shopping platforms. In such two ways, sellers turn virtual products into realistic money.

Some people usually get profits from the investments in stocks and foreign currencies. From this perspective, it is easy for us to understand that people get profits from investments in virtual currencies. Q coins, for example, as same as the changeable conditions on securities market, the exchange rate between Q coins and RMB is changing all the time. It provides a business opportunity for people to purchase Q coins at a low point and then sell them at a high point. In this way, investors can profit from the price differential. Numerous investors successfully turn virtual currencies into their gold mine through different Internet shopping platforms.

**Virtual Currency and Realistic Money**

From a commonsense point of view, money is generally defined as payment for goods, services and repayment of debts. In any case, ‘Money always signifies a Chartal means of payment. Every means of payment we call money.’(Knapp 1924) The main functions of money are distinguished as: (1) medium of exchange, (2) unit of account, (3) store of value. To some extent, the main functions of virtual currencies, such as Q coins, Xiaonei Bean, are similar to realistic money.

As I mentioned above, a variety of online products and services are priced by virtual
currencies. To a certain degree, these virtual currencies play the role of ‘medium of exchange’. Take Tencent for example, a consumer who wants to buy a new QQ show named ‘Wonderful Boy’ below (Figure 1.1), needs to spend 10 Q coins on the necklace, 25 Q coins on the hairstyle, 38 Q coins on the T-shirt and so forth. During trades like this, virtual currencies can be understood in terms of the barter exchange of online goods and services, and their cooperation in production.

In addition, people can purchase goods not only on Tencent shopping platform, but also can pay for other online services which runs by other network companies by Q coins. Some moderators of middle or small online forums even get paid by Q coins instead of RMB. Though the exchange rate between RMB and virtual currencies is changeable, to some extent, it is relatively steady during a certain period. It is easy and convenient for people to invest in virtual currency products through numerous online shopping platforms. Some commercial websites, such as Taobao.com, Ebay.com and Paipai.com, even open the virtual currency prefecture on their web. These virtual currencies can keep their value as long as the companies which create them are operating with successful performance. From this perspective, virtual currencies can be considered as ‘store of value’. To some extent, people even prefer virtual currencies to real money because virtual currencies can help them save money and time. For example, person A wants to transform 10,000 RMB to person B, the whole process will take 24-48 hours from person A’s Industrial and Commercial Bank account to person B’s China Construction Bank account. In contrast, if person A wants to transform 10,000 Q coins to person B, they can finish the trade in 5 seconds. In addition, both person A and B do not need to pay for any fees or commission.

With the rapid development of online communities and games, virtual currencies become an indispensable part of many Chinese online lives. After it was proved that virtual currencies can play a similar role as RMB in virtual space, numerous social problems followed. Lawless persons begin to participate in illegal online gambling, money laundering, online prostitution and so forth under the cover of virtual currencies trades. However, it is nearly impossible to bring them to justice because of the technical problem.

**Conclusion**

In summary, virtual currencies, such as Q coins, Xiaonei Bean, Zhengtu coins and so forth, play a similar role as real money in the virtual world, to some extent, they work as a barter product in reality, too. What will happen in the future is always beyond people’s imagination. From my point of view, in the near future, the current concept of what
constitutes ‘currencies’, will be challenged, as our society undergoes further technological advances, it will be a matter of time before our current understanding of ‘currency’ will be replaced with a new concept that may include ‘virtual currencies’.

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Generation *Me* or Generation *We*? Social Media Technologies, Narcissism and Online Interaction

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**Keywords**
SOCIAL MEDIA DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY NARCISSISM FACEBOOK

**Abstract**
In recent years social media technologies such as Twitter, Facebook and MySpace have become a ubiquitous part of our every day. Hours are spent each week by millions of people worldwide maintaining their online presence, uploading photos and posting comments informing their social contacts of the minutiae of their daily life.
This article will focus on our interaction with online media, and the trait narcissism that some writers and critics have perceived therein. People with narcissistic tendencies certainly thrive in social media platforms, but the widespread enthusiasm with which these platforms have been adopted has led some researchers to believe that this propensity for self-promotion is a cultural phenomenon, bred and encouraged by our interaction with social media.

This article will incorporate recent research on narcissism in social media to explore how we interact with these platforms and, in turn, with the social contacts that make up our virtual communities. I will suggest that the act of self-promotion through sites like Facebook and Twitter is social rather than antisocial, constituting a new form of interaction and community-building.

**Consumer as creator – the significance of “You”**

Social media platforms in the 21st century are much more than a tool or technology; rather, they are a cultural phenomenon. Maintaining an online “presence” constitutes an important part of modern life, with internet users embracing digital social media in its various available incarnations. *Time* magazine recognised this trend in December 2006 when it awarded its annual Person of the Year title – an accolade previously given to such notable figures as Rudy Giuliani and Bill Clinton – to ‘You’, ie. the collective of contributors to user-generated websites such as Wikipedia, YouTube, MySpace and Facebook (Grossman 2006). Similarly, *Business 2.0* named “You – the consumer as creator” at the top of their list of 50 [People] Who Matter Now in July 2006 (Business 2.0, 2006). The titles *You*Tube and *My*Space say it all – the personal pronoun is key. For some critics, this heralds a new-found self-centredness and tendency toward self-promotion. ‘What’s happening here?’ asks Yoni Ryan in a University of Canberra study on narcissism in the 21st century student. ‘Has Gen Y turned into a tribe of narcissists intent only on becoming celebrities in their own circles?’ (Ryan 2007). Or is there in fact a deeper need that is being fed by digital social media – the need for community and social interaction, which is now able to be filled in new and exciting ways?

**The Rise and Rise of Social Media**

The past ten years in particular have seen a huge increase in both the types of social media platforms available and the number of users that have adopted them. The earliest incarnations of online social networks were the Bulletin Board Systems (BSS) of the 1980s, which allowed their users to swap software, play games, post bulletins to a wide network of contacts or private messages to select users. One of the most notable BSS was the WELL (Whole Earth ‘Lectronic Link), which was started in 1985 and moved online in
the mid-1990s to become arguably the first virtual community – or, in its own words, the ‘primordial ooze where the online community movement was born’. The 1990s also saw the emergence of niche social networking sites such as Classmates.com, through which users could reconnect with other members of their high school and graduating year; and Epinions, where users exchanged feedback on consumer goods (Rosen 2007). Friendster appeared on the scene in 2002 and its ‘Circle of Friends’ model of social networking, by which users connect with friends and acquaintances rather than anonymous forum members, was met with instant success (Rosen 2007). 2003 saw the launch of MySpace. Originally a vehicle for musicians to promote their work, MySpace grew to become a dominant site in the online world of social networking. In 2004 Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg and several fellow college students launched Facebook to allow university students in the United States to connect and interact. The site gradually expanded to allow anyone around the world above the age of thirteen to register as a user (Antonas 2009). In 2007 there emerged the earliest incarnations of what we now know as Twitter, a platform based on the belief that “one could change the world with 140 characters” (Sagolla 2009).

The rate of uptake of social networking sites has been exponential, especially in the last two or three years. According to Stan Schroeder, blogger for social media guide Mashable, 2009 was the year of social media. Figures from April 2009 show that Facebook grew from 100 million to 200 million users worldwide in less than eight months. ‘If [Facebook] were a country, it would be bigger than Brazil,’ writes Schroeder (2009). Traffic grew 314% in Europe between February 2008 and February 2009, with a growth of 2,721% in Italy alone. MySpace now lags behind Facebook in terms of its unique monthly visitors (54.1 million as opposed to Facebook’s 65.7 million recorded in April 2009) but continues to remain strong. Twitter, the newest contender, grew 76.8% between February and March 2009 – which amounts to an astounding yearly growth rate of 1382% if this growth is sustained. Neilsen Online states that social networking is now more popular than email, with research showing that 66.8% of Internet users have used social networks, whereas 65.1% have used email (Schroeder 2009). Qualman (2009) forecasts that, in 2010, 96% of Generation Y – generally speaking, those born from the 1980s to the early 2000s – will have joined a social network.

**Generation I and the new sociability**

The ease and speed at which social networking websites have been adopted by users is indeed staggering. Every day, millions of people around the world are logging into their

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Facebook, MySpace and Twitter accounts and making their online presence felt by informing other users of what they are doing, or interacting with their online social contacts through posted or private messages. This phenomenon has led numerous researchers, analysts and writers to ask what our enthusiasm for social media sites has to say about us and the way we interact with others. Why are we using the vast opportunities provided to us by internet technology, to spend up to hours every week maintaining an online ‘image’, uploading photographs of ourselves and of things we’ve done, informing members of our internet social networks what we are doing at any moment of the day? When did our mode of social interaction become so calculated, and so public?

In her article ‘Facebook takes narcissism to new level’, Rachel Gaynes coins the term *Generation I* for what she describes as ‘the slightly self-absorbed generation at the forefront of the social media movement’ (2009). A key characteristic of Generation I is, according to Gaynes, a ‘blatant egocentricity… that has enabled Facebook to flourish’ – a new understanding of being social, in which the distinction between public and private information is unclear. ‘Young people have accepted that sharing private information about themselves is simply a part of having friends,’ writes Gaynes. Raised on a culture that worships celebrity and status, members of Generation I put their lives online for all to see. Photographs are carefully selected to represent their subjects in a particular (often most flattering) light, and profile information is self-aware and carefully edited. The link between narcissistic behaviour and social media has also been identified by Christine Rosen in her article ‘Virtual Friendship and the New Narcissism’. Rosen draws parallels between profiles on social media websites and the tradition of painted portraits in the pre-photography era. Portraits were an interesting insight into the lives of their subjects, hinting at their attitudes, ambitions and social standing. Self-portraits in particular demonstrated both how their subjects wanted to be represented, and how they saw themselves. ‘Today,’ writes Rosen, ‘our self-portraits are democratic and digital; they are crafted from pixels rather than paints… Like painters, constantly retouching their work, we alter, update, and tweak our online self-portraits. Vital statistics, glimpses of bare flesh, lists of favourite bands and favourite poems all clamour for our attention – and it is the timeless human desire for attention that emerges as the dominant theme of these vast virtual galleries’ (Rosen 2007).

**Look at Me!**

This desire for attention, which for Rosen is the presiding feature of social networking sites such as Twitter, MySpace and Facebook, stems from these sites’ organisation around
the *person* rather than the shared interest or the community per se. Focus is placed on the individual profile of the user, with its photographs, listed hobbies and interests, rather than the virtual neighbourhood or community (Rosen 2007). These profiles allow a certain degree of identity creation and play, allowing users to present what Rosen describes as ‘quixotic and ever-changing versions of ourselves for others to enjoy’ (2007). Self-exposure is key, and this “self” can be, in the tradition of painted portraits, how we view ourselves and how we desire to be viewed by others. Dr Tara J Palmatier, on the blog *Shrink4Men*, describes sites like MySpace and Facebook as places where “individuals create their own public-relations-spin-control-propaganda-I-am-the-centre-of-the-universe profiles and networks” (Palmatier 2010).

For this reason, a predilection for social media technology use is sometimes attributed to narcissistic tendencies. ‘I confess my eyes light up when I see a new blog comment or receive a new email, tweet, or Facebook message… I get giddy when someone thanks me, or asks a question that I can answer,’ write Ari Herzog in a blog entry entitled ‘Does Twitter Breed Narcissism?’ (2010). It would appear that user-generated media are encouraging and perhaps even breeding a culture of trait narcissism; not the clinical psychological disorder, but rather a personality trait characterised by vanity, self-promotion and shallow relationships. ‘On Facebook, when you are not posting photographs of yourself and updating people on your activities, you are writing notes listing twenty things nobody knows about you, linking people to analyses of your personality, or alerting them to your recent personal and group affiliations. Most of this is unasked for by others,’ writes Katja Grace on, ironically enough, her personal blog *Meteuphoric* (2010). Do our (re)actions when using social media, as Herzog muses, indeed make us narcissistic?

According to a key 2008 study by the University of Georgia’s Laura E. Buffardi and W. Keith Campbell, the answer is ‘no’. Buffardi and Campbell studied the perceived levels of trait narcissism in the Facebook profiles of a sample of undergraduate university students. The results of the study reveal that apparently narcissistic behaviour expressed on online social networks corresponded with participants’ behaviour in real life; that is, a person’s perceived level of narcissism online was no greater than their perceived level of narcissism in real life. It appears that online social networks in fact offer an outlet for people with trait narcissism to self-promote; average users, on the other hand, displayed a low level of the trait narcissism that corresponded with the parameters established by Buffardi and Campbell (2008).
The Need to Network

Buffardi and Campbell’s research suggests that it is not, as suggested by Rosen, human beings’ desire for attention that motivates them to engage with media technologies, but the deeper need for social interaction. In an article entitled ‘Facebook: Where Narcissists Connect?’ author Ki Mae Heussner gives the example of a recent university graduate named Bradley whose online ‘presence’ appears initially to be an exercise in social media narcissism. The owner of three blogs, one Youtube channel, one Twitter account, several personal websites and a Facebook account featuring over 2000 ‘friends’, thousands of wall posts and numerous homemade videos, Bradley prefers to call himself a ‘social media evangelist’ (Heussner 2008). He reports that he uses numerous social networking sites to meet and interact with like-minded people. His desire to connect with other people is the main driver in his online activity. Looking at social media technologies as an extension of the intrinsic human need to belong to a community provides a more satisfactory argument than Rosen’s ‘desire for attention’ theory. Certainly, there is a large element of self-promotion in sites like Facebook. In order to complete one’s profile page, users upload personal information that best represents them, including a profile photograph that appears as a main feature on their page and as an icon on the page of any network member with whom they interact. A cursory glance at the profile photographs of any Facebook user’s online network reveals a series of self-aware and deliberate portraits.

‘I think the nature of Facebook is such that people do things to promote themselves,’ observes Mark Leary, psychologist at Duke University. ‘It’s a self-presentational vehicle... We expect ads to be self-promoting. Now the rules of advertising apply to ordinary human beings.’ (Phillips 2008). How we present ourselves has always been a vital part of human interaction. Social theorists have long maintained the theory that people define themselves through messages they send to others. ‘They manipulate and manage appearances and thereby create and sustain a self-identity,’ notes Leary (Phillips 2008). A high level of activity on social networking sites is not an isolated act of narcissism and self-promotion; it is an extension of the human need to belong to a wider group. Having control over how one presents oneself to this group gives a greater feeling of belonging.

‘We humans are a complex blend of private and social selves and the textured interconnections offered by social media provide a compelling platform on which we can express these multiple personalities,’ observes David Phillips (2008). Social media technologies are neither creating a generation of self-absorbed narcissists, but rather providing a new avenue for the fulfilment of an innate human desire for bonding and
interaction.

Further demonstrating the idea that social media are an extension of our current social practices, a recent study found that there is much less inter-cultural interaction on social networking sites than previously thought. It appears that users bring their offline modes of interaction – and, in turn, their prejudices – online with them. Social networking sites cannot be seen as a race-less, culture-less medium, as use of these sites is very much tied to one’s culture – the Institute for Policy Research at Illinois’ Northwestern University reports that, after surveying 1000 undergraduates, Caucasian students were more likely to favour Facebook, whereas Hispanics tended toward using MySpace and Asian students preferred Friendster or Xanga. Although by no means comprehensive and with a limited sample size, this study does suggest that the same barriers to equality and egalitarianism are found online as offline. This contributes to the theory that, as Eszter Hargittai of the Institute for Policy Research notes, ‘online actions and interactions should not be viewed as independent of one’s offline identity’ (LiveScience 2010).

Conclusion

Social media technologies offer their vast number of users numerous possibilities for self-promotion, and a mediated environment through which they can control the way they are seen by others in the online community. These media have been taken up by millions of individuals worldwide with both speed and enthusiasm, leading many researchers and writers to wonder where this desire for self-promotion and interconnectedness arose from. Rather than heralding a new type of self-presentation and interaction, social media technologies can be seen as an extension of a long tradition of community and the innate human need for belonging to a social group.

References


