

Report On Digital Disruption and Circulation Patterns of Times of India

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Abstract- The evolution of the digital era has been the most significant transformation the newspaper industry has undergone over the past two decades. Printed newspapers were once the most popular means for obtaining news and current events. People relied on their local daily newspaper to get up to date information about politics, local businesses, sports, entertainment, and social issues. But with the advances of the internet, smart phones, and social media, the way people receive news has drastically changed and continues to change into the future. Instead of waiting for the delivery of a printed newspaper each day, people can now find out about all the news instantly through the use of internet web sites, mobile phone apps, and via social media sites. This transformation from traditional print media to digital platforms is commonly referred to as digital disruption.

This research paper examines how The Times of India - one of India's oldest and largest English language newspapers has changed throughout its history. Traditionally, the number of daily copies that newspapers such as The Times of India sell determines their circulation. Higher circulation equates to greater popularity among readers, leading to more advertising revenue for the newspaper. The growth of digital media has changed the way newspapers measure their circulation; newspapers are now tracking their readership using a combination of traditional methods and new digital means (i.e., website visitors, app users, etc.) in addition to print copies.

The goal of this research study was to gain an understanding of how digital disruption has affected circulation trends of The Times of India and how this newspaper has adjusted to the transformation of the way people consume media. The study is focused on the transition from print to digital newspapers, and how The Times of India has built its digital footprint through a variety of online news sources, mobile applications, e-papers and social networks. Digital media have allowed The Times of India to quickly provide its readers with the latest news and expand its audience base beyond the borders of India, to readers around the world. The results of this research show that the newspaper industry has changed nearly completely

from a business model based upon print advertising and subscription to one that is primarily based on digital advertising, branded content, and mostly online reading. The research results show that it is essential that all media companies develop an overall revenue strategy that incorporates all of these revenue sources so that they are financially viable in today's very competitive marketplace.

The data used in this research are qualitative in nature and use multiple secondary data sources (academic literature, media articles, prior research on digital journalism); therefore, the conclusions are drawn from a number of sources. The results of this focus group reveal that while print newspapers remain a reputable and trusted source of information, publishers must now find ways to integrate digital technology into the delivery of newspapers to reach a large audience.

One example of a Legacy Media Company that has adopted to the new technologies is The Times of India and how it is changing its business practices in response to the current environment."

***Index-Terms:* Digital Transformation, Print Media, Digital Advertising, Branded Content, Online News Consumption, Media Business Model, Revenue Strategies, Digital Journalism, Media Industry Adaptation, The Times of India.**

I. INTRODUCTION

In many cases, newspapers have been very significant in forming and shaping the public's point of view, providing information and educating and raising awareness among the general population over the course of the past several decades. Printed newspapers were among the first and foremost reliable and widely read sources of news prior to the emergence of digital technology. People had a great deal of faith in the printed news media for obtaining up-to-date information regarding what was taking place in their community, in their country and elsewhere around the world. For many families, reading the morning newspaper, as part of their everyday routine, was connected with a feeling of being informed. The newspapers produced in this manner were also considered a credible source of information, as well as a credible source of clarification and support for public discussion about public, local and legal matters.

India's print media literacy has a long history beginning with the colonial period. Among the various publications that have shaped journalism in the country, The Times of India is perhaps the most prominent of all. The Times of India first published in 1838, it is one of the oldest daily general interests (English-language) newspapers in the country, having established a firm reputation over the years. In the past, the Times of India distributed the majority of its papers in the traditional broadsheet format using newsprint through a network of vendors located within each of India's major urban centers and substantial portions of its metropolitan regions. Publishers typically evaluate newspapers on a number of metrics, the most common of which is circulation, or the total number of hard copies of the publication sold by its publisher (publisher circulation).

In addition to indicating how popular and successful the publication is, the total number of copies a publisher sells each day (circulation) will also attract those organizations who are interested in advertising to large numbers of people.

The emergence of digital technology throughout the 21st century has radically changed how the media operates. The Internet, cell phones (smartphones included), and various types of social media sites have drastically changed how we consume and receive news on a daily basis. The immediacy afforded via online sites, apps on your mobile device, and feeds on social media have all contributed to more individuals preferring to read their news online; rather than waiting for physical delivery via the postal service. As a result of this change in consumer habits, many countries around the world now face challenges and opportunities for traditional print newspaper companies.

Digital disruption (or disruptions in journalism) refers to the transformation of traditional formats and delivery methods for providing information via the use of new digital technologies.

As it pertains to newspapers and how they relate to journalism, as digital disruption occurs, newspapers must change the way they distribute and engage their audiences and generate revenue from their content; consequently, many newspapers have increased their reliance upon digital platforms to maintain competitiveness and relevance in this evolving epoch of media. A prime illustration of how longstanding media sources, like *The Times of India*, are transitioning to match the rapidly changing world of technology is that they have always had only one outlet — providing an all-news manual in print form. Therefore, they have created additional means for spreading information, such as a website, mobile app, electronic edition, and presence on social media; each representing a way for *The Times of India* to communicate with readers quickly, connect to new and potentially vast numbers of consumers through their news coverage and interact directly with their readership base through topic-based comment sections and by sharing other items via social networking platforms.

This transition from print to digital and user-generated content has shifted and redefined current practices associated with journalism and circulation. Until recently, journalists primarily measured a paper's total reach by counting how many copies were physically sold; now that they produce multiple formats of their publication, online presence dramatically affects how they measure their overall reach. Increased use of the Internet, through website visits, user clicks, visitation of a mobile application, and participation on social media, has created another way for newspapers to measure their circulation and audience reach. Because of this change, the digital method of delivering news is now a fundamental aspect of how newspapers connect with their users.

Over the last several years, digital disruption has affected newspapers in a major way. The way the newspaper industry has made its money has been transformed forever. For most of the history of newspapers, print advertising and subscription readership have generated the majority of revenue for the industry.

Due to the rapid growth of digital media, the sources of revenue for newspapers have been gradually shifting away from traditional methods for revenue generation. Many newspapers are now placing more emphasis on alternative revenue-generating options, including digital advertising, web-based promotions, and sponsored content, to supplement traditional forms of

revenue generation.

Due to the evolution of the current media environment, a growing number of newspaper companies are taking advantage of new technologies and increasing their distribution platforms in order to increase their overall audience base. Newspapers will also continue their commitment to high-quality journalism and trustworthy news reporting while utilizing these methods as an essential source of financial support in the quickly evolving media marketplace.

The goal of this study is to find out and document what is happening with the Times of India (TOI) while it changes from a traditional large format newspaper to a much more modern and digital source of news. Specifically, this study will track the digital disruption happening to the TOI, and its effect on TOI's circulation pattern, TOI's readership trends and TOI's overall media strategy. This research/case study will also provide insight into the larger trends occurring globally, in the industry.

The introductory portion of this research will highlight how technology has changed both journalism and how people consume media, and that the TOI case study will illustrate how successfully printed newspapers have moved to digital technology and continue to reach their audience for distributing news and engaging citizens.

Transformation from Broadsheet to Browser

Since the early 21st century, the newspaper business has changed dramatically due to advances in technology throughout the digital era. Historically, almost all newspapers were printed on large sheets of paper called "broadsheets," delivered to subscribers' homes every day. Many people read the printed version of their local newspaper as part of their routine; it was their principal source for credible and accurate news reporting. Until recently, when the internet became widely available and fast enough to be a serious contender for news gathering, newspapers provided readers with detailed coverage of things like national and global politics, business news, sports news, and entertainment news. Newspapers have traditionally determined their sales/equipment by calculating how many copies of each day's edition were sold.

In a world that has seen a rapid increase in internet traffic, mobile devices and other types of digital media, news consumers are dramatically changing how they receive their daily news. In addition, consumers have transitioned away from reading the traditional printed version of a daily newspaper to largely reading their news through different types of websites (including social media), mobile applications (mobile apps) and other digital news platforms. This transition from print-only forms of newspapers to digital news platforms is known as a transition from broadsheets (traditional printed newspapers) to browsers (online media).

As a result of the growing need for newspapers to adapt to these types of changes, the majority of newspapers around the world have created versions of their product for digital consumption. For instance, The Times of India has developed a stellar digital footprint through their own website, e-paper version and mobile applications. In addition, readers today are able to access the news at any time and from any location on a smartphone or computer using the different digital versions of a newspaper. Unlike only being able to access a copy of the traditional print daily edition of a

newspaper once per day, the digital versions of daily newspapers allow for immediate access to content as it is generated by the newsrooms of the newspapers.

The increase in the use of multimedia content plays a significant role in the transformation of the news industry. News can now include videos, photographs, audio recordings and could be delivered through interactive graphics, in addition to the traditional printed text. This multimedia approach makes delivering news much more interesting and easier for readers. Multimedia also attracts a younger reader who prefers using digital devices to access their news. Readers can also share news content through social media, extending the newspaper's audience and reach.

For many individuals in publishing, this transformation is a positive one, yet at the same time offers many problems to the traditional print media. Losing readers of the printed newspaper has led to a significant decrease in revenue received from printed advertisements and newspaper subscriptions, resulting in a lot of newspapers re-directing their efforts towards digital advertising, online subscriptions, and various forms of online marketing practices to remain viable in a fast-changing marketplace.

As evidenced by The Times of India, while printed newspapers will continue to exist with an established readership base, digital media's role as a component of a comprehensive approach to the development of journalists is now firmly established in the newly emerging landscape of the newspaper industry.



IMAGE 1: ESTABLISHING IDENTITY



IMAGE 2: STRUCTURING CONTENT



IMAGE 3: NAVIGATING THE NARRATIVE



IMAGE 4: VISUALIZING DATA

II.LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Digital Transformation in Print Media

The impact of digital technology on newspapers is an area of great interest for researchers around the world. Historically, newspapers were primarily used to keep up with the latest events; readers would have to wait until after the next day's edition came out before they would have any idea what had happened. The growth of digital technology has significantly altered this traditional model of news dissemination. Nowadays, people receive their news instantly through various forms of media such as websites and mobile applications, as well as through social networking sites.

Research examining how the media has been transformed also indicates that newspapers had to transition into using digital platforms if they wanted to remain competitive in today's media landscape. Digitization of journalism provides real-time updates on developing stories, as well as broader distribution than was possible with printed editions, and allows for more direct interaction between journalists and readers. Today, rather than publishing only one print edition each morning, many newspapers will publish articles online consistently throughout the day. As a result, many traditional print newspaper companies are now making larger investments in developing their digital technology capabilities and creating more multimedia content for their websites.

2.2 Changing Circulation Patterns in Newspapers

Researchers have noted that the way we view newspaper circulation has changed during the Digital Age. In the past, circulation was simply determined by counting the daily number of printed copies sold. Higher circulation meant that there were higher numbers of people reading the newspaper and advertisers would feel more confident about placing their advertisements in the newspaper.

Now, in an age dominated by the internet, newspapers have a much broader way in which to determine their reach through online measures such as site traffic, app downloads, online subscriptions and social media activity. As such, a newspaper can reach millions of readers online, but for example a newspaper printed circulation might not be growing at the same level. Different studies show that digital readership continues to increase rapidly, especially among younger people who prefer to read news on their mobile phone or laptop devices.

2.3 Digital Journalism and Audience Engagement

Many researchers also study how the advent of digital journalism has altered the interaction between print newspaper publications and their readers. Prior to Digital Media, there was mostly a one-sided interaction between print newspapers and their consumers; that is, after journalists published content that they had written and fact-checked, readers would read said content and, for the most part, not respond for an extended period of time - if they even chose to respond at all.

With the growth of Digital Journalism, the relationship between print newspapers and their consumers has improved significantly. Readers can now comment on the articles they read online,

share the articles they enjoy with their friends via social media, and become actively involved in discussions about the articles they read. Through this improved interaction, print newspapers can better serve the needs of their consumers by providing more of the types of topics in their publication that will generate the most interest among their consumer base. Digital Journalism also provides print newspapers with the ability to incorporate multi-media elements (like videos, photographs, and infographics) into their articles thus making those articles much more interesting to consume and easier to comprehend. Digital Journalism is a fundamental component of current news communications worldwide.

2.4 Media Business Models in the Digital Age

The transition of newspapers from print to digital has also changed the way they make money. Previously, most revenue came from print ads and subscriptions. Classified ads (advertising items for sale), job advertisements, and property listing ads made up a bulk of their income.

These types of advertisements have now mostly moved to internet-based platforms, such as job websites, real estate listing websites, and Facebook, which have lessened the significance of newspaper classified ad revenue to newspapers. They have responded to this change by looking for new means to generate revenue (digital advertisements, sponsored content, digital subscriptions, and brand partnerships) through the modern media business model.

2.5 Role of Online Platforms in News Distribution

News dissemination has increasingly become reliant on online platforms. Nowadays, newspapers can access and communicate with their audience through websites, mobile applications, and various other social platforms. The nature of online platforms offers news organizations the capability to immediately publish and distribute news updates to many individuals around the world.

Social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter are frequently used to distribute a news article and direct readers to the main website of the newspaper. As a result of this process many newspapers now have a much larger global distribution since individuals in countries around the world can view news stories online without the requirement of receiving a physical copy of the paper.

2.6 Challenges of Digital News Media

Researchers report that digital media has created many opportunities for newspapers but also presents new challenges. One specific challenge is that misinformation or "fake news" can spread rapidly through online media due to the fast-paced nature of the Internet. Along with this issue is the high level of competition between established newspapers and digital-only news organizations, where many of the digital-only sites have significantly lower operating costs and produce content more quickly. Additionally, there is increasing pressure on traditional newspapers to produce their

content at a faster pace, while at the same time maintaining the high standards for accuracy and credibility that have been established by their predecessors.

Despite this growing competition and the problem of fake news, there have been many studies conducted that indicate that newspapers that successfully blend digital innovation with traditional values of journalism will continue to be accepted as relevant, credible sources of news and information in our society.



III.CONCLUSION

Historically, the primary measure of a newspaper's success was based on how many copies were distributed on a daily basis. This metric referred to as 'circulation' would indicate the total readership for each paper (and therefore would help entice advertisers). Circulation had been the primary measurement of a newspaper's popularity and reach for decades; however, with the increase of digital media and online options to obtain news, measuring circulation has undergone a fundamental shift.

In addition to printing and distributing printed copies of newspapers, most news organizations now publish their newspapers online via their websites, mobile app (apps) and/or social media channels. As a result of these changes, circulation now includes many different types of measurements in the digital age. Instead of just counting how many total printed newspapers were sold (circulation), media companies also use digital metrics to analyze how users are engaging with the digital delivery of their news (e.g., impressions, page views, unique visitors, clicks, etc.).

Website traffic is one of the major metrics of digital circulation. It represents the number of people who visit a newspaper's website to view news articles. Generally speaking, a greater number of

visitors indicates that a news organization has access to a larger pool of customers than if they had fewer visitors. A second metric that is very important to media companies is the number of unique users. This statistic allows media companies to assess how many different individuals access their content, rather than simply counting how many times an individual returns to access a given piece of content.

Digital news consumption has increased via mobile applications as well. The number of mobile newspaper apps available to users for receiving instant updates from their favorite newspapers provides an additional metric of digital access to news by consumers. Media companies also measure reader engagement with direct article time spent by the reader opening the article for a longer length of time versus a short length of time.

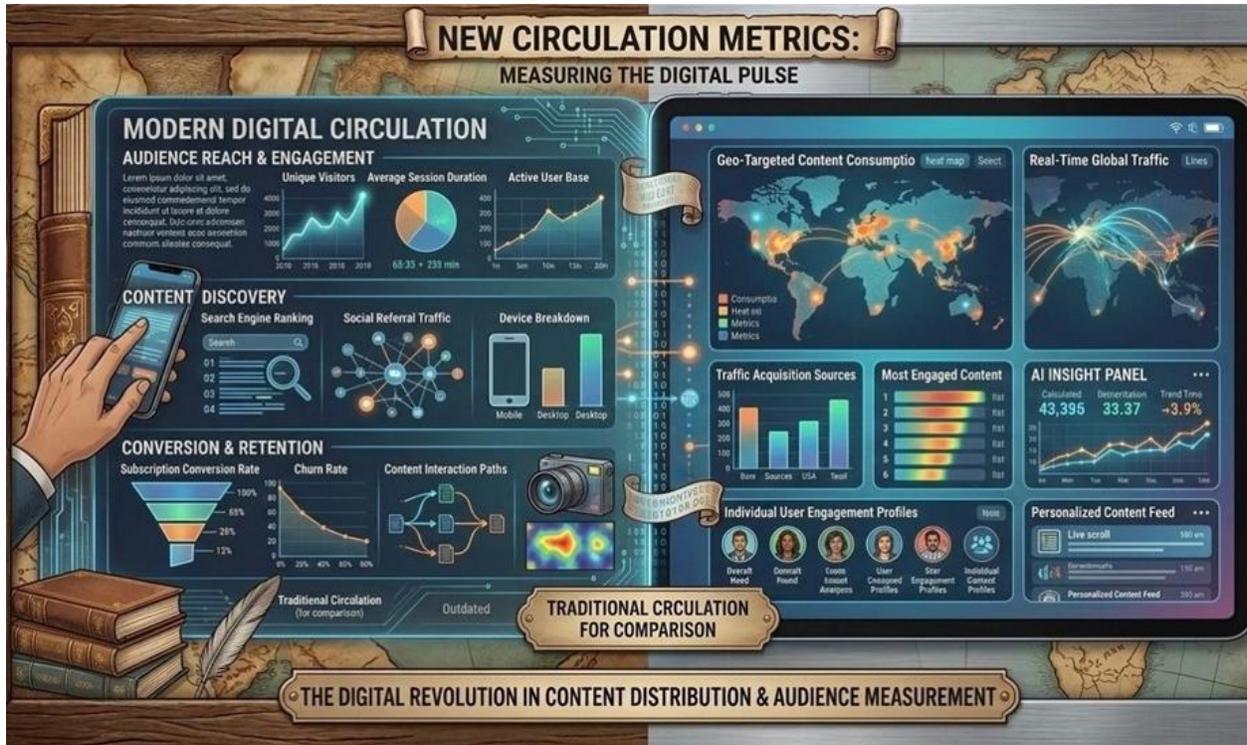
Interacting with social media has now become one of the most important means to assess a person's ability to engage with digital content. When a person interacts with a news site by liking, commenting on, or sharing an article (on social media), this causes the overall reach of the news article to expand and allows it to be connected to more people, and thus connect those people to the article faster than anything else and allows publishers to see what news stories/topics interest their audience so they can create content that is more relevant for those readers.

With digital circulation metrics, there is far more information available, in regard to the level of engagement with a digital publication than has ever been possible to obtain from traditional print publications, allowing digital media companies to have much more access to their readership (as compared to traditional) than they did in the past. Examples include having access to not only the demographics of individual readers but also the topics that they are interested in, their level of engagement with the articles they read (how many times they access the title of an article), etc. With access to such detailed and extensive information, digital media companies can develop improved content strategies based on the desires of their audiences; therefore, Journalism in a digital world has evolved into a system of creating a product whereby the audience determines what to produce. Through their digital channels (website, mobile app and social media), the Times of India (TOI) has hugely expanded the number of people who access its overall content. At least millions have been reached, both in India and around the world. While printed copies of the paper remain significant, TOI uses digital formats to determine total CIRC and total impact in a similar manner to that of printed copies.

In summary, TOI's digital growth is changing how newspapers assess readership and measure success. Prior to the digital age, newspapers only counted sold printed copies toward their total circulation; however, now that all types of engagement (including online) can be counted toward total CIRC and total impact across the board, the media industry is in the midst of similar transitions from traditional print media to all forms of digital media.

The transformation of birch-like commercial and publishing mediums into browsable games or applications is representative of the evolution in circulation and audience interactivity, with new metrics – such as unique user hits through click tracking, application download counts, etc. – enabling a better understanding of current reading habits. In summary, it is reasonable to look toward an improved future of journalism by marrying long-held values of reliability among print

publications with advanced technology and electronic mediums. Therefore, those print publications that react effectively and adapt well to the emerging trends will have a much better chance of remaining relevant and performing their role within a constantly evolving media landscape.



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