The Future of Online News Business:
Online news executive level and managerial level' perspective

ABSTRACT

This paper uses qualitative interviews with senior editors, managers and executive from online news businesses in Thailand. The article examines the inclination of online news organization and future of online news business. The results show that, news content of online news is the first thing that respondents are mentions. Most of the respondents (30) are attempt to develop the news content such as format of news by writing the clearly and easily format. The executive of online news predict the media convergence of online news that online news should be develops multimedia content base on texts, photographs, videos, and audios for attractive the audiences. Online news business depend on the devices for operate the newsroom. So the executive try to select the advance equipment and suitable for their organization. Moreover, they need the vision of executive and organization management in order to operate the business.

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KEYWORDS

Online News	News	New Media
Future		Business

PREAMBLE

Media are major role in the social, cultural, economic, and political of countries around the world (Levinson, 1999). Since the 1960s, the internet has been steadily involved into the lifestyles and increase larger segments of the population (Comer, 2004). The inclination of internet usage will growing and change unlimited (Lee, 2008). In 2005 the internet users has 1018 millions, five years later the internet users has 1650 millions, and 2011 has 2,110 millions of internet users (from http://www.internetworldstats.com/emarketing.html). Sagan and Leighton (2010) predicted by 2013 there will be 2.2 billion internet users worldwide.

Thus, it is not surprising that, as part of this process, online news have grown in importance in the media systems of most countries (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009). The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project surveyed internet user who gotten online news notable increases. In November 2008, 74% of internet users between 18-33 years old had gotten online news, and 76% of internet users between 34-45 years old had gotten online news. In May 2010, 76% of internet users between 18-33 years old had gotten online news, and 79% of internet users between 34-45 years old had gotten online news (http://www.pewinternet.org, 2010). In Thailand, National Electronics and Computer Technology Center surveyed in 2010, Thailand has internet users about 21 million users, most of the internet user access internet at home 54.3%, popular time between 8 pm-12pm 37.3%, internet user who send e-mail 27.2%, and gotten online news 14.1%, more than 2009 about 9.3% (http://www.nectec.or.th, 2010).

For this reason, both government and private organization are extensively using website as a key channel of communication with their various strategy for their organization, demonstrate company profile, public relation and interesting activities (Jo & Kim, 2003). Furthermore, the growth of internet affected the media businesses are increasing interest the internet due to the advantage of invest in online media and lower operating cost (Ahlers, 2006). The media organizations initiated the new way of connecting to audiences by provided their own website (Rogers, 1995). Because the website permits continuous updating content, convenience, continuously and low cost to operate (Cook, 2008). So, the television station, radio station, newspapers organization and cable news network take part in the online news services in order to coverage the information. To establish the online news department many company must established technology for computer system development, personnel skill and content (Albarren, 2002). This situation is very interesting to investigate for mass media changing and predict online news business. Consequently, this paper aims to explore and understand further of online news business. Trend of online news and method to improve online news organization are identified on this article.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section is organized the prediction of online news business into two parts. The first part examine about the direction of online news business. The second parts show about the business model of online news.

THE DIRECTION OF ONLINE NEWS BUSINESS

Online news is different from other traditional news. Some of the special characteristics of online news are immediacy (Deuze, 2003; Massey & Levy,1999; Pavlik, 2000) and interactivity (Boczkowski, 2004; Cover2006; Deuze, 2005). Immediacy is important characteristics of online news. Immediacy means when information is received to news producers then pass on to the news consumers (Karlsson, 2007), the news cycle of online news become radically shortened (Merritt & McCombs, 2004). The interactivity characteristics can define as the degree to which the communication technology can create a mediated environment in communication such as one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-many (Kiousis, 2002). Interactivity can breaking up the news producers receive relationship and placing more power in the hand of the audiences (Karlsson, 2008). The immediacy and interactive features make media organization extent the business to embrace the special characteristics of online news and challenge the direction of online news (Karlsson & Strömbäck, 2009).

Duangmanee, (1996) presented the direction of online news in the future and changing of information diffusion from this following: (1) *Interactive Feature*: the mass media take action in to two-way communication toward the website. The communication method also has real time information between webmaster and users. (2) *Easy*

to Search Information: the information superhighway gather enormous and variety information from over the world. This characteristic supported the convenience of online news users and can connect to other related news issues. The users can search the interested news in order to serve the uses and gratification. (3) *Online News Uses Internet and Multimedia*: Online news has increasing to use multimedia technology such as video, audio, graphic and picture for completely presentation.

The efficiency of multimedia features present on a websites is increasing user's perception of usability and positive attitudes toward the sites (Rajani & Rosenberg,1999). (4) *Consider to Download Speed*: The online news organization consider to users for download and search information. Although, they improve the technology and program computer for fasten and easy to use. (5) *International Publication*: the presentation of online news illustrate by Thai language but it difficult to publicize to other foreign website and hard to data transformation. (6) *More Online News Identity*: The online news organizations attempt to create separate information from traditional news and not duplicate the same content. (7) *More High Storage Information*: online news has become search engine and storage data devices such as e-library, electronics content, and news database for users. (8) *On-demand Information*: The webmaster of online news will keep the series of data and show only headline news. User can also call for news on-demand when desire. (9) Become marketing instrument: internet become increasing marketing instrument for business competition. The online news organization will improve the business strategy from this feature.

BUSINESS MODEL OF ONLINE NEWS

Business model of online news providers was employed over the past few years (Picard, 2000a). The early work was discussed varying approaches for business models in online news. But the meaning of business model is often confused with the same as strategy, such as marketing strategy, product strategy and management strategy (John, 1990). Strategies are the means used by organization to get their goals (Karlöf, 1989) and integrated set of commitment and actions design to exploit core competencies and gain the competitive advantages (Ireland, Hoskisson & Hitt, 2009).

Business models involves the conception of business operation and exchange activities and upon which the successful. Business models are described dimension of product, service, and including various business activities (Timmers, 1998). Consequently, the Business models of online news are concentrated on content (Picard, 2000b) and convergence (Palmer & Eriksen, 1999a).

Content: content or information is the major product of online news services especially online news (Santos, 2003). The news production process should consider by professional working on organization and high experience in making news (Tuchman, 1978). In this process are consist of many persons such as executive news content, editors and reporters. They are involves in development of news content (Palmer & Eriksen, 1999b). They also take part in selection or non-selection the news topics, interviewees relevant questions, language and tone of news (McQueen, 1998).

Although, several scholars are focus on news content selection and news staffs. On the other hand, the news business owner, chief of news, and editors are influences in news content. They can set the organization policy and toward to news content. Ownership of new media will consider to commercial pressure and profit. The profit is made by news outlet as a key factor in news production (Herman & Chomsky, 1988).

Additionally, format of online news is very significant. Its can demonstrates the quality of online news content. Numcharoen (n.d.) revealed most of the online news use news format similar with the newspapers news format. It has 3 structures (1) Headline (2) Lead and (3) Body. Online news generally cut "lead" from news structure. It will present only "headline" on home page. If users want to read some information, they can click to headline for link to the fine details. Some online news also created multimedia-text, video, and audio- and users can reiterate information that they want to receive. Attkisson and Vaughan (2003) revealed art of online news writing, he called "printcast" – news writing that combine outstanding characteristic of newspaper, radio and television script. News writing format in pyramid style is very appropriate for online news because the research found news users dislike reading news all of the web page. So selection, collection and summary only news climax are available for first section.

Likewise, other scholars are predicts news values are increase significant in online news organization. Montgomery (2007) stated news values combine with recency/timeliness, intensity/discontinuity, scale/scope, conflict, personalization, power, negativity, unexpectedness, consonance, proximity/cultural relevance, meaningfulness/unambiguity, composition/fit. Abels, White & Hahn (1997) demonstrated influential content can present by means of concise, easily to understand, readily to found, useful and current. Rich (2005) criticized writing for the internet is not the same as for broadcasting or print. But on most online news sites, the content mirrors the broadcasting or print copy. Hilliard (2004) presented that "a Web site is not normally 'scripted' in the sense of linear drama. The code that lays the content out into the browser is more integral to the user' experience than any linear storyboard, but this code is meaningless unless interpreted by the browser".

The task of developing "guideline" for the effect design and layout of text on the internet is as broad as the subject of computer/human interface itself. On the internet, the text is "content", the design and nature of which is determined by various factors, among these are: (1) intended audience (2) purpose of display (3) nature of Web project (4) nature of interface design paradigm (5) target technology base.

CONVERGENCE

New technologies permit the integration of other communications and allow readers, viewers, listeners more control and choice. It provides different methods for participating in and receiving communication. These changes and particularly the interactive possibilities that permit users to select materials and the forms of that material, create a significantly different relationship than exists between users and traditional media. But, given the existing technologies and the technologies currently in development for media and multimedia, that interactivity is fairly limited to making more effective use and personal choices based on already existing content forms or combinations of those forms (Kozma, 1991). This current is come from media convergence which is an ongoing process and

included intersections of media technologies (Jenkins, 2001).

The internet is the product of convergence, which the researchers defined as the "coming together of all forms of mediate communication in an electronic digital from driven by computer" (Pavlik, 1996). Another researcher defined convergence as "merging of communication and information capability over an integrated electronic network" (Dizard, 2000). The internet is a convergence of enormous of characteristics of traditional media such as text, graphics, moving picture, and sound into unique medium (Medoff & Kaye, 2011).

Online news is the excellent example for media convergence. Online news should be develops multimedia content base on text, photographs, video, and audio (Kling, 1994; Lee, Stavrositu, Yang & Kim, 2004). Many features' presentation of content could affect to user's perception and increase attract to audiences (Chen & Corkindale, 2008). Influential content can present by means of concise, easily to understand, readily to found, useful and current (Abels, White & Hahn, 1997).

Although the convergence could be included inform of content and features but also demonstrated into media organization management. McQuail (2005) was revealed that the distinctive physical characteristics of media cease to matter, at least for purposes of production, processing and transmission. The contemporary trend of convergence has been used as an argument for media deregulations, the regulatory regimes are linked to specific technologies such as printing, broadcasting, and cable. The potential for convergence were present in from of single apparatus, and diversification seems to increase.

Not only the convergence of media features but also the other researchers, Briggs & Burke, (2009) defined the meaning of convergence is the process particularly coming together of the media industries and it also had broader users in relation to whole societies and cultures. Albarren, (2002) revealed the interesting in globalization that the media business had emerged the news online department in the media company. For instance, television business, newspapers business, radio business. They established the news online department for take advantages from new gateway to audiences. Every media organizations try to established the online news section for competitive opportunities with

others media organizations to present faster and deeper information. Because of news can provides information to improve learning, aids in awareness of our society norms, values and beliefs.

METHOD

In order to find the influential factors effect to trend of online news the researcher employed the qualitative approach because it take the researchers to closer and understand the perspective of directors and executive of online news about how to management, operation and factors that effect to the online media between the technology changing condition and globalization. Both the primary data and secondary data were used. The primary data were collected by techniques in-depth interviews by the researchers. The secondary data were searched from recent reports, dissertations, articles, journals, online resources, databases, and others, which were beneficial to informing the primary data collection process, and also used to interrogate the findings.

PARTICIPANTS AND SETTING

Non-probability sampling and purposive sampling are employed in order to finding the trends of online news. This study considered the background of participants such as age, level of education, working experienced, and organization. So, the researchers contacted to the 90 samples who work in the executive level and managerial level of online news organization which located in Bangkok capital city of Thailand. While 30 persons give permission to interview individually. The participants are based on 15 online news services included local online television (Channel 3, Channel 5, Channel 9, Channel 11, and Thai Public Broadcasting Services), online cable news (VoiceTV, Spring News, TNN), online newspapers (Thairath, Dailynews, Khaosod, Matichon, Prachachadthurakij, Thansettakij, and Nation).

RESEARCH FINDING

Thirty (30) respondents were interviewed face-to-face individually. All of them are base in Bangkok, Thailand. Most (24) of the respondents were male and 6 were female. The respondents were varies in age. They grouped in 2 groups: 20 were 30-40 years, and 10 were 41-50 years. A large

number of respondents (21) were bachelor degree and only (9) respondents were master degree. The major of their educational qualification was mostly in the fields of journalism and mass communication. The thirty (30) respondents were work in the executive level and managerial level of online news business.

THE ONLINE NEWS CONTENT PREDICTION

The quality of content was the first thing mentioned during the interviews from respondents. They were pointed out the trend of online news content is very significant because the quality of information can attractive the audiences and remind the brand awareness of online news business. Most of the respondents (30) are attempt to develop the news content such as format of news by writing the clearly and easily format. The news format may be not have lead or heading news and will be demonstrate only body of news for inform the objective of the information. The online news producers will add the window for breaking news area in order to audiences can be finding this format when they access to online news. The online news producers also predict about the audiences will be desire to read only core concept of news and pass the other detail. Sometime audiences want to receive more frequently of news and news current in daily life to making decision. Consequently, (25) most of the news editors will be activate the online news reporters to send the faster news, videos and photos in order to increase the variety news on the websites.

The photos and videos are the second things that online news executives thinking of its. The online news organization will purchase the smart phone, blackberry, and I-pads for online reporters to send the photo and video. They mentions about the faster, more information, and competitive advantages between other online news organizations. The audiences will expect about the clip-video and photo which relate to each news. They will access to news with video and photo more than news with text only. The popularity of audiences are send the news with video and photo to their friends for widespread the interesting information.

Between interviews from the respondents the online news's executive (15) was disclosed the important issues about the trend of news content. They will

consider the news comment and news editorial more than current and routine news on website. The audiences will be access online news for reading the deeper information for planning in the future such as exchange rate, and gold price. Online news business will determine the news host or anchor, who create the news content such as the prolific writers, politician, celebrity and actors. These mentions for attractive the audiences and fan club in order to increase the rating and advertising.

Moreover, the online news business will take advantage from the citizen reporters, who are the primary news sources for each incident areas. They can reporting the news to the newsroom center immediately and understand the truly information. The online news producers will support the devices and budget for the citizen reporters for send the information, video, and photo.

The last issues which the respondent mentions are the interactivity of online news consumers. The online news business were also send the breaking news to audiences by e-mail and social network for inform important news. The sending news to audiences has many benefits because the business can investigate the target group, online news use rate, frequency, and cause to use. They can send the activity of company to audience and set the promotion campaign.

THE CONVERGENCE OF ONLINE NEWS

The convergence is the window of opportunity for media. Most of the online news expect from profitability and efficiency of organization. Thus the media company will attempt to seek the suitable method for changing in the future. 25 respondents of the executive of online news predict about the media convergence of online news that online news should be develops multimedia content base on texts, photographs, videos, and audios. The collections each features are support the interesting of online news to attractive the audiences. In the future, Web Television or WebTV is the first thing which the online news executives are interesting and desire to establish. It's a television on demand and audiences can access all the time for watching television by internet. The news organization also set it in the business strategy and planning to set the technology devices. For example, they will prepare the new application on computer to converge news content

and motion pictures for present real-time on the website. Additionally, they established the news online department for take advantages from new gateway to audiences. Every media organizations try to established the online news section for competitive opportunities with others media organizations to present faster and deeper information. Moreover, they will cooperate with foreign company and increase long-term investment.

THE ONLINE NEWS BUSINESS IN THE FUTURE

Online news business in the future seemed to be the challenge and difficult to prediction. Most of the participants (30) was exposed the technology changing the way of online news. Online news depend on the devices for operate the newsroom. So the executive try to select the advance equipment and suitable for their organization such as the large server for internet, edit room, control room, on-air section and newsroom. Moreover, they need the vision of executive and organization management.

Interestingly, every news organization has improved the news instruments, news workers, law and regulation of organization following the technology changing. Online news department was established in news organization. The suitable content and website for audiences was created in online news department. The organization will pay attention to send the workers to learn the modern technology and news devices. The workers who used to learn the new innovation, they must teach and recommend the novices. Sometime they involved in seminar and conference with other organization for exchange the opinion.

Audiences are now generating their own content and displaying on the internet to potentially millions of users. People from all over the world have uploaded millions of videos and post comment on online news. The phenomenon has ubiquitous on cyber world among young people who enjoy short clips of videos about news content, academic until miscellaneous. Some people can edit video and audio on their laptops and produce television and video program in their home.

The online news has made social network on Facebook to increase the brand awareness. The online news business take advantages from the interactivity by set the online community and seek

new target group. Sometime the webmaster of online news will send the promotion to audiences for increase the frequency access.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The goal of this study was to investigate the online news in the future. The researcher was evaluated the direction of online news business, and the business model of online news concentrate on content and convergence. The online news prediction came from executive level and managerial level of online news such as online news executive, manager, and editors. The dimension of executive news organization can indicate the way to improve the organization. Most of the news company attempt to adjust the news content, news devices and news worker for next innovation. They should focus on the new technology devices because the advance innovation changing all the time. Social network will be more power in this era. The news audiences uses social network for spread the news to other person. Furthermore, the vision of online news executive is very important for global communication society. The business strategy and media management are mentions for online news organization.

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