

REFLECTIONS  
ON CORONAVIRUS



IMMAA / COLUMBIA  
WEBINARS



# NEWSLETTER №10

*President's Preface | By Dr. Castulus Kolo*



*We hope this newsletter finds you well and your loved ones are all safe. The novel corona virus and its pandemic spread is an unprecedented experience first and foremost for us as individuals – a new way of being-in-the-world. Furthermore, in most countries a lockdown and other measures taken to distance people provoke social formations on all levels from the household via organizations to states.*

*With many things upended worldwide, such a crisis also presents opportunities: an appreciation of life's simple pleasures and more sense of community, but also more sophisticated use of technology, a tipping towards more sustainability and, hopefully, also the remaining insight that expertise matters and government is for serious people. We shouldn't just hit the pause*

*button to temporarily ease the pain but look out for a new normal. Megatrends like climate change, digital transformation, changing gender roles, migration and mobility, urbanization as well as mediatization are now observed under previously unknown circumstances and will very likely be reassessed. In these days it's particularly rewarding to be a media management academic. Apart from being privileged to teach students who will shape the world long after Corona we are reassured on the relevance of our research. The media play a decisive role in everything to come and are facing enormous change at the same time. Whilst some incumbents could even strengthen their position, others may be challenged by more innovative start-ups.*

*Innovation in terms of new products and services but possibly even more in terms of new processes is an imperative when usage patterns change but also financial means wither. Paulo Faustino, my predecessor as IMMAA president, and Zvezdan Vukanovic, share their ideas on these challenges with us in this newsletter. But whatever media company will emerge strengthened after the crisis, the media as fourth estate will probably continue to be threatened by autocrats, trying to bias (or interfere even more substantially), and followers of conspiracy theories alike. Trust depends on telling the truth. And public trust - particularly in media - is crucial to governance and democracy in general. With its key theme "Trust and Audience Engagement across Platforms: The Impact of Media Management on Society and vice versa", the IMMAA conference planned for this year in Madrid had emphasized a topic already before the crisis that became even more relevant today. Unfortunately, we must postpone the conference to September 2021 due to unpredictable framework conditions. However, in November this year we will organize a virtual topical forum bringing together industry experts and academics to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on media management with the aim of publishing this discourse.*

## IMMAA/Columbia Webinars

Whilst a virtual conference cannot really substitute the spirit of a physical IMMAA conference that is very much based on bringing together young academics with senior scholars and industry decision makers, we are happy to announce a webinar series on the effects of COVID-19 on the media and ICT organized by Eli Noam and co-sponsored by his Columbia Institute for Tele-Information and IMMAA. These seminars aim to contribute to the community of media management researchers by providing a discussion platform for general presentations of new work, ideas, issues, and personalities.

**Thursday, June 25th 12:00pm EDT**

### **The Transformation of the Classroom: Digital Learning after Covid-19**

Schools and universities around the world have canceled in-person instruction. And the question now is what education will look like in the future, and the role of online education.

The webinar will address the following:

- How distance learning is being accelerated by the Covid-19 outbreak?
- What regulations and policies need to be changed or adopted to enhance distance learning?
- How to address the digital divide issues?
- What the effects of distance learning on networks?
- Does distant learning mean the -n 99the imposition of nationwide standards?

Speakers include:

Milton Goldberg, Formerly the Distinguished Senior Fellow, Education Commission of the States  
 Roberts T. Jones, President & Founder, Education Workforce Policy, LLP  
 Castulus Kolo, Professor, Macromedia University of Applied Sciences

Other speakers might be added. This event is dedicated to the memory of Glenn Jones, a pioneer of cable TV and of online education.

**Thursday, July 9th 12:00pm EDT**

### **The short-term and long-term impact of Covid-19 on Tele-Medicine**

In 2020 the global pandemic has required stay-at-home orders, and hospitals have become inundated with cases. Patients have had to skip non-essential doctor visits because of offices having been closed, or to avoid possible exposure to Covid-19. To deal with this, there has been a surge in the use of telehealth services. In March 2020 alone, there was a 50% jump in the number of patients using a telemedicine service instead of going to a doctor in person. In US? some analysts predict almost 1 billion virtual doctor visits in 2020.

This webinar will address the following:

- What kind of problems have been encountered as TM scaled up?
- What are the major regulatory barriers slowing adoption of tele-medicine?
- What is the role for governmental investment in telemedicine? Of commercial ventures?
- After return to some normalcy, what will be the role of TM?
- Does this create a two-tiered health system, where more affluent patients receive in-person care while poorer patients are pushed to virtual visits? Or is it the other way around?
- How will outsourcing be handled? Can doctors from out-of state and other countries be used?
- What effects will TM have on the ICT infrastructure in poor countries?

Please register at <https://citicolumbiacovideducation.eventbrite.com>

# COVID-19: an accelerator for change in media businesses and the media industry



When inspired by Darwin (*The Origin of Species*), one must say it is not the most intelligent of species that survives, nor the strongest, but the ones most capable of adapting and adjusting to a changing environment. Darwin's theories are inspiring when it comes to the ability of media organizations to adapt and change. Today, as a result of the ongoing Corona Virus crisis, humanity has been "forced" to make major behavioural changes (e.g., resorting to the use of ICTs to replicate social and other group activities normally conducted in person). Hence the need for media businesses to similarly undertake major adaptive changes.

Currently, COVID-19 is serving as an accelerator spurring new and more intensive uses of information and communication technologies. ICTs were already there at our disposal, of course, just never used with such intensity in so many facets of our lives, both personal and professional. Social connections and interactions have moved increasingly online while businesses have been reinventing their processes around the use of ICTs. The fact that reinvention with digital technologies at its core has become an imperative has created an opportunity for technologically innovative companies to prosper in the midst of this economic crisis, or to at least lay the foundations for future prosperity, rather than declining and dying in a faltering economy. These types of transformation are most visibly evident in companies in the various sectors, including healthcare, textiles, mold making, and logistics sectors, whose services are required to respond to the challenges posed by COVID-19d.

Although COVID-19 has had a globally negative impact in the media industry, there are some companies that have managed to adapt. Some media companies, including some in the press (i.e. newspapers and magazines), have even improved their performance. Media services compete in the global market for consumer attention and COVID-19 confinement has left many people with more time to consume media products, both online and offline. This has worked to the benefit of some media companies, especially those with streaming media services, while others, such as those tied to live sports, have suffered.

It is obvious that innovation is not much worth unless it contributes added value to the market. We must always be careful, for a company can always fail if it doesn't understand the type of innovation needed by its business or its place in the market. And a media company does not only compete with other media companies, but in a broader market of attention that includes leisure and various cultural activities.

Innovation is effective only when it produces benefits for customers. In the case of media industry, COVID-19 is already acting as an innovation accelerator in several domains, from production, to delivery and monetization. Specially, during the confinement period journalistic companies have re-invented their distribution models, found new ways to monetize content and

optimized the editing process to the new environment. Importantly, while online audiences increased, there wasn't a proportionate financial return: a reflection of a chronic problem digital media experience trying to collect on the value of their services to media consumers.

One can say there is no alternative for the media industry other than to face the reality of the accelerating effect of COVID-19 on innovation in online and offline media. Technology must be seen as complementary to business goals. For instance, analog media are not doomed, but do have to be repositioned, which implies the need to look at technology and understand that at the base of innovation is the way: (i) a company is organized, (ii) its products are monetized, and (iii) its products are delivered.

Many media companies have already realized this and uncertainties concerning business model sustainability still abound. But there are still some certainties going forward, namely: people will work more and more from home (a new way of managing time), organizations still need marketing (new ways of communication), consumers still have a need for good information, wherever they want (support), whenever they want (period) and however they want (ways of payment). While profitability and market share are never guaranteed, innovation that enhances profitability will necessarily reflect the following:

1. An understanding of the benefits customers receive from the business to guide it in adapting and/or reinventing the way its products and services are provided and a mechanism for validating that customers do benefit.
2. Avoiding time lost trying to create something completely original when success might be realized through gradual improvement— i.e. incremental innovation. Innovators are not always 100% original, they often simply perfect what already exists in their own way. If you want to pursue more radical innovation, acquire or license something revolutionary and apply your creativity to it.
3. Analyze if the innovation has in consideration the available infrastructures. What would be the purpose of creating digital social networks if internet hadn't been invented yet or if there wasn't a good access.

Product/service/application Innovations are successful only if they are accepted by consumers. Along with alignment with existing infrastructures, market acceptance has to be a major thread running the innovation process, which implies a close focus on customer benefits, and, when feasible, making customers part of the innovation process, perhaps by testing product innovations with prospective users whose feedback can lead to better designs, help identify false starts, and point to new avenues for future innovation.

## Reflections on Coronavirus Pandemic by Zvezdan Vukanovic

The Coronavirus Pandemic and Global warming are two most impactful events that will most profoundly shape the first half of the 21st century global economy. Clearly, in this socio-economic context, the global pharmaceutical corporations will increase its economic market share and profit. In order to improve the competitiveness, market share, profit and innovation in the post-corona time, the major global digital media and ICT corporations will have to remove the intermediary (i.e. representing the wholesaler or the retailer and being positioned between a producer and an end consumer/user) by selling products directly to retail stores or consumers via internet, digital online

channels, cloud media, mobile internet 5G networks, streaming media, VOIP, etc. Importantly, the major advantages and benefits of removing the intermediary include increasing cost savings and efficiency, adding better value and providing the affirmative environmental impact.

Ultimately, as the business product cycles are shortened, the global companies will have to re-purpose media content, simultaneously trying to make a paradigmatic shift from using incremental to exponential technology.

Moreover, the established companies will have to grow its market share inorganically – i.e. utilizing the diversification strategies such as mergers and acquisitions. Organizationally speaking, the corporations will have to adapt from typical digital chains, networks and multi-platforms towards the on-demand, massively personalized/customized, interoperable and proprietary digital business/economic ecosystems.

Equally important, the corporations have to utilize preemptively the following business strategies: vendor lock-in, software versioning, complementors and network orchestrators. Relatedly, B2D markets will become increasingly important as well as the subscription video on demand OTT platform, over-the-top internet television and streaming media service providers; video conferencing softwares; post-cloud computing architecture; wearable technologies; IOT – Internet of Things; Industry 4.0, Domotics – Smart Home, Smart Grid, Smart City, SOA – Service oriented architecture; API; Cloud computing; e-commerce; Ubiquitous/Pervasive computing; Sensors - RFID/near field communications (NFC) and QR codes; Machine-to-machine communication; Robotics; 3D printing; Drones; Blockchain; Telehealth; Virtual and augmented reality; AI/ cognitive computing/machine and deep learning; Search algorithm.

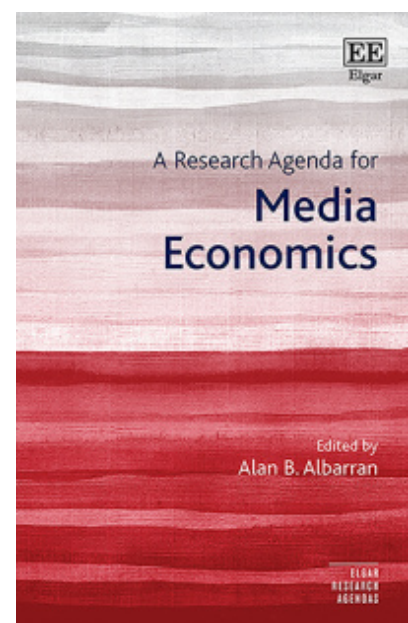


## A Research Agenda for Media Economics

Edited by Alan B. Albarran

Presenting cutting-edge thoughts on media economics, its history and development, and looking forward to its future, this timely book investigates the changing face of the field. With contributions from some of the most prominent media economics scholars in the world, this provocative and visionary Research Agenda covers theory development, consumer and audience demand, information and cultural goods, and technological dimensions.

‘A Research Agenda for Media Economics edited by international scholar and veteran researcher Alan Albarran brings together a top-notch group of well-established and emerging scholars to look at the current state of media economics research.



From theoretical traditions in media economics research to the spending patterns of the individual consumer this book presents a whole host of new ideas in advancing the future of the discipline. If there is a one important tie-in to the many authors who contributed to this work, it has to do with idea of audience, from a business, technological and global perspective.’ – Richard A. Gershon, Western Michigan University, US

‘An excellent resource with insights from leading scholars in our field, this book provides structure for graduate teaching in media economics that cannot be found elsewhere. Tackling topics such as the history of the field, theoretical developments, global perspectives, ethical considerations, along with suggestions for research, this volume elicits excitement for furthering knowledge in the critically important area of media economics research. An absolute must read for professionals, as well as budding or seasoned scholars seeking answers to what’s next in changing media landscapes.’ – Angela M. Powers, Iowa State University, US

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