

Chapter 13

Innovation and Media: Googlization and Limited Creativity



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Abstract In many countries, media are facing severe crises. This chapter examines how media companies have undertaken a process of innovation that has nevertheless been accompanied by limited creativity. First, a literature review will recall the fundamental definitions of innovation and present various works on media innovation. Second, we will show that the ongoing innovation process is mainly based on a new media model, which we have called “the media Googlization model.” Media Googlization focuses on a new digital management process that aims to take advantage of digital data, traffic, and advertising. This process represents a strong shift for media companies. Third, we will show that this innovation is a process of creative destruction with limited creativity. Indeed, media Googlization induces a destruction of media’s traditional economic model, with, of course, new features. However, this innovation is accompanied by limited creativity because the priority has not been to fuel creativity in the production of quality informational and cultural media products. We will show that digital development tends to lead less to new forms of quality creative content than to a new form of industrial system driven by Internet platforms and media Googlization. We will draw on the Swiss press to illustrate our analysis.

Keywords Creativity · Creative destruction · Innovation · Googlization · Media

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13.1 Introduction

In many countries, media are facing severe crises. Revenues, particularly those of daily newspapers, have dramatically declined, while traditional radio and television have had to evolve in a new technological and economic context. At the same time, an innovation process can be observed with the development of online media, the participation of users (in the form of, for example, user-generated content), and changes in organizations and journalistic work, such as that created by integrated newsrooms. Furthermore, the media is generally included in both cultural and creative industries because it is seen as dependent on a creativity from which it derives value [see, for example, UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) 2013 classification of cultural and creative industries, which includes cinema, radio, and television]. Have changes to the media favored creativity? This chapter examines how a process of innovation has been underway in the media. We show that a new economic and managerial model, which we have called “the media Googlization model,” is emerging but is accompanied by limited creativity.

First, we will conduct a literature review on innovation and media. Then, we will propose the media Googlization model as a new economic and managerial media model. Finally, the third section revisits innovation as a form of creative destruction and analyzes the limits of creativity in the media. We will draw on the Swiss press to illustrate our analysis.

13.2 Innovation and Media

13.2.1 *Main Theories of Innovation*

Let us recall the main theoretical approaches of innovation (Badillo 2013). Schumpeter is the key author of the technology push model. For him, innovation “consists in carrying out New Combinations” (Schumpeter 1939: 84). He considers five types of innovation and a general process of creative destruction: “The fundamental impulse that sets and keeps the capitalist engine in motion comes from the new consumers’ goods, the new methods of production or transportation, the new markets, the new forms of industrial organization that capitalist enterprise creates . . . This process of Creative Destruction is the essential fact about capitalism” (Schumpeter 1942: 82–83).

Today, innovations in the media cannot only be explained by the technology push model. Other theories have shown that other elements may be important, such as the market (the demand pull or market pull innovation model) or organizational networks. In the open innovation model (Chesbrough 2003), new ideas come from both outside and inside the firm. Moreover, the disruptive innovation model (Christensen et al. 2015) can explain the rise of some new media. Von Hippel (2005)

demonstrated the importance of users in the innovation process. Various communication theories, particularly recent approaches to media use, have led to a better understanding of the way users appropriate technology or even divert innovation by adapting innovation to new uses.

Rogers illustrated how the analysis of the logic of innovation evolved. His works moved from diffusionism to a process in which the user plays an important role. Indeed, in the third edition of his book (Rogers 1995), Rogers introduced the term “re-invention,” which was defined as “the degree to which an innovation is changed or modified by a user in the process of its adoption and implementation” (1995: 174). According to Denning and Dunham (2010), “Innovation is the adoption of new practice in a community . . . Success at innovation lies in the intersection among the innovator’s domain expertise, social interaction skills, and ability to recognize and move into opportunities (realizable possibilities)” (6, 23). These authors highlighted the role of Google as a new information ecosystem that “through its infrastructure ‘platform,’ (300) interacts with and supports the work of four groups. The first group is that of “content providers,” i.e., media companies and individuals who create information. Advertisers are the second group. The third group is made up of consumers who “are the hundreds of millions of people who visit Google every day. Their searches reveal their interests . . . They . . . contribute ideas for improvements” (300). And the fourth group is that of innovators who work through the Google platform and who “constitute a rich and diverse product development network and attract many users who want to try new products. They generate revenue and expand the value of Google tools and technology.” (Denning and Dunham 2010: 300).

According to us, this ecosystem has been so successful that it may be a model for other companies that develop their activities through digital platforms. Finally, we argue that the communication and social dimensions of innovation are essential. We showed that new digital re-innovation processes can be set up by promoting human relationships and social creativity (Badillo 2013).

13.2.2 Innovation in the Media

Today, innovation is the buzzword in the news media industry. Strategies and initiatives are formulated and implemented by institutions and companies to cope with the developments, the new demands and requirements in the news media industry. Governments are also developing policies to support innovation activities. (Van Kranenburg 2015: 6).

In recent years, the word “innovation” has regularly appeared in the media and in the spheres of media professionals (e.g., WAN-IFRA 2018). Media stakeholders are aware of the challenges their organizations are facing. Innovation is perceived as a necessity and a matter of daily hard work: “‘Innovation is not an event. It’s not a lab. It’s not the perfect day once a year. It’s something that’s happening 365 throughout your organization and it’s a really hard process,’ says Niddal Salah-Eldin, Director of Digital Innovation at WELT [a daily newspaper owned by Axel Springer]”

(Flueckiger 2018). The issues are generally approached from managerial and journalistic points of view.

Thus, it seems clear that innovation theories can be very useful in understanding changes in the media. However, according to Bleyen et al. (2014), “innovation in media is not well understood; it seems to be ill defined and poorly captured by statistics.” (29). Content-related innovation, in particular, is generally not taken into account. Without being exhaustive, we can sum up some recent approaches specifically centered around media innovation. Storsul and Krumsvik (2013) recalled various approaches of innovation literature that have helped define the concept of media innovation, and they emphasized two dimensions of change: what is changing and the degree of novelty. Concerning the degree of novelty, the distinction between incremental and radical innovations is obvious: in the media, most innovations have been incremental; but radical or disruptive (Christensen 1997) innovations are now challenging the industry. Concerning the kinds of change, Storsul and Krumsvik (2013) applied Francis and Bessant’s (2005) four Ps of innovation (product, process, position, and paradigmatic innovation), and they added a fifth type: social innovation, which is defined by Mulgan et al. (2007) as “new ideas that work to meet pressing unmet needs and improve peoples’ lives” (Mulgan et al. 2007: 7).

Bleyen et al. (2014) proposed another typology of media innovations that include various aspects of content innovation; the five categories of innovation are business model innovation, production and distribution innovation, inner form innovation [“a new stylistic feature” (35)], core innovation [“a new theme or message” (35)], and consumption and media innovation [“a new way of consuming a content, or a related service” (35)]. That typology “takes as a starting point the standard distinction between product and process innovation, which is also reflected in the distinction made by Handke (2010) between creative and humdrum innovations” (Bleyen et al. 2014: 34). Process innovation is indeed divided into production and distribution innovation and business model innovation, while core and inner form innovations are two categories that characterize product, i.e., content innovation. Bleyen et al. (2014: 35) situated the fifth category—consumption and media innovation—between process and product innovation. According to Bleyen et al. (2014), “from the media industries’ point of view” (28) the most important innovations concern the product, notably the core (for example, new types of TV shows), and business model categories, while the other types are driven more by external players, mainly information and communication technology and technology companies.

The impact of digitalization on media, particularly on news media, has been widely studied recently. From an innovation and management perspective, Küng (2015) analyzed five media outlets in the United States and the United Kingdom: *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *Quartz*, *BuzzFeed*, and *Vice Media*. As she underlined, the theoretical basis is the theory of disruptive innovation: “The news industry is facing a classic case of disruptive innovation. The effect the invention of the internet has had on the print newspaper is similar to the effect the launch of the railways had on horse-drawn transportation” (Küng 2015: 5). Other studies are centered around changes in newsrooms and journalistic work (Paulussen 2016). Some authors consider that innovation may emerge in the media thanks to journalists

who are leading the process of newsroom change (García-Avilés et al. 2018). Moreover, according to Bruns (2014), innovation in media practices, driven by professional media practitioners, but also by users of media, “will prove to have the more immediate impact on the further evolution of the contemporary media ecology” (23).

In particular, media professionals must adapt their content and marketing practices to the Internet, as search engines drive a great amount of traffic to news websites. Search engine optimization (SEO) has thus become a tool used by media professionals in order to increase traffic. Giomelakis and Veglis (2016) showed that, in the case of Greece, media websites with the most traffic also have the largest proportion of SEO practices and that there was a clear correlation between traffic and various SEO factors. Moreover, search engines, and more particularly Google, which is a quasi-monopoly in many countries, have a significant effect on the web traffic of media websites and more generally on news gathering, news production, distribution, and, thus, journalism.

There are lengthy debates about big Internet companies, their digital platforms, and their influence on economic, political, and social activities. Beyond the innovative aspects of digital platforms, recent studies have critically examined the economic and social consequences of the use of digital platforms. In particular, according to Plantin and Punathambekar (2019), such digital platforms have reached “the scale, indispensability, and level of use typically achieved previously by infrastructures. Google and Facebook are perhaps the most compelling examples of this infrastructural evolution of digital platforms. They are both Internet companies that first leveraged the properties of platforms to increase their market power, yet they have been increasingly developing capacities that are typically understood as infrastructures” (169). Van Dijck et al. (2018) described the three processes of datafication, commodification, and selection that are developing on digital platforms, and they questioned the compatibility of private interests and public values.

Dogruel (2013) described some of the limits of the dominant approaches to media innovations by considering that three different concepts of it can be found in media economics and management research traditions:

One approach discusses media innovation as an ‘external,’ mainly technical product or process innovation that ‘demands’ change in media organisations—applying a more or less implicit techno-deterministic position. A second field of study analyses new technological devices as new media consumer products, predominantly focusing on adoption and diffusion theory. Here, media economics scholars focus on media technologies (cf. interactive television, Internet, smartphones) but also on new media standards such as DVD . . . or broadband . . . In line with the literature on creative/cultural industries . . . a third set of research considers new media content (media formats, single media titles) as media innovation—often related to marketing-oriented approaches (32).

Dogruel (2013) then proposed to approach innovation from a “creative/cultural industries perspective” (33). and an “economic and sociological perspectives.” (35). Concerning the creative/cultural industries perspective, she quoted Stoneman (2010), who introduced the notion of ‘soft innovation’: “Soft innovation is innovation in goods and services that primarily impacts upon aesthetic or intellectual appeal

rather than functional performance” (Stoneman 2010: 22). Dogruel also recalled Handke (2010) research on the record industry, which recognized that the industry is both a high-tech manufacturing and cultural industry.

13.3 The Media Googlization Model

We argue that the ongoing innovation process in the media may be explained by a new media economic and managerial model. Of course, that does not mean that various innovations, particularly incremental innovations, are not developing concerning the contents of media products or new media uses. However, we consider that the main changes in the media ecosystem are linked to the emergence of a new media economic and managerial model. We will now summarize this new model (for first drafts, see Badillo and Bourgeois 2016a, 2017b).

Media companies are now seeking markets or market segments that are mainly interesting from the point of view of Internet audiences. Advertising is not the unique goal; media companies now try to get more traffic and, at the same time, data about visitors to their online platforms. As mentioned by Bell et al. (2017), “The influence of social media platforms and technology companies is having a greater effect on American journalism than even the shift from print to digital” (9). Moreover, “The influence of social platforms shapes the journalism itself. By offering incentives to news organizations for particular types of content, such as live video, or by dictating publisher activity through design standards, the platforms are explicitly editorial” (10). We introduced the “media Googlization model” (Badillo and Bourgeois 2015) to have a new understanding of the mutation of the media correlated to the influence of platforms. Thus, what we call “the advertising-traffic-data model” or “the media Googlization model” is emerging (see Fig. 13.1). We use the term “Googlization” to focus on the importance of online platforms and the new digital management processes they have created.

The “media Googlization model” is a new media economic and managerial model. It differs from the traditional model that has long been considered the economic and managerial basis of the media. The traditional model is a two-sided model: advertising and payments by consumers are the two sources of revenue for media. In the traditional model the content is defined by an editorial concept in order to attract readers. And, obviously, Web traffic was not taken into account in the traditional model. The media Googlization model has the following specific characteristics.

- It is a multi-sided model; a company offers various products and/or services that can attract advertising resources and specific audiences, including various informational and non-informational services and commercial products (e-commerce of events, etc.).
- Advertising and traffic are essentially the prerequisite of editorial concepts; a company has to adapt its editorial concepts to what we call advertising-traffic-

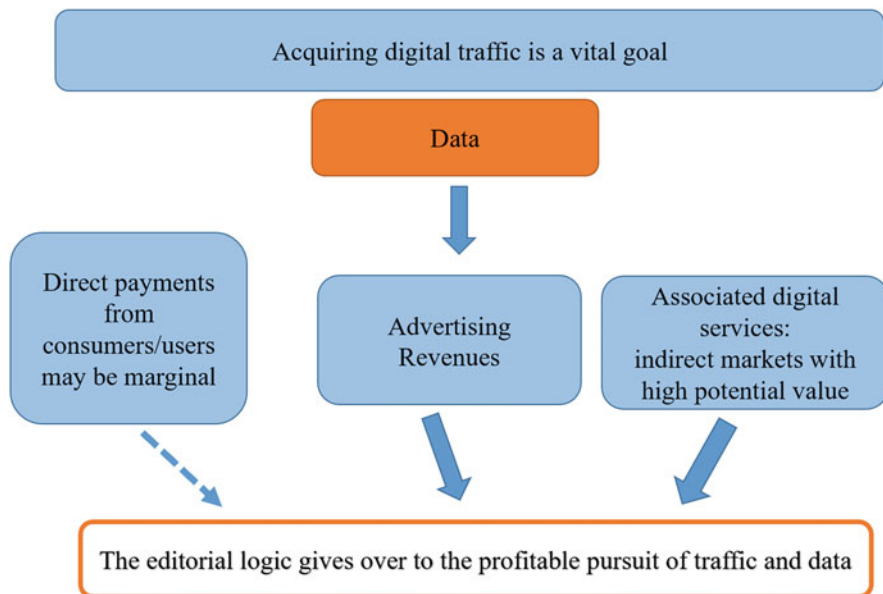


Fig. 13.1 The media googlization model

data. Thanks to digital flexibility, media are now able to define and change editorial concepts in order to get traffic.

- In this new framework, media activities must be understood from the general perspective that the new Holy Grail is traffic and data. If one gets a lot of traffic, one can likely obtain high advertising revenues, and in the near future, one will be able to propose new services and/or sell data. New services will be linked to geolocation and information about visitors. Media could become a central means of knowing consumer preferences and uses for many kinds of commercial and noncommercial fields of interest. For example, if one knows the people interested in specific health questions, one can advertise specific services. In other words, information is a means of creating traffic, and traffic allows the development of advertising and the acquisition of high-value data.

The innovation process at the heart of the growth of the media Googlization model is mainly focused on a new management process in a digital context. This process leads to a kind of destruction of the traditional media economic model while creating, of course, new features of the industry. Indeed, print journalism is facing a major crisis in many countries, with a decline of traditional resources, i.e., paying readers and advertising resources. Other media, such as television, are also concerned, especially in relation to the development of streaming services. The search for online traffic and data is becoming the core of the media ecosystem, but it does not push for quality content. In the media Googlization model, editorial logic gives over to the profitable pursuit of traffic and data. Moreover, it is reasonable to

assume that the Googlization of the media may lead to new online content, some of which may be attractive to audiences, but of limited cost and low creativity from an informational and cultural perspective.

While our analysis of the impact of media platforms is largely convergent with the approach of Bell et al., let us indicate an important difference. Bell et al. (2017) stated:

Platforms rely on algorithms to sort and target content. They have not wanted to invest in human editing, to avoid both cost and the perception that humans would be biased. However, the nuances of journalism require editorial judgment, so platforms will need to reconsider their approach (10).

Our conclusion is quite different, as we are not sure all the platforms will reconsider their approach. Media Googlization will probably contribute to the weakening of journalism and the limiting of creativity.

13.4 Creative Destruction and Limited Creativity

The process of creative destruction can be clearly observed today in the media industries, particularly in the process of digitalization, which changes the methods of production, the products (online content, free content), the forms of industrial organization and the markets (geographic and those linked to various social media). Let us deepen the theoretical approach of innovation in creative industries with an exploration of creative destruction.

13.4.1 Revisiting Innovation as Creative Destruction

In Schumpeter's innovation approach, the "process of Creative Destruction is the essential fact about capitalism" (Schumpeter op.cit.). In this fundamental analysis, the process of innovation relies on both destruction and creation. One component of innovation is destruction aimed at improving performance and increasing profit. In this case, innovation is related to the management of human resources or the betterment of procedures and technologies. Additionally, the model includes a creative component, which means that the innovation process has an undisputable human dimension, which appears in the activities of managers, researchers, engineers, designers, etc.

Recent changes in the creative industries can be analyzed by considering the process of creative destruction. Creative industries, such as the media, largely rely on a human dimension; they are based on the work of artists, designers, journalists, and, more generally, human creation, which can be partially personalized and partially depersonalized. The human dimension of creation is key in media innovation, especially content innovation, but destruction is also at work and may have

considerable human impacts. We have shown that the media's innovation process is mainly focused on a new digital management process, which represents a kind of destruction that brings with it some new features, but the creative process does not necessarily prioritize the human aspect of innovation.

13.4.2 Creative Industries: Which Content Innovations?

There are various possible approaches to the changes in the creative industries, in particular the media. We will not analyze the issue from the point of view of the arts or entertainment. We will not view it solely from a management perspective, although this is important for media companies and media management literature. Let us recall, as stated by Dwyer (2016), that “there is no consensus on what creativity actually is. Simply put, there is no theory of creativity” and “there is surely no agreed theory of managing creativity” (343–344). Our approach based on the literature on cultural and creative industries is focused on innovation, as a creative destruction. It is applied to the production of information, especially on news, by media.

Since the first studies in the United Kingdom 20 years ago, many governments have recognized the concept of “the creative industries”: for example, the UK Creative Industries Council was created in 2011 and a campaign “Creative France” was launched in October 2015 in France. More recently, the wider idea of the creative economy has emerged, defined by UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) as “an evolving concept which builds on the interplay between human creativity and ideas and intellectual property, knowledge and technology” (UNCTAD2020). However, there are various definitions of the creative industries, and it is not easy to measure a creative economy (e.g., O'Connor 2010; Bouquillon et al. 2013). Beyond the debates among researchers about definitions and measurement, the reference to creativity is inserted in the power relationship between industry actors, and it contributes to challenge and transform public policy (Bouquillon et al. 2015).

Thus, a creative perspective can be useful in understanding some of the significant stakes in media changes. Jones et al. (2015) considered four primary drivers of change in creative products and creative industries: demand, public policy, technology, and globalization. They also identified “four primary types of change in the creative industries—Preserve, Ideate, Transform and Recreate—as particular combinations of change in semiotic codes and material base” (Jones et al. 2015: 4). Miège (2017) developed a critical approach to cultural and creative industries; in particular, he analyzed the arrival of content industries: the content industries will increasingly provide information and cultural content for communication industries.

Beyond various categories of innovation that can be applied to the cultural and creative industries, it seems possible to distinguish between new technological, managerial, and economic characteristics and what constitutes creativity with impacts on the informational and cultural field. Setting up digital platforms has

been obviously innovation for traditional newspaper companies: many newspapers have now digital-first offerings, such as reportages designed to be consumed online. Undoubtedly innovation processes are going on from the technological point of view: streaming and podcast offerings, access every time, everywhere. . . . New processes of management, production, dissemination, and journalistic work are developing. Some digital newspaper leaders like *The New York Times* are offering a diversity of narrative content with high quality. Does that mean that we assist to a generalized process of creativity from the point of view of the quality and the diversity of content? In fact, form and content should not be confused: there is a large diversity of new narrative formats, such as short, ludic, and dynamic videos; but that does not mean that content is generally based on in-depth investigation. As regards new media products, creativity concerns mainly technologies and formats. But content is often impoverished and the diversity of content is decreasing since many newspapers closed and fewer journalists are working. Journalistic creativity has to be supported by a large number of journalists, which permits a diversity of opinions, and also by in-depth analyses guaranteed by the professionalism and independence of journalists. Let us give some numbers to show the impoverishment of journalism. In the United States, there were 74'410 newsroom employees in the newspaper sector in 2006 and only 37'900 in 2018 (Pew Research Center 2019). If there is less investment on information professionals (journalists), it is obvious that the diversity and the quality of content are in danger. Of course, there are other information sources than the media on the Web. But, as shown by various studies, “dis-information,” “mis-information,” and “mal-information” (Wardle and Derakhshan 2017: 20) are spreading on the Web. The need for quality information is all the more strongly that the difficulty to spread truth on the Web was demonstrated by an authoritative study: “Falsehood diffused significantly farther, faster, deeper and more broadly than the truth in all categories of information” (Vosoughi et al. 2018). We argue that creativity in the field of media production, particularly in news production, is limited because it is not mainly oriented towards hierarchized, checked, and deep information. Therefore, according to us, the core issues in the new media ecosystem are the following ones:

- To what extent does the media Googlization model explain the destruction of the old media system and the development of a new media system?
- And to what extent is the new media system accompanied by true journalistic creativity, beyond new economic and managerial characteristics? For us, creativity and innovation in this field should mean checked, hierarchized and deep information. In particular, do content innovations that appear in the new system favor informational and cultural quality?

The Googlization of the media is indisputably a trend toward a new economic and managerial system, with the associated destruction of the old system, but creativity to produce quality information is limited.

13.5 The Swiss Press

The Swiss press is very illustrative of the rise of the media Googlization model. It has a long-standing tradition of quality information, diversity, and high newspaper readership. Above all, it is essential to democracy since regular “votations” are organized and information is at the core of the political Swiss model. The media, in particular newspapers, enlighten debates with relevant information. But the Swiss media system is challenged in terms of economic issues and, in particular, the Swiss paid for press is facing a crisis.

At first glance, the Swiss media situation may not appear so bad if one considers that uses of media are developing, particularly uses of new media by young generations. Nevertheless, the economic dynamics are detrimental to traditional media. In a previous study (Badillo and Bourgeois 2016a), we showed that the financial resources of Switzerland’s main traditional media (press, radio, and television) are lower than those of the country’s telecommunications sector (fixed and mobile telecommunications, Internet, and cable companies). Traditional media are poor, and furthermore, the dynamics of their financial resources are negative. The telecommunications sector benefits from a much higher level of financial resources, and these resources have progressed over time. But, the telecommunications sector develops information technology and does not produce content.

Moreover, the Swiss media’s economic system is itself challenged by the development of online content and services. In Switzerland, the media system has long been based on print journalism and public television. However, the print industry is losing resources, and the public broadcaster is facing a decline of its public resources, due to political decisions. Correlatively, print and television have both been developing strategies to produce online content. We analyze the press because it is the main media industry that has faced a large crisis. In this context new business models and creation of new content—including audiovisual entertainment—are developing. The Swiss press is increasingly shaped by the digital transformation that we have modeled in term of media Googlization.

In the Swiss press, especially the daily press for which people have traditionally paid, both sales and advertising revenues have indeed dramatically declined. The main press companies have introduced various measures to diminish costs, such as integrated newsrooms and layoffs. The first integrated newsroom in Switzerland was created by Ringier in 2010: the editorial offices of the German-speaking newspapers *Blick*, *Sonntagsblick*, *Blick am Abend* and *Blick.ch*, together with Web-TV, were joined together. Since then, other integrated newsrooms were created by the press companies and the main strategies have favored online news. For example, in 2018, the print edition of *Blick am Abend* was abolished. The end of *L’Hebdo* in 2017, a magazine in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, may have been considered as the beginning of a trend toward the disappearance of many newspapers, even well-known, quality newspapers.

Unquestionably, destruction is affecting Swiss media. Innovation has developed through the free press—free print newspapers since the beginning of the years 2000,

and, of course, free online press—the rise of news and communication on the Internet, new sources of revenue for media firms, new content, and new organizational structures.

The understanding of the media Googlization model could be clarified by analyzing the strategies of the two main Swiss press companies, Ringier and TX Group—TX Group was previously called Tamedia; at the end of 2019 Tamedia decided to change its name to TX Group and the name “Tamedia” was given only to the TX Group’s paid media sector. We presented detailed case studies related to TX Group and Ringier (Badillo and Bourgeois 2017a). Let us update some main elements. These companies are indeed examples of the new online media model that is radically changing the production of news. TX Group and Ringier have tried to resist destruction by developing digital strategies with scale and scope economies at the heart of their new activities. Both companies have expanded digital news platforms with, of course, digital advertising. They have also increasingly developed other digital services, with many online platforms. Their new digital activities, such as classifieds platforms and many e-commerce platforms, are, in general, profitable. In 2019, TX Group’s digital offerings represented 51% of its total revenue and 77% of its EBITDA (Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization); the upward trend towards digital is strong, since in 2014 the figures were respectively 24.5% and around 33%. Furthermore, the EBIT margin (Earnings before interest and taxes/Revenue), which gives an indication of profitability, is low for TX Group’s paid media activities—less than 3% in 2019—while it is high for “classifieds” online activities—48.7% in 2019—such as *homegate.ch*, *ImmoStreet.ch*, which are real estate portals. Concerning Ringier, digital businesses represented 46% of Ringier’s total 2018 revenue and contributed some 71% to its 2018 EBITDA. The global Ringier’s EBITDA margin (EBITDA/Revenue) was equal to 11.3% in 2018. Marc Walder, Chief Executive Officer of Ringier, emphasized that “The Ringier Group has successfully transformed itself from a classic publishing house into a modern and diversified media corporation over the past few years” (Ringier 2019: 155).

Of course, for Swiss media companies, the development of digital activities is accompanied by the creation of new content, even if the focus is increasingly on digital services rather than information. Further, the issue of quality journalism remains important, as underlined by Pietro Supino, chairman of TX Group’s Board of Directors: “We will endeavor to create lasting added value through quality journalism, attractive advertising opportunities and innovative digital offers” (Tamedia 2017: 5). It must be noted that, for example, TX Group has launched its own quality monitoring program. Moreover, companies such as TX Group could at any time reinvest in the information sector and produce quality information, as they generate significant profits from their digital services.

Even if the two main Swiss press companies are successful in their digital transformation, two main issues have to be recalled. A process of concentration is going on in the Swiss press, as we demonstrated in other contributions (Badillo and Bourgeois 2016b, 2017a). Concentration implies a decline in pluralism. Moreover, the core business of the two main Swiss press companies is less and less the production of information and more and more the deployment of various digital

services through online platforms. We can conclude that creativity from the managerial point of view is satisfying, since these companies are flourishing in some digital segments. But, from another hand, creativity relying on the capacity of the whole Swiss press to produce fundamental and quality information is questioned.

13.6 Conclusion

To understand recent changes in the media, we have focused our analysis on innovation and creativity. Innovation has to be analyzed as creative destruction. We have proposed “the media Googlization model.” We have shown that the innovation at the heart of the media Googlization model is mainly focused on a new management process in a digital context with an underlying objective of improving profit. Let us note that we have analyzed the limits of “media Googlization,” but we are fully aware of the importance and success of innovations supported by Google itself. The main issue for us is the incidence of “media Googlization” on the production of information by media. The Swiss press illustrates the Googlization of the media.

Beyond new economic and managerial characteristics, will the new media system lead to a development of creativity that will favor informational and cultural quality? The Googlization model is so strong that it is now increasingly adopted and integrated into the media model. Getting traffic, audience, and data is becoming a dominant activity of the media. We have proposed a new economic and managerial model that clarifies the ongoing strong shift—a mutation of the media. Is the new press an industry dominated by the goal of producing information or developing traffic and data? We hope our contribution will foster debate. In fact, the true challenge for media and society is to fuel creativity to produce information and cultural products and to enhance the quality of information and media products.

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