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# How to Choose the Appropriate Media Format

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## ABSTRACT

*Media format is one of the techniques through which important information is disseminated from original source to its final receiver. Before we proceed with choosing the right media format. Let us discuss what does the term media means. Nickolas Luhmann “defined media as “those institutions which make use of copying technologies to disseminate communication.” Luhmann captures the “efficient” or “economical” aspect of mass media. Media are anything, “provided that they generate large quantities of products whose target groups are yet undetermined.” The history of media can be traced back to 12th century where news was communicated from one mouth to the other. Merchants, Traders, and Travellers travelling to far lands fetched information on various subjects. In the 18th century newspapers and magazines were the primary sources through which information at large extent can be communicated to masses. However, years later as the technology has undergone a major revolution there are various ways in which information can be disseminated. Development of radio communications, satellite navigation and better connectivity helps us in providing with the real time update of any event around the world. One of the primary examples of this is the cricket match which can now be live streamed from any device right at the comfort of your home. Many news channels and newspapers which had conventional ways of imparting news have now shifted their focus from the traditional to modern approach. Many news applications provide you the news in a consolidated form instead of reading the long articles. As the technology has undergone a major evolution there are numerous media formats through which story or happening of an event can communicated to the public at large without any delays. Through this article we would like to elucidate various media formats and how to choose an appropriate format.*

## I. BACKGROUND OF VARIOUS MEDIA FORMATS

**Print Media:** Over the course of its long journey print media has seen many changes.<sup>3</sup> Johannes Gutenberg’s printing press drastically changed the face of publishing. In 1440, Gutenberg invented a movable-type press that permitted the high-quality reproduction of printed materials

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<sup>3</sup> (N.A), History of Newspaper’s, <https://open.lib.umn.edu/mediaandculture/chapter/4-2-history-of-newspapers/> (Last updated on: N.A)

at a rate of nearly 4,000 pages per day, or 1,000 times more than could be done by a scribe by hand. This innovation drove down the price of printed materials and, for the first time, made them accessible to a mass market. Overnight, the new printing press transformed the scope and reach of the newspaper, paving the way for modern-day journalism.

**Radio:** Guglielmo Marconi is credited for creating radio which helped in better communication and dissemination of the information. <sup>4</sup>Not long after radio's broadcast debut, large businesses saw its potential profitability and formed networks. In 1926, RCA started the National Broadcasting Network (NBC). Groups of stations that carried syndicated network programs along with a variety of local shows soon formed its Red and Blue networks. Two years after the creation of NBC, the United Independent Broadcasters became the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) and began competing with the existing Red and Blue networks (Sterling & Kittross, 2002).

**Television Media:** <sup>5</sup>Early pioneers speculated that if audio waves could be separated from the electromagnetic spectrum to create radio, so too could TV waves be separated to transmit visual images. Television broadcasting began as early as 1928, when the Federal Radio Commission authorized inventor Charles Jenkins to broadcast from W3XK, an experimental station in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC. Silhouette images from motion picture films were broadcast to the public on a regular basis Formerly known as Community Antenna Television, or CATV, cable television was originally developed in the 1940s in remote or mountainous areas, including in Arkansas, Oregon, and Pennsylvania, to enhance poor reception of regular television signals. Cable antennas were erected on mountains or other high points, and homes connected to the towers would receive broadcast signals.

**Social Media:** <sup>6</sup>The first social media site was a website called 'Six Degrees' that was launched in 1997. It allowed its users to create a profile and then befriend other users. From Six Degrees, the internet emerged into the era of instant messaging and blogging. People across the world began to use chat rooms to make new friends, to date, and to discuss topics with other like-minded people. Back in 2002, when LinkedIn was founded, it was aimed towards professionals who wanted to network with one another and functions the way even today. In 2004, Mark Zuckerberg launched Facebook, which went on to become a social media giant. Even after all

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<sup>4</sup> (N.A), Evolution of Radio Broadcasting, <https://open.lib.umn.edu/mediaandculture/chapter/7-2-evolution-of-radio-broadcasting/>, (Last updated on: N.A)

<sup>5</sup> (N.A), Evolution of Television, <https://open.lib.umn.edu/mediaandculture/chapter/9-1-the-evolution-of-television/> (Last Updated on: N.A)

<sup>6</sup>Munira Rangwala, Evolution of social media over last two decades, [https://yourstory.com/2017/05/evolution-of-social-media?utm\\_loadtype=scroll](https://yourstory.com/2017/05/evolution-of-social-media?utm_loadtype=scroll) ,(May12th, 2017)

these years, Facebook is the number one social networking site there is, boasting over a billion users. In 2006, the popularity of SMS and text messaging inspired Jack Dorsey, Biz Stone, Noah Glass, and Evan Williams to create Twitter.

## **II. <sup>7</sup>ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF VARIOUS MEDIA FORMATS**

### **Advantages of Print Media**

1. Broad reach within a defined marketing area that is business, sports, shopping section newspapers often have special advertising sections as well)
2. Geographic selectivity is available in small towns the best example is news papers in the vernacular language.
3. Marketplace for competitive price shopping.

### **Disadvantages of Print Media**

1. Ad clutter that is Classifieds, Sunday Paper Advertising)
2. Decreasing market penetration and readership with many newspapers reaching less than 50%
3. Low Younger audience readership (people between ages 18-24 are not reading the newspaper)

### **Advantages of Radio:**

1. Has targeting capabilities.
2. Inexpensive compared to another traditional broadcast media.
3. Builds frequency quickly as commercials are replayed throughout the day/evening.

### **Disadvantages of Radio:**

1. No visual component
2. Advertisers must buy multiple stations and formats to accumulate audience reach.
3. Peak listening is during morning and evening drive times with relatively low audiences the rest of the day driving to and from work.

### **Advantages of Television Media:**

1. Wide geographic coverage & broad audience reach appeals to most demographics.

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<sup>7</sup> (N.A), What Are The Advantages And Disadvantages Of Major Media Formats, And How Does Out Of Home Media Compare <https://www.adoptahighway.com/what-are-the-advantages-and-disadvantages/> (Oct 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012)

2. Perceived accountability with well accepted audience.
3. Relative ease of buying and post-buy maintenance.

#### **Disadvantages of Television Media:**

1. Audience share is generally declining due to fragmented audiences.
2. Increasing use of DVR's diminishing the impact of commercials (people can record their shows and skip the commercials)
3. Typically, high CPM costs and rising production cost

### **III. MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT**

<sup>8</sup>The Bureau of Outreach and Communication (BOC) was created by the Ministry on 08.12.2017 by merging the erstwhile media units of Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), Directorate of Field Publicity (DFP) and Song & Drama Division (S&DD) to have synergy and integrated approach between these organisations; better utilisation of resources and workforce; and to deliver better communication to the masses in every state and every districts. BOC is headed by DG level officer at Headquarter and consists of 23 Regional Outreach Bureaus (ROBs) and 148 Field Outreach Bureaus (FOBs). BOC takes care of communication needs of the Ministry/Departments and Government Organisations at Headquarter level and interpersonal communication at Regional and Field level through live media utilizing wide range of performing arts such as Drama, Dance-Drama, Composite programmes, Puppetry, Ballets, Operas, Folk and Traditional Recitals, Mythological Recitals and other Local Folk and Traditional forms, propagating policies and programmes of the Government. The Bureau of Outreach and Communication undertakes multi-media advertising and publicity for various Ministries and Departments of Government of India through print media, electronic media, digital media, outdoor publicity, live performances, and arts etc. BOC acts as a service agency and communicates at grassroots level on behalf of various Central Government Ministries/ Departments.

### **IV. MEDIA FORMAT WITH EXAMPLES**

#### **Print Media:**

1. **Newspapers:** Printed and distributed on a daily or weekly basis. They include news related to sports, politics, technology, science, local news, national news, international

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<sup>8</sup> (N.A), Bureau of Outreach and Communication, <https://mib.gov.in/media-units> ,(N.A)

news, birth notices, as well as entertainment news related to fashion, celebrities, and movies. Today's parents grew up with this type of printed media.

**Broadcasting Media:**

1. **Television:** In the past, there were a few channels sharing various types of content, whereas now we have hundreds of TV channels to choose from. Each channel delivers a different type of content, so you have a separate channel for news, drama, movies, sports, animation, nature, travel, politics, cartoon, and religion. It is the number one broadcasting media due to its reach to the audience.
2. **Radio:** Uses radio waves to transmit entertaining, informative, and educative content to the public. Due to its high reach to the audience, radio is widely used for advertising products and services. Radio is one of the oldest means of entertainment, and today people often hear it to find out the weather and traffic while commuting.

**Social Media:** Social networks or websites including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Quora, Reddit, Pinterest, etc. They are user-friendly and widely used by people around the world. Although we can find any news here, they may be misleading because of the lack of regulations on the content shared.

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<sup>9</sup> (N.A), What Are the Different Types of Media, <https://whatagraph.com/blog/articles/different-types-of-media> (Nov 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020)