This book is part of a series “Media Markets Monographs”, a biannual publication edited by the Media Management Department, School of Communications, University of Navarra. This series aims to publish original research work which focuses on the analysis of media and communication markets from a variety of perspectives. The editors of the “Media Markets Monographs” encourage the submission of works which deal with conceptual developments and practical aspects of theory, rather than simply empirical research papers. These criteria are amply met by “Time and the Information Market: the Case of Spain”, which spans a wide number of issues related to the way different information markets compete for time of audiences and advertisers, including some philosophical and sociological considerations on the use of time.

Alfonso Nieto takes up the argument that a big portion of human life is devoted to consumption of products related to the media marketplace. The relationships established by supply and demand for time constitute a special market within the media marketplace, called the time market, which can be studied from the perspective of not only supply and demand, but also media. This mediation comprises advertising, distribution and promotional activities. The time market in information exerts much influence on such essential aspects of human life as professional activity, culture and leisure.

The author’s argument is presented in five chapters, which cover conceptual framework of working with time (which includes limits on the concept of time, as well as the idea of information time), the offer competing for the use of time (dailies, magazines, radio, watching), the demand side (reading demand, radio and TV time, demand and decision in time), the mediation of time (identifying and manifesting offer, its continuity, identification of time and its acceptance), concept and functioning of the time market (with linkages to the age and professional group, leisure time, cultural and societal implications, the emergence of the information society).

The chapter structure is comprehensive, the range of subjects wide, interesting and original, with some of distinctions between offer, supply and the mediation of time departing from the conventional usage of these terms.

Three chapters are documented with data from Spain and some international statistics, which show how the supply and offer of mediated time has evolved in the 1990s. The author notes that even though the total time given to media (and information) consumption has increased considerably, the available programming and particularly advertising spots have had much higher growth dynamics. He analyses different types of information consumption from the perspective of the particular time commitment they require (the question of intensity, flexibility, adaptability, time shifting etc.).

Alfonso Nieto argues that time dedicated to information has six main manifestations: a) market position, b) people’s participation, c) consumption, d) permanence, e) cost and f) coverage, which are they applied to the analysis of main segments of the information market. These are set against the background of wider considerations on the universality and the wealth of information, growing valuation of time as an immaterial asset and chronofagia. It is through such wider considerations, which include reflections on the nature of tranquility in personal time management, relations between information, culture and leisure, as well conceptual subchapters on the nature of real, subjective and virtual time, that this book moves beyond traditional media participation and consumption statistics quoted in chapters II-IV.

From the methodological point of view, the book benefits from a multiple perspective. It offers exemplifications of the Spanish information market, which are based on conventional analysis used in media economics, marketing and communication studies, reflections drawn from the literature on time management and valuation of economic assets, but also considerations, which could be placed in the broad philosophic and humanistic discourse about the temporal dimension of human existence. This ambitious approach is the source both of the book’s strengths and weaknesses as the bridge between highly general discourse and ‘hard facts’ from the Spanish market is not always very clear (this may also be the result of the complicated sentence structure, which could be the consequence of translation into English - resulting in formulations such as ‘mediation for time continuity in favour of the demand’).

No reference is made to time budget studies (such as “The Use of Time”), the dynamics of social time and the body of knowledge referred to as ‘leisure studies’, where the author could find answers to some of the questions about time choices that he raised. The study could also benefit from further analysis of the way media compete with each other for the audiences’ and advertisers’ time and attention.
It must be added that the book has an attractive layout and even when it discusses well-known phenomena, it does so in a different, original way, from a broader perspective and in a language which is rarely seen in publications of this type. It also has a positivist undercurrent, which underlines the importance of making good use of time, such as self-education. This is manifested in its final sentence (p.155): “Fortunately, the majority of people increasingly look for more time to fill their lives with human and transcendent meaning: time that gains time.” Hope the media industry notices this!

Rating

Rating Criteria | Rating
---|---
Theoretical Approach / Methodology | ++++
Structure | ++++
Depth of the Analysis | ++++
Contribution of new Knowledge | ++++
Applicability | ++
Clarity and Style of Writing | +

Rating Points: excellent: ++++ poor: +

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**Call for Papers**

**Volume 5 – Number I  
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The Future of Convergence

Guest Editor: Michael O. Wirth, University of Denver, U.S.A.

The 1990s were dominated by the belief that the concept of convergence (i.e., the disappearance of technological differences among distribution networks so they begin to compete by delivering multiple applications over the same network to different platforms) would eventually result in a small number of large transnational corporations dominating the communications industry. However, the results of some of the most aggressive attempts to achieve communication industry convergence (e.g., AT&T, Bertelsmann, AOL/Time Warner, Vivendi Universal, etc.) have been less than successful to date. The purpose of this issue is to provide a forum for papers focused on the future of convergence in light of the economic, financial, managerial, technological and regulatory realities of today’s marketplace.

Analytical papers focused on the future of convergence as related to the following topics (or other appropriate topics) are invited:

- Communication Company Valuation
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Technological Innovation/New Product Innovation
- Various Communication Industry Sectors
- Industry Regulation/Deregulation
- Consumer Demand
- Globalization
- Competitive Realities
- Corporate Culture/Core Competencies
- New Media vs. Old Media
- Marketing Challenges
- Strategic Planning/Strategic Management

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**Important Deadlines**

**Submission:** January 30th 2003

**Decision:** March 15th 2003

**Publication:** Spring 2003

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JMM – The International Journal on Media Management accepts short papers up to 3,000 words or longer papers up to 6,000 words. Please refer to the Contributors Section at http://www.mediajournal.org for our templates and additional specifications.