

GLOBAL BUSINESS SCHOOL ORGANIZES PANEL DISCUSSION ON PRINT MEDIA – “ISSUES AND CHALLENGES”

Global Business School organized a Panel Discussion consisting of notable press and media personnell from all the leading media houses on the topic ‘ Print Media – Issues and Challenges’

The panelists were

1. Sri Girish Pattanshetti. The Hindu, Hubli.As a Moderator.
2. Sri Ravi Kulkarni. Deccan Herald, Hubli. As a panel member.
3. Sri Prakash Kulkarni. The Times Of India, Hubli. As a panel member.
4. Sri Anil Gejji. The Indian Express Hubli. As a panel member.
5. Sri Jaytheerth Devale. Kannada Prabha, Hubli. As a panel member.
6. Sri Satish Joshi. Hosadiganth, Hubli. As a panel member.

Shri. Girish Pattanashetty, introduced the panelists about the evolution of the Print Media, the birth of paper, the advent of print media and quoted the various statistics from the 2013-14 survey, stating that India has a 45crore population on readership. He narrated, as to how Julius Ceaser initiated communication media to circulate the message among royal family. Slowly the message become a wide spread means of communication. Until the paper was invented and become the means of circulation, the stone carved communication was in use as news paper. The advent of printing machine gave a big boost to news paper to get the reach to the masses. Around 1622 the 1st periodical – the weekly news paper started In India the Bengal Gazette in 1780 made a formal beginning of news paper. The entry of news paper in Karnataka was signalled when the Mangalore Samachar was started in 1843. Quoting the 2013-14 survey statistics he informed that 99000 periodicals are published in India, out of which 19000 are news papers. 45 crore people read news papers daily. Quoting the former US president Mr Thomas Jefferson that given a choice between news paper and government he would choose the news paper first to emphasis the importance of news paper. Ending his few words, he said the Print Media or the Newspapers in particular which began with a social motive, have now undergone a transformation as a business industry.

With the opening speech giving the introduction of print media, the discussion started by the panelist- Anil Gejji, from the ‘The Indian Express’, continued with giving the audience a brief sneak into the daily happenings on a given day at the newsrooms. He brought forth the important areas of the newspaper publishing process, beginning with the editorial departments, which consists of reporters, and the various numbers of reporters according to the areas/location. He shared how a typical metro city newspaper media house would have beat reporters, which is consisting a team of reporters based on different areas of expertise such as Crime, Health, Politics etc. Further he continued sharing how the reporter’s job of getting a report on a particular event reaches the desk, where in it undergoes a scrutiny and editing by the editorial team, leading to the page makers and the printing centers and ending with circulation.

Shri. Prakash Kulkarni from the 'The Times of India' then brought forth the efforts from the Circulation department. He shared how the Newspapers of today is essentially a Business, and is no different to the business terms as Returns of Investment, Consumers etc. He shared how, News paper works on cost to cost basis in circulation whereas the other various expenses to which the newspaper is subjected to is recovered through the advertisement. A notable fact which was brought forth during the discussion was how the English dailies have a very less readership in India compared to the Vernacular dailies. This low readership which is about 2% of the Indian population for English papers is serious challenge for the industry to handle. The readership at state level in Karnataka is 40 lakhs while at local level it is 5 to 10 lakhs. Readership and subscription is different. Readership is about 4 times of subscription. This is because subscriber may be one but readers are many. One paper subscribed by a home has many readers at home substantiates the point of 4 times of readership to subscription.

Circulation Department of any newspaper dailies would still be found dealing with Rupee and Paisa and the major challenge faced in this industry was revenue generation.

Shri. Ravi Kulkarni, from the 'The Deccan Herald' gave a qualitative synopsis on how the transformation process, which began in the 17th century led to the newspapers being no more a social institution but a business industry. He shared how the management terms such as 'Cost to Cost Analysis', 'Cost to benefit Analysis' is extremely helpful for the newspaper industry to gather the revenues for its sustenance. The main segments of revenue generation, being the Circulation and Advertisement. The Costs to cost analysis holds well for determining the newspaper price while revenue generation through selling of advertisement spaces, is useful in determining in achieving the cost of production. He majorly emphasized the key role of Advertisements in generating the revenues for the newspaper enterprises, explaining the definition advertisement as a 'non verbal paid form of communication'. Further he explained how the department functions in procuring the advertisements, categorizing and customizing it according to the needs of the client, all the while keeping the cost factor in mind.

.Jayateerth Devale from the 'The Kannada Prabha' brought forth to the form of discussion the Vernacular Vs the English, especially since the Vernacular dailies growth is comparatively faster than the English dailies. Sharing his experience about how rural customers need to be approached and although reach of the advertisements selling and its response are found to be satisfactory, the various forms of challenges faced in current times, is about the communication challenges for the rural customer.

Shri.Satish Joshi from the 'The Hosadigantha' brought forth to the discussion the various challenges faced in establishing a new newspaper edition, and the efforts in establishing a brand and the collective efforts of both the editorial, circulation and advertisement functions.

During the interactions, the interesting points brought forth were about the formula with which the newspapers work i.e, Advertisement is directly proportional to the number of copies circulated. And this advertisements and marketing was only begun about 2 decades ago. The change in the various terminologies in the today's newspaper houses, such as Results and Market Development Department and the Response Department and the broad functions of these two departments were also shared to the audience.

Another major challenge that surfaced during the discussions were the Reach, timely reach, as newspaper is viewed as the least shelf life, from a business point of view. And the circulation, largely faces the problems today of that of distribution, vendor market dealers, especially shortage of beat boys, i.e., the newspaper distributing boys.

Circulation is an important area calls for timely reach of newspaper, it is facing the challenge of manpower as nit many people come forward for this. The circulation manager cannot afford to relax but should be on the toes. He has to be at the dealer at 4am in the morning. So the job profile is special. The industry works 24 hours as the editorial works up to 12 mid night, the advertisement works up to late evening and circulation starts as soon the paper is sent out to dealers.

Advertisement department also faces another challenge of sales, as in selling ad spaces and in determining the ad rates advertisement rates. Also at the same time, the rising competition from digital media which is growing at 30%, against the print media whose growth has seen a drop from 8.3% from 9.30% last year.

Yet another interesting issue that was discussed among the panelists was the challenge the three wings advertisement, editorial and circulation have work as a team for the success of newspaper though the goals and objectives are clashing in nature. Ad department seeks more space; editorial seeks more space so the two sections have space related challenges to sort out. The circulation seeks timely dispatch to help reach the readers. So the production related delays are seldom taken lightly. So meeting the deadlines is a daily routine. Providing the space to unpredictable news items like obituary news is a difficult issue the editorial and ad have to sort out.

Pricing has become the strategic issue as such invitation pricing like strategy is practised.

News paper has not revised the prices in tune with the rising cost and inflation. It the cheapest product available in market. The cost of one paper is about Rs 15 but the price is Rs 5. And a day may not be too far when the industry may undergo further changes, an example quoted was newspaper vending machine is very much possible as the manpower shortage is driving towards that. News paper industry is regulated by Press council of India, IENS, and Audit bureau and like agency.

The students of management were also briefly oriented towards career opportunities in print media and the several opportunities to work in the areas of editorial, advertisement or circulation. The students were asked to seek a career and not a job, stressing that passion and drive is what would yield success. Some essentials for a career for the students in the Print Media industry were - meeting up with deadlines, creativity and innovation and writing skill.

The Program was organized by Dr. Ramakant Kulkarni. The Welcome address delivered by the Director of Global Business School. Mr. Uday Lawate and co-ordinated by Dr. Bharghav Revankar. Ms. Diana Hombal gave the vote of thanks.

-Director

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