

ONLINE BUSINESS NEWSPAPERS IN INDIA: AN EVALUATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

This paper aims to provide an overview of the contents and coverage of the online business newspapers in India. Six online business newspapers published daily in India were selected for the study. The study used website content to analyze and assess the contents of these newspapers. A check list was prepared as the key tool for data collection and MS Excel was used as the tool for data analysis. The study indicates that online business newspapers in India have a same pattern of contents and coverage. Contents availability and access to the contents are the most predominant options in these newspapers. Majority of the newspapers use Facebook, twitter, google plus, RSS and Blog to connect with their readers.

Keywords: online newspapers, business newspaper, electronic publishing, News sites, Evaluation

1.0 Introduction

The tremendous growth of Internet and the improved reliance on virtual information have revolutionized online newspaper broadcasting with new methods and means of disseminating news and other products. It has put online newspapers to the task of updating and providing fresh and speed news frequently and dramatically increased the news usage and consumption. Compared with old-style news media, online newspapers have extraordinary advantages including their capacity to provide current information, rapid access to a huge number of newspapers and their archives without extra expenses, the benefits of being interactive and paperless, the option to print, bookmark or save and edit the contents of online newspapers.

Newspapers can deliver online versions, that are not reflect images of print versions, instead deal something extra such as interactive features or information that might not fit in print forms. There are a good number of online newspapers available on the Internet. Some of these have only abstracts and general information, while others being whole newspapers with archives. The important characteristics of online newspapers include interactivity, hypertext, and multimedia. Hyperlinks allow navigation through online newspapers and link readers to related contents. News available on the online newspapers can be complemented with contextual information, photographs, graphics, animations, audio streams and video footage and links to e-resources such as online archives, e-books, magazines and other online newspapers. Interactivity can be made accessible on the online newspapers to make online versions interesting. The interactivity might be achieved by engaging readers using, Blogs, RSS, polls, feedback, opinions, comments, surveys, etc.

2.0 Online Business News Paper

An online business newspaper is the virtual form of a newspaper, either as a stand-alone publication or as the online form of a printed journal. Online business newspapers are considerable like hard-copy newspapers and have the equal legal limits, such as laws regarding defamation, privacy and copyright. Advantages of online business newspapers are being interactive and paperless, the possibility to bookmark, print or save, email and edit the contents.

Some of the Online Business Newspapers available are as follows

- Business Line
- Business Standard
- The Economic Times
- Financial Chronicle
- Financial Express
- Livemint

3.0 Review of Literature

Kiran G & Kadakol A M (2013) made a case study of Old-style Vs Online Newspaper and came out with the following; A newspaper is a organized publication containing news of present events, enlightening articles, advertising and diverse features. The newspaper is naturally funded by paid subscriptions and advertising. A wide variety of subjects materials has been published in newspapers, including criticism, editorial opinions, persuasion and op-eds; obituaries; entertaining features such as crosswords, horoscopes and Sudoku; weather forecasts and news; advice, food and other columns; reviews of radio, television, movies, plays and restaurants; display ads, classified ads; radio and television listings, editorial cartoons, inserts from local merchants, comic strips and gag cartoons.

Justice G.N. Ray (2009) writes on Forthcoming of Newspapers: clarifies about the present situation: Today, when we are facing constant fast transformation from print to online media, there is big and usual question mark about the future of print media. Nevertheless even before we discuss the concern in depth, I could state with assurance that the print media and newspapers are here to stay several more years and no e-communication module has the capacity to replace it. It has assisted in well designing and lay out and more beautiful presentation with improved colors in printing of the papers but also made it possible and economically feasible to print more multi edition copies quicker and at lesser cost with well get up and attractive type, thus, enabling the press to supply to more readers located at different locations. These progresses in technology and growth in the newspaper readers on account of higher literacy and higher income level have led to a good growth in the number of newspapers and their circulation.

Mohamed Haneefa K and Shyma Nellikka (2010) aims to give an overview of the contents and design of the online English newspapers in India. 12 online English newspapers published daily in India were selected. The study used website content analysis to measure the contents and design of these newspapers. A checklist was prepared as the main tool for data collection and MS Excel was used as the tool for data analysis. The study displays that online English newspapers in India have a general pattern of contents, design and coverage. Contents access and availability to the contents are the most predominant options in these newspapers. Majority of the newspapers use RSS, Blog and Facebook to connect with their readers.

Ramesh C Gaur, Mahesh Chand, Kavita Gaur & Amar Singh Yadav (2013) conducted study on Online News clippings & News Services for knowledge centers. Online news and online services based on newspapers are fetching progressively popular and useful in present digital age. These services helped libraries in reaching out users anywhere they are and also save time. This paper will tell experiences of mainly Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Library. However the examples from Parliament of India Library, TERI, International Management Institute (IMI) and some other significant libraries and archives have also been presented. JNU primarily used to archive hardcopy files of news clipping along with bound volumes of thirty selected newspapers. With speedy change in technology and user needs, now emphasis has been moved to online/digital news clippings. Above one million news clippings on subject topics“ largely covering social sciences & international studies have been digitized by Jawaharlal Nehru University and now accessible online. The paper shares JNU’s involvements in digitization of news clippings and also of beginning online news based services for its Faculty, Scholars and Students. Conversion from hardcopy news clippings to online/digital news clippings and commencing bound volumes of newspapers to online newspapers archives has also benefited JNU Library in saving space.

Objectives

The main aim of the study was to analyze the contents & coverage of the online business newspapers in India with following objectives:

- (i) To evaluate the structure, style, and design of the online business newspapers in India.
- (ii) To recognize the contents and coverage of the online business newspapers in India.
- (iii) To determine the special features and nature of advertisements that appears in the online business newspapers in India.
- (iv) To know the patterns of collecting news, graphics and multimedia in the online business newspapers in India.
- (v) To know the application of Social Networking Sites (SNS) technologies used in disseminating the news

4.0 Research Methodology

In this study six online business newspaper were taken for analysis from websites of the newspapers published in India. A checklist was prepared as the key tool to assess and evaluate the contents and coverage of the news papers. The checklist included general information about homepages, authority, accuracy, currency, multimedia, graphics content, accessibility, coverage, cost, advertisement, special features, and application of Social Networking Sites (SNS) technologies.

5.0 Data Analysis and Interpretation

When the six online business newspapers in India were evaluated for the homepage characteristics it was found that Business Line, Business Standard and The Economic Times had all the features enlisted. In Financial Chronicle, some features like Movingtext/marquee, Site map and Poll were absent, however in Financial Express online newspaper Poll and Newsletter were not featuring, but in Live mint, moving text/marquee, comment, poll and Newsletter characteristics were not present (Table 1).

Table 1. Homepage characteristic of online business newspapers in India

Characteristics	Business Line	Business Standard	The Economic Times	Financial Chronicle	Financial Express	Livemint
Sign in	√	√	√	√	√	√
E-paper	√	√	√	√	√	√
Side-Bar/frame	√	√	√	√	√	√
Copyright	√	√	√	√	√	√
Contact	√	√	√	√	√	√
Moving text/marquee	√	√	√	-	√	-
Advanced Search	√	√	√	√	√	√
Comment	√	√	√	√	√	-
Site map	√	√	√	-	√	√
Poll	√	√	√	-	-	-
Opinion	√	√	√	√	√	√
Feedback	√	√	√	√	√	√
Newsletter	√	√	√	√	-	-
E-mail	√	√	√	√	√	√

As the online newspapers were assessed for authority, accuracy, and currency it was evident that all the newspapers had all the characteristics and most importantly the links did not expire or move (Table 2). Similarly, when the graphics and multimedia design of online newspapers were analyzed it was seen that they had all the features under study except that they were not flash enabled (Table3).

Table 2. Authority, accuracy, and currency of online business newspapers in India

Authority, Accuracy, and Currency	Business Line	Business Standard	The Economic Times	Financial Chronicle	Financial Express	Livemint
Are the original sources listed	√	√	√	√	√	√
Location details	√	√	√	√	√	√
Information accuracy	√	√	√	√	√	√
Basic grammar	√	√	√	√	√	√
Currency	√	√	√	√	√	√
Links expired/moved	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3. Graphics and multimedia design of online business newspapers in India

Graphics and multimedia design	Business Line	Business Standard	The Economic Times	Financial Chronicle	Financial Express	Livemint
Infographic	√	√	√	√	√	√
Photo	√	√	√	√	√	√
Video	√	√	√	√	√	√
Statistical data	√	√	√	√	√	√
Flash enabled	-	-	-	-	-	-

The six online newspapers were considered for their contents and coverage, it was found that Business line, The Economic Times and Financial Chronicle and all the features under study however Business Standard, Financial Express and Livemint did not contain any information on most read and most commented, whereas information on wealth was not present in Business Standard and data on economy was not present in Livemint online newspaper (Table 4).

Table 4. Contents and coverage of online business newspapers in India

Contents and Coverage	Business Line	Business Standard	The Economic Times	Financial Chronicle	Financial Express	Livemint
Editorials	√	√	√	√	√	√
Most read	√	-	√	√	-	-
Most commented	√	-	√	√	-	-
Market Information	√	√	√	√	√	√
Industry News	√	√	√	√	√	√
Politics	√	√	√	√	√	√
Wealth	√	-	√	√	√	√
Economy	√	√	√	√	√	-
Stocks	√	√	√	√	√	√
Sports	√	√	√	√	√	√
Technology	√	√	√	√	√	√

When the six online business newspapers were checked for some features for analyzing accessibility, advertisements and special features it was found that, Business Line had accessibility, subscription, archive, advertisements and mobile apps but did not have classifieds, spot light and no information was available on jobs. There was also no option for online shopping and the access to e-paper was not free of cost. Business Standard online newspaper had all the characters except that they had no option for online shopping, classifieds and spotlight. The Economic Times featured all the parameters under study except for classifieds and online shopping. Financial Chronicle online business newspaper did not have information on classifieds, jobs and spot light however Financial Express online newspaper did not have data on classifieds and spotlight whereas Livemint did not have information on classifieds, online shopping, jobs and spot light (Table 5).

Table 5. Accessibility, advertisements and special features of online business newspapers in India

Accessibility, advertisements and special features	Business Line	Business Standard	The Economic Times	Financial Chronicle	Financial Express	Livemint
Accessibility	√	√	√	√	√	√
Subscription	√	√	√	√	√	√
Archive	√	√	√	√	√	√
Free of cost to access e-paper	-	√	√	√	√	√
Advertisements	√	√	√	√	√	√
Classifieds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Online shopping	-	-	-	√	√	-
Jobs	-	√	√	-	√	-

Spot light	-	-	√	-	-	-
Mobile App	√	√	√	√	√	√

The application of social networking sites technologies by six online business newspapers in India were assessed and it was found that Business Line, The Economic Times and Livemint had all the prominent social networking sites under study whereas Business Standard and Financial Express had all except Podcasts however Financial Chronicle did not have Podcasts and Youtube (Table 6).

Table 6. Application of social networking sites (SNS) technologies by online business newspapers in India

Application of social networking sites	Business Line	Business Standard	The Economic Times	Financial Chronicle	Financial Express	Livemint
Blogs	√	√	√	√	√	√
RSS feeds	√	√	√	√	√	√
Podcasts	√	-	√	-	-	√
Youtube	√	√	√	-	√	√
Twitter	√	√	√	√	√	√
Facebook	√	√	√	√	√	√
Linkedin	√	√	√	√	√	√
Google Plus	√	√	√	√	√	√

6.0 Conclusion

Technology has revolutionized all sectors of industries and newspapers is no exception to this change. It is one of the biggest industry through which day to day information related to education, politics, business, national security, sports research and developments, entertainment etc. are catered to the respective population or general public for their information and to gain knowledge related to the current developments happening in their country and across the globe.

As the global trends are changing and the information seekers have become more tech savvy and look for electronic information. Hence, it is important for the newspaper industry to cater to its readers in both print and online version. The online version of business newspaper is very important as most of business companies have become paperless in their communication and hence online business papers are very apt. Thus evaluating the online newspapers becomes critical so as to keep the quality of the online newspapers under check and to improvise on the features to increase the utility by the end users.

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