

# Foreword

---

## **Guest Editor - Castulus Kobo**

President of Macromedia University and President of International Media Management Academic Association

## **Paulo Faustino**

Professor at Porto University and Past President of International Media Management Academic Association

This issue marks three important milestones: six published issues; the resilience to the adversities resulting from the Pandemic; and the beginning of a cycle of guest editors' involvement.

With regard to the first milestone - six published volumes - its importance stems, on the one hand, from the international accession and reputation that JOCIS has achieved; and, on the other, the enormous involvement of authors of great scientific prestige who have collaborated with JOCIS.

On its turn, this edition also proves the resilience to various adversities resulting from the impact of Covid 19, namely at the level of reduction of resources - resulting from the decrease and crisis in global economic activity- as well as the physical distance, which made it essential to stimulate the sharing of knowledge

and planning in a more interactive and participatory way of this editorial project.

Finally, the adoption of the role of "guest editor" materializes the consolidation and maturation of a scientific editorial project that aims to expand and enhance the creation and dissemination of knowledge of authors and relevant personalities within education, research and scientific associations, investing in a co-creation and open innovation approach.

From a holistic perspective, these three milestones converge and stand with a common purpose: to envisage a relevant and lasting future as a publishing project to create, discuss and disseminate knowledge in the area of media studies as well as creative and cultural industries. Hence, despite all adversities, we continue to publish yet another fine example as presented.

This issue of JOCIS features three full papers and a briefer trend paper all in the context of media management and innovation. This was the key theme of the annual conference of the International Media Management Academic Association (IMMAA) in Doha 2019. This conference also marked the handing over the presidency of IMMAA from Paulo Faustino to Castulus Kolo who has committed to further promote a conversation about media management, that is increasingly inclusive of the Global South, encompassing the diverse challenges and opportunities in this field. Along these lines, and based on the conference theme, JOCIS invited submissions to this edition – some of them having been presented in an earlier version at the Doha conference.

As a globally distributed association of academics and academic institutions researching and teaching Media Management in its many facets, IMMAA was founded with the mission of bridging the gaps between research, industry needs, and education. With media management and innovation as key theme of the annual conference in Doha, IMMAA intended particularly to promote the discourse media executives and policy makers draw on to respond to the challenges posed by the dynamic and rapidly changing media sector. Recurrent themes on the conference ranged from conceptual investigations on what innovation means at a time when the new has become a norm and how research about media innovation and its manage-

ment evolved over time. To what extent is media innovation based on technology, and what matters beyond? What do the global North-South dichotomy with its respective narratives tell us about media management and innovation and how can policy support media innovation? How are media institutions prepared for sensing and seizing innovation to transform themselves and cope with an evolving media environment exhibiting changing patterns of consumption and new competitors?

The selected papers in this JOCIS address the issue of innovation in media management from different perspectives with respect to technologies as well as on different levels of analysis. Starting from an international foresight study among media and communication experts in the article from Castulus Kolo and Florian Haumer on the manifold impact of a variety of current technological advances, subsequently Alex Mari provides a deep dive on the role of smart voice interfaces therein. Whilst Elena L. Vartanova, Andrey Vyrkovsky, and Daria Vyugina summarize in their contribution the digital transformation of television companies in Russia from a nation state or media system level, does Ilhem Allagui focus on innovation in a specific legacy media institution, namely the Al Jazeera Media Network.

The article on technological advances and the future of corporate and marketing communication by Castulus Kolo and Florian Haumer is based on an international survey among experts from

different professional backgrounds. According to the latter, several technological advances combined will enable real-time produced offerings for mass markets without external services. Trust will be key in customer relations and related communications. Real-time production of content requires richer and at the same time more natural user interfaces with as much dependency on context as possible. Furthermore, communications activities will become faster and more one-to-one requiring increasing technological support to get it organized. Based on this, the authors relate the effects of technological advances to various aspects of a company's communication activities mapping the changes and challenges coming along with the latter.

Alex Mari introduces voice commerce by an analysis of shopping-related (intelligent) voice assistants and their effect on brands. As voice assistants become better at learning consumer preferences and habits, they are expected to increasingly influence consumer behaviors driving fast-changing market dynamics that may also have a severe impact on consumer brands and retailers. Loss of brand visibility, the increased relevance of retailers' private labels, and the growth in advertising costs are just some of the consequences anticipated by marketing and technology experts. In light of these potential dynamics, the article gives an overview based on expert interviews on the interplay between consumers, brands, and retail-

ers' behaviors in response to machine behaviors and artificial intelligence respectively.

The world is undergoing digital transformation and the essence of the digitalization process is to change the structure of the industry: the flow of money is redistributed, new technologies do not improve existing ones, but create new ones on the ruins of the old. Elena L. Vartanova, Andrey Vyrkovsky, and Daria Vyugina embark with this assertion into their trend paper on digital transformation of television companies in Russia. They conclude their analysis of expert interviews with showing that the development of digital strategies is a priority for most television companies because the advertising market is decreasing and the state agenda supports this idea. However, as global changes have not yet occurred, plans are being built based on something reliable and understandable, and analog TV channels remain a key source of profit. According to the authors, media companies in Russia are choosing the path of evolution as radical changes involve too much risk.

Last but not least, Ilhem Allagui explores innovation in the case of Al Jazeera Media Network as an example for legacy media institutions. Her paper sheds light on how the latter can facilitate an environment where innovation is possible. Using media innovation and the dynamic capabilities theoretical framework, the paper uses the case-study approach combined with semi-structured interviews with media

experts to understand the way innovation unfolds for Al Jazeera. While media transformation and innovation research is predominantly located in the western world, this paper provides an empirical perspective from the global south. The paper finds that adaptability is the primary mechanism in Al Jazeera's management of innovation.

The data for the contributions to this JOCIS were all taken in pre-COVID times as well as the analyses conducted, and the conclusions drawn. Hence, the collection at hand documents a situation before the crisis which may help to better classify and understand what happened later during the pandemic or what will happen when it has been

overcome. The articles confirm that technology is one of the most important drivers of innovations in media – from a product but also from a process point of view. On the one hand, it has a substantial impact on the business models of legacy organizations and may represent a threat for existing businesses. On the other hand, advances in technology also give opportunities to revise strategies or at least to come up with alternative ways of managing media. In recent years, new competitors or startups respectively have taken advantage from technological progress, but also legacy organizations successfully explored innovations in the context of digital transformation.

