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Editorial – Media and Communities

Dear Readers.

This issue of JMM – The International Journal on Media Management includes five articles.

Media and communities provide the focal point for this issue. We can find here many ways in which media researchers can define the term “communities” and articles included in this issue reflect the definitions of this. Needles to say that all of them find the concept of communities highly important within media management.

We open with a study on community building strategy, labeled as cognitive dominance. In “Lighting Campfire – The Creation of a Community of Interest Around a Media Company” Tobias Johansson examines the strategy that builds economic value from the creation of a community of interest. The cognitive dominance strategy is illustrated in single case study from the Swedish media industry. The company’s strategy was to create a community of interest around its products by use of story telling with a distinguished rhetoric. As the study shows this strategy allowed this company to go through changes and build upon changes itself.

In the second article “Customer Centred Community Application Design” Peter Aschmoneit and Mark Heitmann are interested in product design of

community applications. They argue that the understanding of customers’ cognition is crucial for the development of sustainable communities. Having developed the application of the means-end chain (MEC) framework for investigating customers’ cognitive structure, they claim that it can support the creative process of finding community functions and features in media products.

In the third article “Interoperable Community Platforms and Identity Management in the University Domain” Michael Koch examines how to implement interoperable platforms, that provide an alternative solution to central platform for all communities. This article exemplifies the reasoning for community support platforms basing on the case of Technische Universität München, Germany. It gives us a good overview of different possibilities offered by a community support system used in the academic environment.

Academic environment is also the background of the next article entitled “Management of a Virtual Community of Students”. Walter Diettling and Petra Schubert deal with virtual community of students in Switzerland. The empirical study conducted presents the linkage between conceptual community design and the business model needed to operate such a platform in a sustainable way.

Our last article does not deal with communities per se, but looks at one segment of the media industry, grouped around “Community of Fantasy”: the home video game industry. Dmitri Williams in the article “Structure and Competition in the US Home Video Game Industry” examines in detail development and economics of this segment in USA. This study gives insight to understanding strategies undertaken by biggest manufacturers such as Nintendo, Sony and Sega.

We conclude this issue with book reviews. Ulrike Lechner reviews the book titled “Business Information Technology Management – Alternative and Adaptive Futures” and Doerte Wittig with Oliver Christ review “Content Critical: Gaining Comparative Advantage Through High-Quality Web Content”.

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