

A Trend and Prospect of News Media through Mobile News Application

Yeol-han Park and Hee-soo Choi

*Department of Creative Content, GSCT, Sangmyung University, 7 Hongji-dong,
Jongno-gu, Seoul, Korea (110-743)
parkyeolhan@naver.com, choice@smu.ac.kr*

Abstract

With the advent of the smart media era, mobile news applications have started to gain attention as a new method of news consumption. Although initial mobile news was nothing but a mobile version of old media outlets, SNS has attracted attention in recent years as a news delivery medium thanks to the massive spread of smart devices and the diffusion of SNS.

SNS news service, a horizontal network of journalism driven by prosumers, was able to secure an overwhelming advantage in the speed race. However, this type of news release based on the premise of public consensus may cause errors in judgment in the process of news consumption due to things such as herd mentality, etc.. SNS news services such as 'Yolk News' launched recently in an attempt to build a device that can guarantee reliability, and are expected to develop into a form in the future where consumers can make judgments independently by putting various pieces of news together from different angles. Old media will take time to screen the news for their platform, but they are excellent in service quality and objectivity since they are produced by professional groups pursuing journalism. However, they are also subject to the risk of false reporting and loss of confidence triggered by the speed competition and are now losing ground as SNS news services have recently gained confidence beyond expectation. This suggests that the old media should give up the speed competition with SNS news services and need to evolve in a direction to secure objectivity and reliability of the news while maintaining a suitable level of news delivery speed. In recent years, there has appeared a new form of news purely focusing on the value of the news, destroying both the speed and the objectivity of the news. Applications such as New Square are attracting attention as a new form of news-on-demand by providing news in a storytelling manner, allowing readers to be able to identify the sequence and context of events at a glance.

As described above, SNS news services have a structural limitation in that the quality and the objectivity cannot be guaranteed because non-professional individuals become the first news providers, while old media have already proven that they cannot keep up with the SNS news services in terms of speed. Therefore, in the smart media era, SNS news services, old media, and news-on-demand will compete and grow by satisfying the speed, objectivity, and consumer value, and the news media ecosystem is likely to change rapidly as these news consuming platforms change.

Keywords: *Mobile, News Application, SNS News Service, News on Demand*

1. Introduction

With the advent of smart media era, mobile news applications have started to gain attention as the new method of news consumption. Although initial mobile news was nothing but a mobile version of old media outlets, SNS has attracted attention in recent years as a news delivery medium thanks to the massive spread of smart devices and the

diffusion of SNS. In recent years, while SNS news and old media have been occupying the mainstream of news delivery, a new type of news delivery, “news-on-demand”, has emerged. The on-demand news service does not compete with SNS news services or old media in speed or amount of information. Instead, it provides a news service that satisfies the individual needs of consumers by limiting news consumers or news categories, or by giving a new value for the news.

Current mobile news applications fall into three categories. The first is a mobile version of existing old media, the second is news applications or SNS applications based on SNS, and the third is an on-demand news service satisfying the needs of individual consumers. Given the properties of news such as speed, accuracy, and diffusivity, it is thought that each of the news services has limitations and characteristics.

In the SNS news service, unlike other news media, news consumers provide and spread news by themselves rather than professional editors providing the news. Therefore, it is characterized by the network of journalism among consumers rather than the existing vertical news production system where news providers existed separately. The old media news service has been provided through the media that has acted as a news provider even before the penetration of smart devices and SNS. So, the old media news service is different from other news services in that it spreads to a variety of platforms, including TV and newspaper, as well as the Internet and mobile environments. On-demand news services, unlike SNS news and old media news services, tend to seek a third value as well as delivery. This is an enhancement of NOD (news-on-demand), providing personalized news by subdividing news consumers according to their objectives and preferences.

Table 1. Characteristics of News Services in Different Forms

News service	News offerer	Service form	Information Value
SNS news	pro-sumer	Internet, mobile	issue transmission
Old media news	professional editor	Internet, mobile, TV, radio, paper media <i>etc.</i>	issue transmission
NOD	professional editor	Internet, mobile	issue transmission satisfaction of consumers

This paper was created for the purpose of predicting the future evolutionary direction of news services by analyzing the characteristics and limitations of each type of news application. To this end, I try to find ways to meet the needs of news consumers by analyzing mobile news application types currently in service from various angles such as news providers, service types, and information value.

As analyzing the characteristics and limits of each type of new applications, the paper is to predict the direction of the news services in future. Moreover, it is to suggest solutions to satisfy users' news consumption needs by analyzing the mobile new application in types from various angles: news offered, news form, information value.

2. Characteristics and Limits of SNS News Application

SNS news services have emerged since the spread of smart devices and SNS. SNS news services can be classified in more detail, according to news providers and news delivery methods. First, there is the news delivery function of SNS itself. SNS

is a multimedia medium of a single interface and SNS users form an individual-centered network where an individual is linked with other individual as a node [1]. Each individual will act as a news provider, news consumer, and new medium by simply using SNS and constitute parallel network journalism as prosumers. In this case, a remarkable point to note is that the news itself is not highly reliable because non-professional individuals can become news providers and that entertainment-based soft news tends to be diffused.



Figure 1. Network Journalism of SNS News

Second: offering news services by using the trends in SNS. In the case of ‘Yolk News’, news is exposed in descending order of citation counts by aggregating the number of times cited in Twitter. Yolk News is based on Twitter, and posts leading news most frequently mentioned on Twitter in the ranking order of the day. So, this is meaningful in that Yolk News can satisfy the maximum number of preferences, even though it did not create articles by itself when considering that the demand of the public depends on news-providing media and article narrative style. In addition, we cannot miss the fact that opinions can be exchanged through the comment and share functions as soon as consumers see the news. Even though this is possible with the majority of Internet news services including news applications, SNS-based news services are different in that they can take advantage of this place of opinion exchange through immediate feedback.

A main feature and benefit of an SNS news service is its ripple effect. In the case of Facebook, once an individual clicks the ‘Like’ button, news is disseminated to all users associated with the individual. SNS users try to share news by delivering news provided by media or issue makers or by adding or spreading new information or comments [2]. The main reason they are performing an overlapping role in news distribution process is self-expression and formation of consensus with others [3]. They share news not just to consume news, but to be aware of the news together in the SNS platform and to feel the chemistry of thinking about it. However, news consumption to form this chemistry is likely to be altered in the course of distribution and propagation of news. Due to the nature of SNS platforms which have a great ripple effect, news can be re-edited and provided at the will of consumers regardless of accuracy and objectivity, or it can also be expanded and propagated through groups or individuals with certain tendencies.

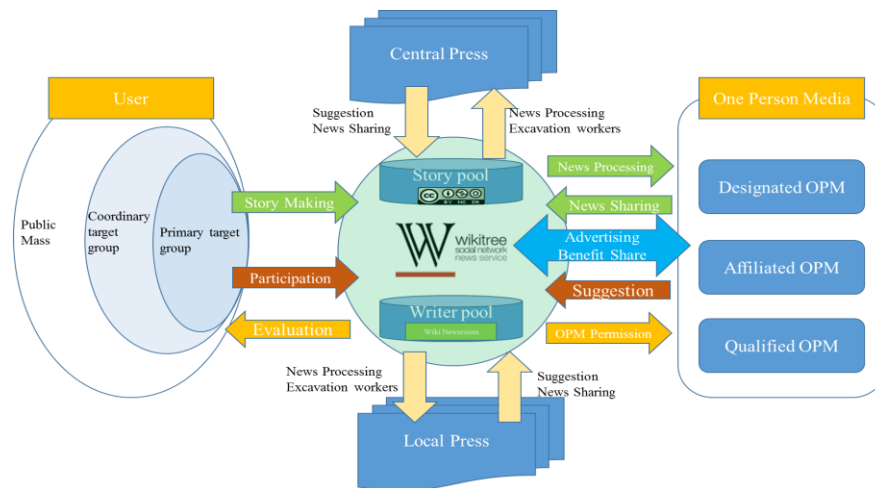


Figure 2. Realtime SNS News Service 'Wikitree' Process

The limitations revealed in the characteristics of SNS news services mentioned above are as follows. First, there are the capacity limits of news. News media in a mobile environment inevitably limits text capacity due to the small screen. Thus, the number of characters cannot be more than those of any other news applications since the environment is relatively unfavorable to deliver information, and SNS platforms do not function only as news mediums. Twitter, one of the most popular SNS platforms, imposes a limit of 140 characters on its system. However, the capacity limit of text is revealed more clearly in that the capacity of text is inversely proportional to the delivery speed and ripple effect due to the nature of the delivery process of SNS news services, let alone the disadvantages and system factors in the mobile environment.

Second, there is a social network influencer. SNS users, as news distributors, perform a variety of roles, and in the case of Twitter, a representative SNS, the news are circulated in this order: issue maker, influencer, and propagator / diffuser. Issue makers are traditional news media, news portals, social news such as Wikitree, power blogs, celebrities, and ordinary users. Issues makers perform a traditional agenda-setting role, but the whole of the agenda raised by them is not diffused. And, influential persons or influencers are issue makers with a lot of retweets, not just those who have a large-scale network of followers or friends, but who engage in direct participation and social interaction, including tweets, mentions, *etc.* These influencers perform very important roles in SNS news propagation, and the point to note is that all influencers are not professional news producers at all pursuing objective journalism. When compared with traditional news media outlets, SNS news is often provocative, biased, or interest-driven because it is based on platforms where the tendencies of individuals or groups are strongly exposed. The fact that influencers of social networks are actively involved in news production as Internet celebrities may result in them not being able to guarantee objectivity or credibility as news delivery media. SNS news is a platform which shows individuals or group's tendency and voice more strongly than traditional news media do, so it tends to cause stimulating, interesting, and tendentious news. The social network influencers are internet celebrities and participating in making news enthusiastically, and it causes objectivity and reliability issues which are essential in news media. Lastly, there is a hybridity of SNS news. One of the characteristics of SNS news is that the news is distributed without clearly classifying the fact and the truth, the news and the information, and communication and discussion whereas the traditional journalism classifies the fact and the truth.

Third, the hybridity of SNS news distribution may be mentioned. One of the features of SNS news distribution is that facts and opinions, news and information, and dialogues and debates are circulated without being clearly identified, unlike traditional journalism separating facts and opinions. While, in traditional media, news contents with clear boundaries such as politics, economy, society, and culture are distributed according to paper size or broadcasting sequence, SNS news with a variety of sources is mixed and circulated regardless of the nature of the contents [4]. This hybridity sometimes creates the issue of news consumers accepting the opinions of the social network influencers mentioned above as official opinions of traditional media or opinions with social implications.

Finally, there is a lack of objectivity as news media. The emergence of SNS has caused new changes in the structure of the existing forms of political communication and discourse. SNS news, by its nature, tends to be softened and highlights the claims of users who distribute and spread the news rather than the value of news in terms of journalism or the content itself. In the SNS, unilateral and extreme claims easily attract attention and those who actively express their opinions tend to be over-represented, but this has nothing to do with real politics [5]. Rather, the limitations of SNS news media are revealed in that they could be used as a tool of real politics.

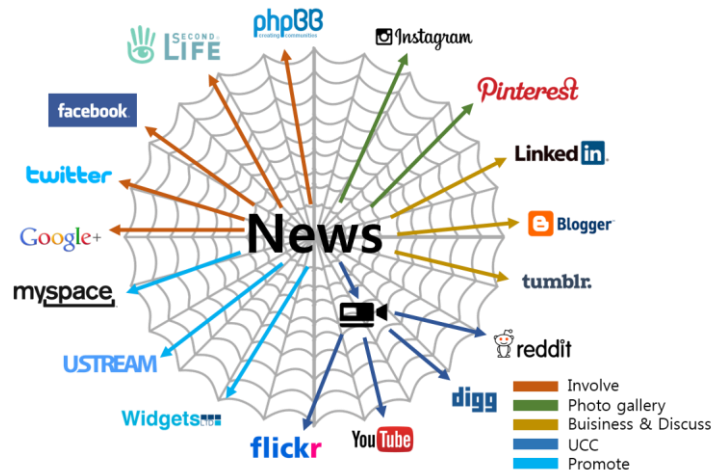


Figure 3. Present SNS News Analysis

3. Characteristics and Limits of Old Media News Application

The ripple effect of old media is still overwhelming, compared to other news services. The reason for this can be found in the diversity of platforms established by traditional media outlets and the high quality of news reproduced by professionals. Despite some differences from medium to medium, it is a great advantage to provide news through various platforms with significant capital investment such as TV, radio, and, print media, as well as the Internet and mobile environments. This is due to the fact that the quasi monopolistic market was formed depending on medium, in the case of existing TV, radio, and print media.

However, when compared with SNS news services, old media reveals limitations in speed. When an issue occurs, unlike SNS where news is immediately produced, propagated, and spread, it is hard for old media to hold the position of “first messenger” that they enjoyed until the emergence of SNS, since they go through the process; issues occur, news processing (platforming), and news delivery. Nevertheless, because the “speed” is one of the important values in news delivery media, the speed competition among old media is not yet as fierce as in SNS news services. However, excessively overheated speed competition may lead to accidents such as false reports or speculative

articles and significantly harm their public confidence, one of the greatest strengths of old media, in proportion to their ripple effect.

Although false reports are too many to aggregate, there was a case where the Korean general public came to greatly distrust old media. That was the sinking of the Sewol. The maritime accident occurred at 8:48 a.m. on April 16, 2014 and was quickly spread through SNS by the persons involved including students and teachers in the Sewol. Old news media started broadcasting on the accident at around 11:00 a.m., but they carried out their broadcast based on unconfirmed rumors, “The Sewol sunk near Jindo, but all passengers have been rescued”. However, it soon turned out to be false report, and the accident was recorded as one of the worst maritime accidents in history with 294 people dead and 10 people missing among the 476 people aboard.

After that, public broadcasters and disaster broadcasters successively spread a number of false reports with respect to the number and the list of the rescued people, so the public who was anxiously waiting to hear victim news turned away from the old media and began to pay attention to SNS news coming up directly from the field. SNS news has rather poor credibility compared with old media, and its false report rate is even higher. Nevertheless, the public focused on the SNS news because of its speedy delivery of vast amounts of information. The sinking of the Sewol instilled a strong sense of distrust regarding the old media in the public. While the influence of SNS was increasing thanks to the wide spread of smart devices, the sinking of the Sewol and the false reports of the old media served as a catalyst to change the news consumption patterns of the public in a more dramatic way.

4. Characteristics and Limits of NOD (News on Demand) Application

A new news service has recently emerged which considers the nature and consumption patterns of news consumers. This type of service takes the form of NOD (news-on-demand) in that it reflects and meets the news consumption habits of individual consumers. This service requires a platforming process, as the same as old media, because a specialized workforce processes and distributes the news, but the diversity and scale of the platform are not comparable to those of old media. Moreover, its news delivery speed and ripple effect are not comparable to those of old media and SNS news services, due to the problems of scale and capital. But this service gives a third value to the news itself to actively meet the preferences of news consumers, away from the passive function of news delivery media which simply pass issues, and is leading new news consumption patterns by segmenting news consumption targets.

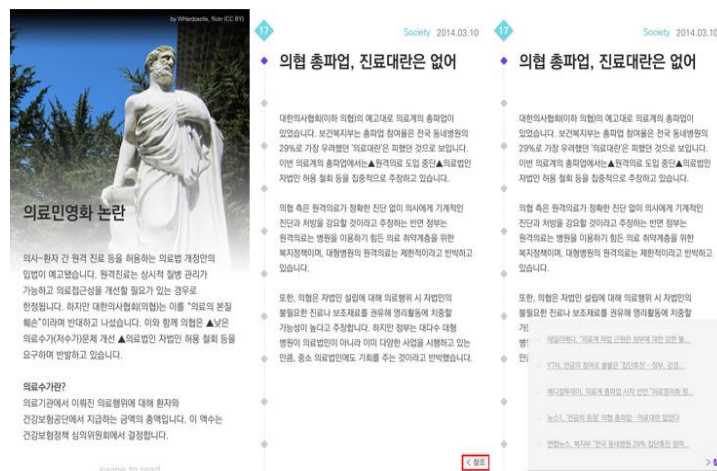


Figure 4. 'Newsquare'

In the case of 'Newsquare', they actively become involved in the news processing step and provide existing news after organizing news articles in a chronological and casual order. For example, if new legislation is passed, existing news services only offer the news in the same time period or other closely related information. However, Newsquare provides news in a diachronic way on the basis of news about the legislation's passage by aggregating other information with the same context, such as the reasons why the passage of the legislation becomes an issue, the social background of the legislation, the discussions surrounding the legislation, and the reasons for the passage of the legislation. Newsquare uses relatively simple words and limits the text of each article to 500 characters so that consumers can quickly scan a vast amount of news. Thus, users can build an understanding of the overall news in a much simpler and faster way than using conventional news delivery media.

So, the main target is those who have to study the news out of necessity, such as job applicants, foreigners, and students. However, it is difficult to ensure objectivity compared to old media since editor's opinions strongly intervene in the news reprocessing process than in old media, and there is the risk of not fully meeting the preferences of news consumers because information is likely to be missed in the process of reducing the text.

While 'Newsquare' has limited consumer segments by focusing on "Learning" as a consumption pattern of existing news, 'Dispatch' subdivides the newsfeed range by focusing on the "Entertainment" category among issues. 'Dispatch' sought to differentiate themselves not just in the news categories but also in news delivery system. Regardless of the SNS news service and old news media, the text accounts for a high portion of news delivery media. However, 'Dispatch' reduced the text and increased the proportion of photos to satisfy consumers by focusing on the characteristics of the "Entertainment" category. Even though Dispatch has created a unique consumption pattern and business model as a photo-based news media, it still has limitations on transition or spread to other news categories.



Figure 5. 'Dispatch'

'Zinynews' is technically a way of looking at the news by bringing together the news provided by old news media, and its function of outputting the existing news is an important part, as is the case with 'Yolk News', the SNS news service mentioned above. However, Zinynews provides a service called "3-minute briefing". This "3-minute briefing" provides only headlines, but the headlines are different from those of other news delivery media since they are composed of a minimum amount of text, allowing consumers to obtain the information. This is only aimed at office workers who are too busy to consume news properly or consumers who want only simple information, and

extremely reduces the amount of text to improve readability, as is attempted by 'Newsquare'. Also, rather than simply looking at headlines, consumers can select a headline and read the original article if they feel interested in the headline or have some time on their hands.

However, even though there are no two ways that the "3-minute briefing" of Zinynews is a unique service, we have no choice but to raise questions on its effectiveness. Since the original headline itself provides news information implicitly, the amount of information delivered only by headlines does not increase significantly, even if the amount of text is slightly extended. And what's more, reading the full text by clicking headlines is not so innovative when compared to other news delivery media. Thus, even though 'Zinynews' has limited its news consumer base to a certain extent, it has clear limitations in that it does not take an active stance to reflect the needs of news consumers.



Figure 6. 'Zinynews'

5. Conclusion

In the media environment where smart devices have become popular, the news service is mainly provided through mobile Internet environment and applications. Therefore, in this paper, I analyzed the news media trends after classifying news services into three types such as SNS news, old media news, and news-on-demand, on the basis of news providers, service types, and value-added types.

The major contents may be summed up as follows. SNS news, a horizontal network of Journalism driven by prosumers, was able to secure an overwhelming advantage in the speed race. SNS news has high journalistic values in that it was born to facilitate two-way or many-to-many communication and to publicize everyday life. However, due to the platform properties susceptible to softening, subjective opinions often attract attention rather than the value of objective news, and therefore SNS news contains risk to become only means or target of political promotion or to stay just as emotional and social ties. In fact, in recent years, politicians and the government mostly take advantage of the SNS as a means of agenda setting [6]. Therefore, recently launched SNS-based news applications are attempting to prepare a device that can guarantee the reliability and, in the future, expected to develop into a form where each consumer is capable of determining the value by summing up the news from various angles. Even though subjective opinions of Internet influencers often intervene in the course of propagation and interpretation of the news and sometimes contain social risk, the fact that news consumers can actively express their opinion about the news and make discussions is a great attraction of SNS news. In addition, the base of SNS news service is expected to be further expanded according to the gradual penetration of smart devices.

Old media have an advantage to provide single news through various platforms. Therefore, even though it takes time to put the news into the platforms, their ripple effect is great due to the diversity of platform, and service quality and objectivity can be guaranteed since the news is produced by professional group pursuing journalism. However, their confidence can be tumbled by false reports sparked by the speed competition with SNS News, and recently they are losing ground as SNS news services are gaining more and more confidence. This suggests that old media have to give up the speed competition with SNS news services and need to guarantee the objectivity and reliability of news while maintain a suitable level of delivery speed.

In addition, recently another form is emerging, by destroying the speed or the objectivity, but focusing on new values of the news. Applications such as 'Newsquare' are gaining attention as a new form of NOD (News on Demand) by providing the news as storytelling type to allow consumers to identify at a glance the sequence of events and the context. In the case of 'Dispatch', it provides visual news through pictures, as an entertainment-specialized news service, after focusing on the characteristics of news categories and giving up traditional news delivery ways depending on the text. 'Zinynews' focuses on news consumption time and is dedicated to "3-minute briefing" service which provide major news of the day in 3 minutes.

Table 2. Characteristics of Each Media

Media	Expendability of platform	Variety of users	Text	Objectivity (Subjectivity)	Main news	News offerer
SNS	low	high	less	low(high)	soft news	SNS individual users
Old media	high	high	more	high(low)	hard news	professional workers
NOD	low	low	less	mid(mid)	mixed	professional workers

Old news media traditionally had their positions as "first news messenger" and "objective and credible news messenger", and further had a huge ripple effect through a variety of platforms. However, as SNS news services recently strengthen their position thanks to the wide spread of smart devices, old news media eventually collide with SNS news services armed with unprecedented amount of information and news delivery capacity [7]. As a result, it became difficult to look for the position as the fastest news delivery medium in the old news media. Moreover, old media became unable to monopolize the ripple effect anymore, because they had lost credibility from false report cases such as proved in the sinking of the Sewol. SNS news service is already overwhelming the existing media in the propagation capability as we see in the false report of the sinking of the Sewol and subsequent developments, and it is easy to predict that the existing media will gradually lose their ground in the digital media ecosystem if they fail to respond appropriately to the speed and convenience of SNS. However, SNS news services have not yet exceeded the ripple effect of the old media due to the lack of platform channel where news can be consumed. Moreover, SNS news has not yet dispelled negative perception such as "News production by nonprofessional personnel", because it creates a network journalism driven by prosumers where news consumers

become new producers and propagators. This suggests that the SNS news services and old media news services will develop in a mutually complementary manner.

Finally, the news on demand has lower propagation speed and weaker ripple effect than those of SNS news service because it has to limit the range of users and the types of news categories due to its service properties accommodating the fragmented needs of users, and had greater difficulty in obtaining platforms and capital than the old media. In the future, however, it seems to be equipped with enough capacity as a modern news media by resolving the speed issues through the quote and the link to the old media and by preparing mass communication system through curation service, sharing, and scrapping through SNS. Further, it is likely to develop along with differentiation to satisfy highly segmented needs of news consumers over time. In particular, as old media are losing their ground, the news on demand has a possibility to differentiate itself as a professional news service tailored to individual consumer by combining with media companies and capital getting out of traditional news media market. To sum up, the result of research is that the SNS news service would have a bigger power of spreading based on how much SNS gets spreaded, and the old media would have a smaller portion in the market since its speed and amount of information limit has been proved. However, the old media would be complementary with the SNS news service by editing and filtering with credibility the over produced news on SNS through its own diverse platforms. Third, NOD news would be more diversely specified and developed to satisfy users needs for the news even though it is not a service has a power of spreading, or the one has various platforms or resources.

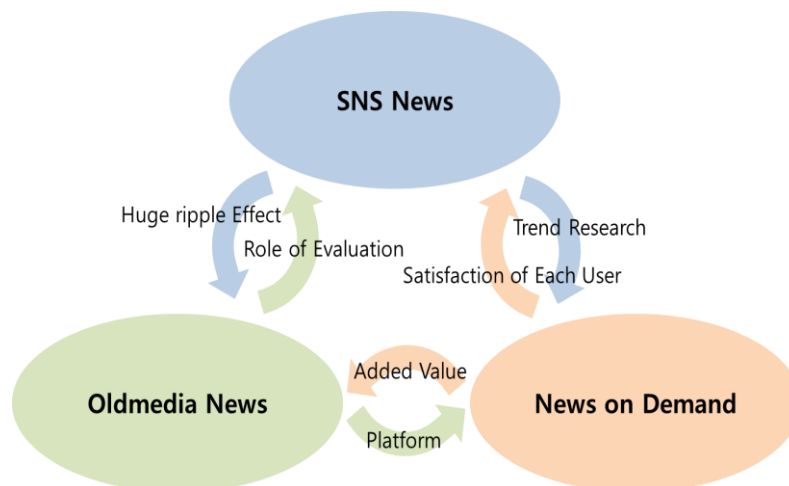


Figure 7. The Future Correlation of the News Media

In conclusion, first, SNS news service seems to have a greater ripple effect based on the prevalence of the SNS. Old media news services will gradually lose their ground since it has been proved that they were able to catch up with the SNS news services in terms of the speed and the amount of information. But, they seem to play a complementary role with SNS news service by screening and reprocessing in a credible manner the overproduced news in the SNS news service through a variety of platforms of their own. Second, the news on demand is likely to differentiate itself further to satisfy the gradually segmented needs of news consumers, even though it has low ripple effect and does not have a variety of platforms and capital due to its service property to satisfy the needs of individual user. Finally, the change of news media ecosystem is expected to be accelerated due to the changes in the platform for news consumption, regardless of old media, SNS news, and news on demand. In the recent news media ecosystem, the expectations of news consumers are getting higher and their requirements are also

becoming diverse, as various new media platforms emerge and news production mechanism changes accordingly [8].

While we can't tell until when news production method depending on print media will continue to exist, we will see in the near future that people consume news through a variety of smart wearable devices. Given that the production and consumption of news are closely associated with the development of technology, we need to notice and study how news consumption platforms change the news media ecosystem in the future.

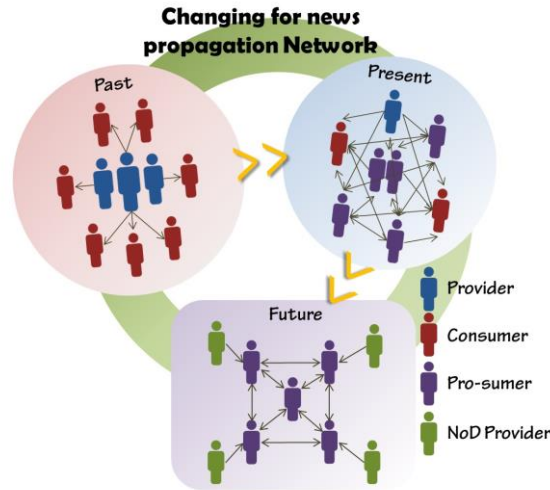


Figure 8. A Prospect of News Propagation Network Progress

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Authors



Yeol-han, Park, He received B.A. degrees in Historical Content from Sangmyung University, Korea in 2014. He is undergoing the M.A. course work of Graduate School of Culture Technology, Sangmyung University, Department of Creative Content. His current research interests include Cultural Contents development, Information service in Social Network, Cultural tourism based on heritage.



Hee-soo Choi, He received B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in Korean History from Sogang University, Korea in 1989, 1991, and 2009 respectively. Since 1995, he has been an office worker and CEO of Contents development Company. And also since 2012, he was a professor of Sangmyung University, Department of History and Historical Content. His current research interests include Cultural Contents development, Information in Museum, Exhibition and Archives, Cultural heritage and Traditional Knowledge service.