

A Study on Strategic Modeling to Develop Comics Content with Smart Device Platform

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Abstract

A new transition of content is required by the developmental evolution of Smart Device Platform and the production of comics has been changed. Also, the necessity of the strategy for content is on the rise owing to the change of SNS network. Currently we are having hey days of Webtoon market in Korea. Webtoon's got about 200 million hits by viewers on a weekly basis in NAVER and DAUM, the two Korean prominent portals. The content is already saturated with these sorts of comic books, low-volume of Webtoons, high-quality Webtoons and new-styled novels. Especially, the Webtoon market has been strongly regarded as area of free of charge, so it is difficult to switch into a fee chargeable market at this moment. This study is to propose the strategic model for developing and distributing content, and support to progress Korean comics market steadily. This application of modeling can produce diverse content with qualitative improvement. Moreover, it can expand comics market and then complete a virtuous circulation to reproduce comics through profits. In sequence, the expansion of business in storytelling of comics will help to keep the virtuous circulation stable to plant itself as the Korean Wave all over the world.

Keywords: *Smart Platform, Smart media, Convergence contents, One source(Original source) of Comics*

1. Introduction

The world Comics market prospects that the printed Comics market will grow 103% and the digital Comics market will be growing 238% from 2008 to 2014. Comics started entering online market due to propagation of PC and internet since 2000. This is not a simple change of equipment, but an attempt to change the concept of Comics. Since Comics standing in the center of culture reflects the age, it is continuously developing with media. Initially starting with Comics strips like <Kwang-soo' thought>, <Asaekgiga> and <Yonghada Yonghae>, released through homepage of the domestic press in 1998, the domestic online Comics got much closer to consumers as Comics like <Pape Popo Memories> and <Marine Blues> got popular after 2000. Based on Kang-Pool's 6 pages in 2003 which was an innovation of webtoons, <Romance Comics> scrolled down almost 20 pages played a huge role in spreading the term of 'webtoon' in Korea. As a typical window of the distribution platform started with industrialization of contents, the classical type was maintained till the early 2000s. As devices like smart phone and smart pad are generalized with the rapid arrival of smart environment since 2010, however, the distribution window of contents is also evolving rapidly. The feature-length animation for theater is evolved to 3D digital animation and now a type of experiencing five senses. As the expression area of live-action film is interlocked with the substitution effect of animation, the area of live-action film produced in animation form is

largely expanded, and Comics show their differentiated looks by combining app-Comics and webtoons with other genres. Also series of TV animation evolved to broadcasting system through cable and specialized channels, breaking out of the broadcasting patterns focusing on terrestrial channels. Especially, animation customized for specific generations meets consumers through various distribution platforms based on pay-download service without any time/spatial limitations.

Currently, it is 'the golden age' of webtoons. The weekly hits for the webtoons appearing serially from major portal sites, Daum and Naver approach 0.2billion. Cartoonists popular with 10s-20s grew in star writers with fan clubs.¹ Together with webtoons, the production of Comics contents was sharply increased. In accordance with the appearance of new platforms, platform development companies or relevant contents production companies are developing contents optimized for platforms.

This study aims to suggest directions to expand Comics contents for developmental demand market which is the one should be aimed for as consumer-centered service of the latest smart environment realized as HTML 5 of Web 2.0 era.

2. Analysis of Smart Platform Contents

2.1. Case Analysis of Platform-Centered Comics Fusion

As a typical window of the distribution platform, started with industrialization of Comics, animation and game, such classical types like book, magazine, theater, TV series and video(DVD) and PC were maintained till the early 2000s. As devices like smart phone and smart pad are generalized with the rapid arrival of smart environment after 2010, the distribution window is also sharply evolving. Owing to such periodical changes and demands, customized contents were shown up. In order to present Comics optimized for platforms, those contents have technical fusions.



Figure 1. Tap Toon

As a part of 'How to live SMART' campaign, in October 2011, Samsung showed 'Tab Toon', a new concept contents produced by using Galaxy Tab 10.1. Since tabtoons are completed by fusion with musical elements and flashes rather than simply creating/uploading images, in the aspect of the existing app-toon and consumers' participation, it is possible to create new ideas through tabtoon while there could be difficulties in the actual production. In case of app-toon, it is possible for individuals to produce and upload through creative attempts.

¹ <http://news.mk.co.kr/newsRead.php?year=2012&no=63944>(accessed April 10, 2013).

In 2011, Daum Communication released 'Daum Comics' Application for iPad through which Daum Comics service can be enjoyed by using iPad. Releasing 'Pad Toon', Comics for smart pad, it also showed 'Haru' and 'Yahwa', webtoons for smart pad. Through 'Pad Toon', users can enjoy the new concept Comics by using an interactive function reacting to users' selection. Also the usability of smart pad was maximized based on animation changed from various scenes, video and sound effects. As a case fused with a certain platform, iPad, Pad Toon is a little differentiated from the existing Comics by adding sound and scene effects.



Figure 2. Pad Toon

Releasing Galaxy Note, Samsung Electronics also showed 'Note toon' which is a compound word of Galaxy Note(smart device) and Comics, as Comics produced by creation of Galaxy Note platform. The representative work of Note toon is <Cine Note>, one of the new contents fused with films and webtoons. Though <Cine Note> was produced to promote and inform the excellence of Galaxy Note, it is such a great case of fusion contents showing several possibilities like contents production by using smart media platform, network of Comics storytelling and changes of contents suitable for technical changes.



Figure 3. Cine Note

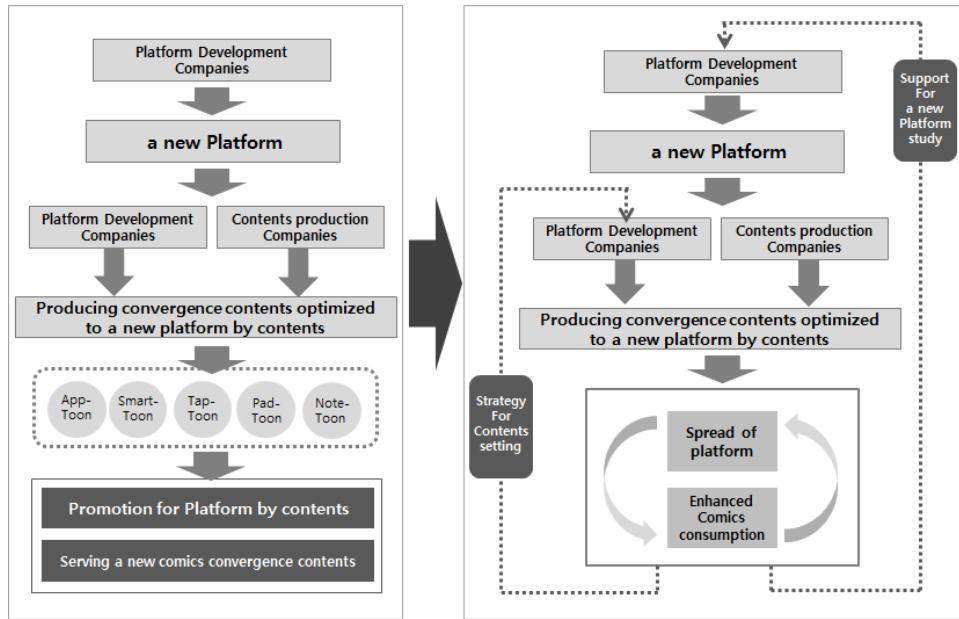


Figure 4. Platform Development Strategic Model

As mentioned above, the platform-centered fusion contents produced by platform developers can be one of their strategies to spread the platforms. If a contents 'Lock-in' strategy is established, however, the continuous contents market can be maintained and expanded. Such a market will be estimated as a rational model that can develop both Comics market and platform market.

2.2. Case Analysis of Innovative Technique-Centered Comics Contents

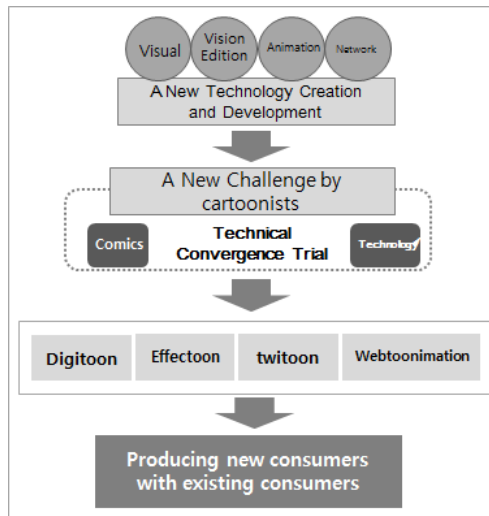


Figure 5. Innovative Technical Comics Convergence Contents Model

New changes of Comics market was attempted not only by platform production companies, but also contents production companies. The innovative technique of Comics contents was triggered by the appearance of digital Comics. As a differentiated approach from

analogue method, it was an attempt of transformation by applying graphic and image programs to Comics. Moreover, new technologies of network are now creating new Comics area. Such Comics contents based on new technologies are provided to consumers, showing innovative techniques of the contents. New technique of writers and production companies will bring in new markets. Furthermore, it can attract not only consumers of the existing market, but also consumers that have never approached to Comics market.

The first case is Digitoon that appeared first. As a short Comics1) composed with pictures taken by digital camera and Comics, it received great responses from the general public, based on the start with Jang, Hye In's <Sally Toon>. As a Comics form newly shown with development and propagation of digital camera, Digitoon is creative contents produced focusing on techniques. Since users can use photos of various facial expressions suitable for the Comics story and also decorate the surroundings with a graphic program, even people who are not good at drawing can also create Comics.

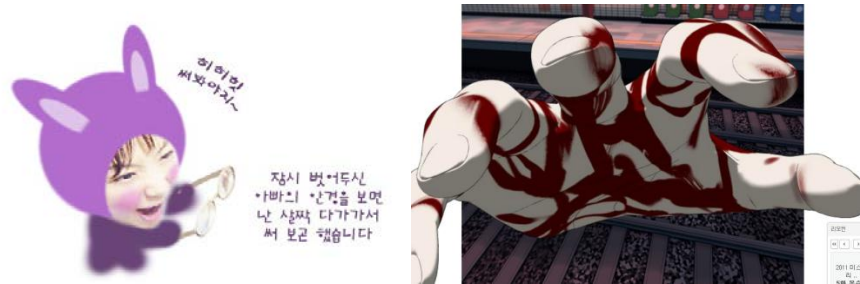


Figure 6. Sally Toon(Jang, Hye In) & Ok-su Station Ghost(HORANG)

The second one is Effectoon which is the fusion contents based on Comics to maximize effects. As Comics that use multimedia effects for proper parts by controlling the dynamics, the multimedia contents are variously fused with contents in accordance with changes of high-performance platform, screen expansion of tablet PC and smart phone differentiated from feature phone, getting out of the existing image-line up method. Effectoon maximizes immersion into webtoon through animation and direction.

The 2011 Summer Naver webtoon <Mystery, Short Stories>, attracted attention with lots of hits from various portal sites was an adapted webtoon of the existing mysterious stories, by Naver webtoon writers in a relay form. Many works used flashes and special effects to maximize dramatic situations. With them, consumers were able to enjoy the webtoon more realistically. Webtoons can be read by anyone easily and lightly, which becomes a strength and also a weakness. However, <Mystery, Short Stories> was able to imprint on consumers for a long time with a single exposure for a short time through shock tactics caused by maximized effects.

Third, it is Twittoon through SNS. As a compound word of Twitter and Comics, Twittoon means Comics shown through SNS(Social Network Service). Contrary to webtoons appearing in portal sites, Twittoon's main readers are the followers of the relevant writers, and it is also possible to check consumers' reactions in real-time. Twittoon is one of the contents whose development was possibly predicted as everybody can enjoy Comics anywhere and anytime through mobile smart media devices while it was needed to have a fixed hardware, PC. It is expected that Twittoon can extend its influence to new Comics genre by using ripple effect and exposure method suitable for the technical platform, SNS, without largely breaking out of the strengths of webtoon.

Also contents distributors show differentiated strategies through diversification of direction and search engine, and attempts to provide portals with customized-service focusing on consumers. The U.S. Marvel Comics provided an Marvel App with the release of iPad, and especially provided pay-premium members with Cut View showing details of Comics. In case of Korea, KT(www.kt.com) released 'Olleh Comics' app, and then started providing Comics lovers with various high-quality Comics contents. With 'Olleh Comics' released for android, users can use the largest scale of Comics contents in Korea around 30,000 books and 3,000 titles including domestic popular Comics of Daewon Culture Industry Inc. and Haksan Publishing Co., Ltd, and foreign major Comics of the U.S. IDW and Shogakukan in Japan. By strengthening search functions, such emotional search functions are provided to make it possible for search based on each writer, work and Comics style. It also operates a premium spot applying UI of Cut View method so that users can conveniently enjoy Comics in a unit of cut even with a small-sized screen.

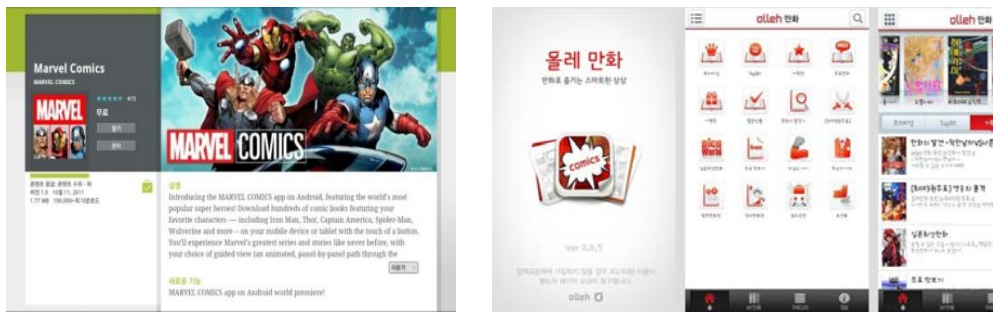


Figure 7. Marvel Comics & Alleh Comics

3. New Comics Contents Strategic Modeling

3.1. Comics Contents Production Strategic Modeling

What is the most important for the development of Comics contents market is the quality of contents itself which is the qualitative completion. Every innovation of fusion techniques and certainly secured distribution channels should be based on quality of works. Moreover, such a stable and expansive Comics market should be continuously expanded by the existing star Cartoonists' continued mega-attempts, and also should be vitalized more by appointment of fresh and excellent new Cartoonists.

Star writers should establish strategies for fusion from the planning stage of Comics. Of course, writers themselves do not have to perform every technical fusion. By recruiting experts in fusion techniques, distributors or production companies should realize fusion technical power suitable for the Cartoonists' intention. At this time, acquirement of expertise and meeting with experts in every fusion area to write storytelling should be preceded. Since it is hard for new writers to create contents through fusion experts, it might be also important for them to target niche market for new platforms and to show unknown fusion techniques by studying various directions. Also writers and production companies should study legal matters including author's moral right and author's property right in regard of free/pay distribution of their own contents, in order to establish their own concepts of pay-contents. This will form right commercial supremacy in regard of free/pay contents, and furthermore, solve the current problem of the webtoon market which is cognized as free of charge.

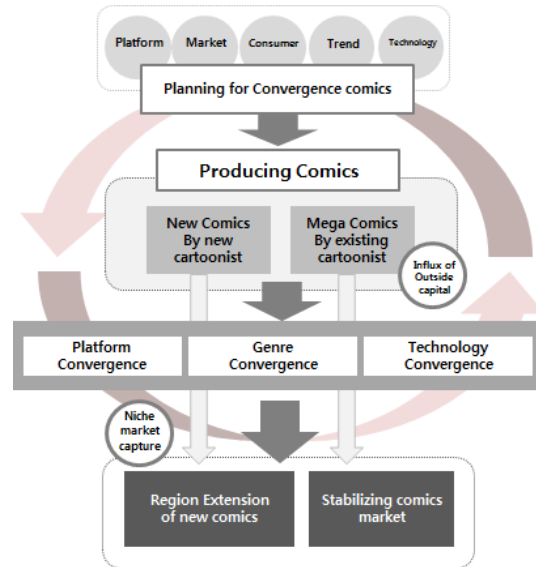


Figure 8. The strategic Model for Contents Development

3.2. Comics Contents Distributor Strategic Modeling

The contents distributors' strategic model can be summarized like below. First, it is necessary to support researches on continuous mega-attempts by the existing star writers and also to support new writers' fresh Comics. A base that can be actively reflected to work planning should be provided after researching studies, demand survey and directions of work in advance. Second, the current windows of appointing new writers focusing on portal sites are needed to have qualitative improvement and smart strategies to select effective works. Third, the fusion method should be sought for and studied after recruiting technical experts(PD). The expert in fusion will change the work into high-quality contents that have marketability in domestic market by using fusion technical power. Fourth, the strategic model should have various changes of direction to actively express fusion contents.

The app viewer developed by Operation Ajax realizes technical fusion like game effect and specialized panel transition based on dynamic direction. The Operation Ajax is showing the optimized fusion techniques. The Marvel's 'Iron man' application shows technical fusion including combination of mobile function of each close/medium/distant view with a game for moving space, speech bubble's reading function, mobile function in accordance with appearing objects and target selection in game. Showing new innovative contents based on the fusion between contents and professional technical power, it has maximized synergy effect of cross media platform contents(Comics-film-application). There also should be attempts of various directing techniques and curation in the whole viewer form that can be commonly used with apps and webs. It is advisable to provide optimized distributing viewers by recruiting social curation in order for online distribution of Comics, which is great that customized contents for each consumer can be provided. Lastly, the contents created through fusion with the optimized technique on the basis of great quality of the work will be recognized by both domestic and international markets. however, the overseas distribution is not currently moved forward smoothly. Thus distributors should establish active strategies to enter overseas market.

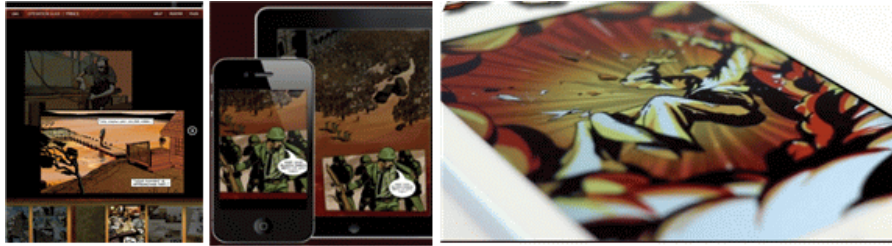


Figure 9. Cognito Comics <CIA: Operation Ajax>

Pioneering markets in developing countries(BOP: Bottom of the Pyramid) should be preceded before the advanced countries, and then overseas market can be gradually expanded. Such undeveloped market(BOP) showing 4.5 times higher population growth and more than 4% higher economic growth rate than advanced countries implies such high population growth and high economic growth possibility. It has great possibility to expand business area when their standard of living is improved after supporting the expansion of infrastructure.

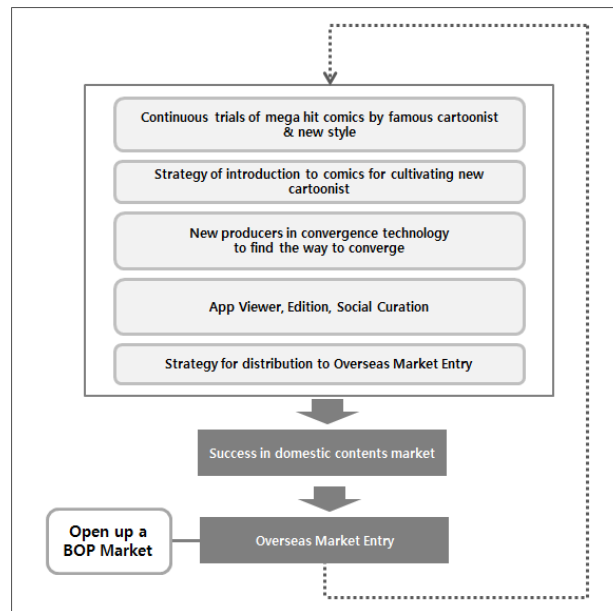


Figure 10. The Strategic Model for Contents Distribution

4. Conclusion

The quality of comics should be improved by contents convergence to expand the quantity and quality of comics contents. This is the way to reduce the decrease in quality as the increase in quantity. Both the national policy support for contents convergence and the aggressive production strategy by companies can complete the circle virtuous structure.

In conclusion (refer to the diagram above), If the quality of convergence contents is improved, the high quality of contents will be produced, and then it can expand the comics market and generate the virtuous circle structure to reproduce comics by earnings. In addition, the expansion to connected business through the original resource based storytelling of comics business can maintain to stabilize the virtuous circle structure of comics based

convergence contents more. This system will succeed in advance abroad to globalize Korea wave as well as the domestic cultural business.

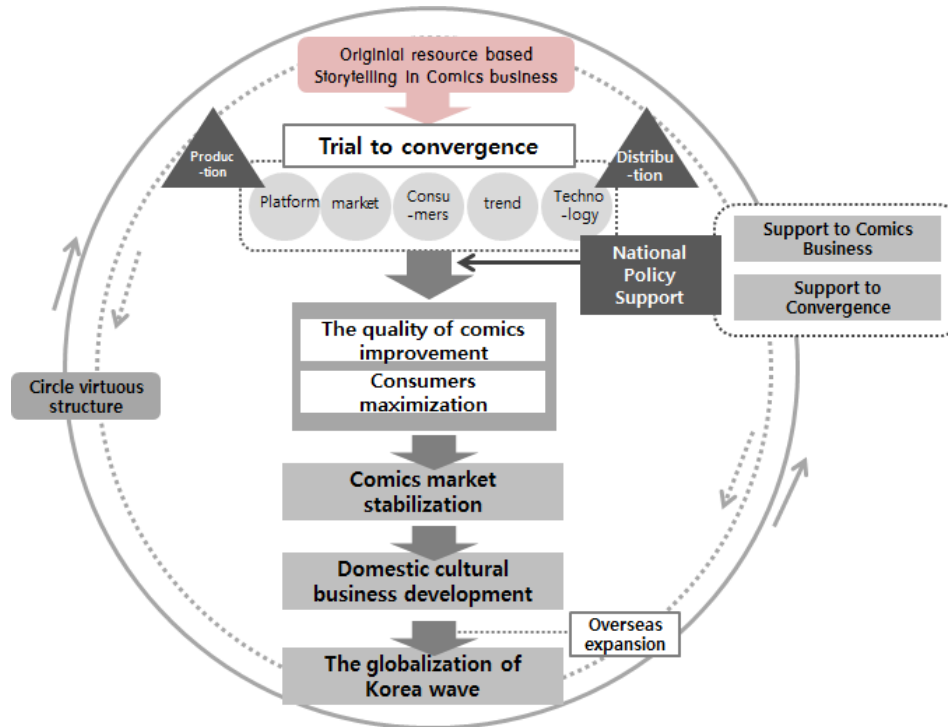


Figure 11. Strategic Modeling to Develop Comics Contents Based on Smart Platform

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