



preface

Three things made me realize that a new edition of *The Dynamics of Mass Communication* was in order. The first was a news article that reported that (1) Facebook had nearly 700 million members worldwide (that means about 1 in every 10 people in the world is a member) and (2) the company was valued at about \$100 billion dollars. Not bad for an idea that started in a dorm room.

Apps were the second thing. Apps weren't around when the 11th edition was written and the iPad had yet to come out. These days articles with cute titles about the growing popularity of apps for mobile media are appearing everywhere. Some of the more clever examples I found were "App-lause," "Planet of the Apps," "Get Appy," "What's App-ening?" "What's App Doc?" and my personal favorite, "App, App and Away." More than 10 billion apps had been downloaded by mid-2011. It was obvious that this app stuff was catching on.

The third thing had to do with the companies that now control most of the Internet's media commerce: Netflix, Apple, Google, Amazon, and Yahoo. When I first started working on the first edition of *Dynamics* (way, way back in 1980), Apple was only three years old and thanks to its early success as a computer builder, the company had revenues of about \$330 million and employed around 50 people. In 2010, Apple had \$65 billion in revenue and nearly 50,000 employees. Netflix, Google, Yahoo, and Amazon did not exist in 1980. In short, over the past 30 years, there has been a rearranging of the guard in mass communication. Traditional media companies, such as HarperCollins, Condé Nast, Sony Music, Paramount Pictures, NBC, and Gannett, while still influential, have been joined by the new digital powers.

As you have probably deduced by now, these three developments—social media, apps, and the new media Goliaths—are major themes in the 12th edition.

The new edition also examines other events that have affected the media. The economic downturn that caused media revenues to shrink over the past couple of years has, it is hoped, bottomed out. Nonetheless, money is still tight and it is doubtful that some media industries will ever see their incomes rise to previous levels.

With the exception of YouTube and news/weather videos, the user-generated content craze has cooled off. Many bloggers have turned to Twitter or Facebook to express their thoughts. Most mass media are relying less on amateur content and more on professionally produced material. Even YouTube has put more emphasis on content produced by pros.

Video on the Web has exploded in the last couple of years. Internet-connected TV sets and DVD players are in many households. New software has made it ridiculously easy to add video to social media sites. Advertisers and public relations firms rely heavily on Web video in structuring their campaigns. Politicians declare their candidacies via Web video. The Online Video Guide lists numerous sites where a viewer can find videos in more than two dozen categories.

Finally, when I was working on the previous edition, Amazon's Kindle had been on the market for less than a year, and there were still doubts about its ultimate success. Amazon's e-reader sold about 400,000 units in 2008. As of this writing, experts estimate that the company has sold more than 8 million Kindles, and the device has gotten a lot of competition, including the iPad, the Nook, and Sony's e-reader. The book publishing industry is now feeling the same disruption that the recording industry felt when file sharing and digital downloading became the preferred way of acquiring music.

So much for the general overview. Here's a more specific look at what's new in the 12th edition.

New to the 12th Edition

Users of previous editions of the book will quickly notice that Chapter 18 (“International and Comparative Media Systems”) in the 11th edition has been dropped from the 12th edition. Reviewers suggested that such a topic seemed too specialized in a basic introduction to media and should be left to a more advanced course. Nonetheless, key parts of that chapter are now included in the appropriate media chapters so that students who wish to take a course in the international area will be familiar with fundamental information on the topic.

Next, the organization of the book has been slightly rearranged. Chapter 12 (“The Internet and the World Wide Web”) in the 11th edition is now Chapter 4 (retitled “The Internet and Social Media”) and leads off Part II (“Media”). Since the Internet has had such a drastic impact on all of the mass media, it seems appropriate to discuss the Internet first rather than last. Consequently, Part II starts with the newest medium (the Internet), then looks at the oldest medium (print), and finally more recent media (sound and pictures).

In addition, Chapter 4 has undergone a major revision. The revised chapter has an expanded section examining the effects, economics, political implications, and dysfunctions of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and MySpace. More specifically, the new Chapter 4 discusses, among other topics, the impact of social media on traditional media, the role of social media in the unrest in North Africa and the Middle East, and the problem of cyberbullying.

Here are some of the changes that you will find in individual chapters.

- Part I: Chapter 1 has been streamlined and contains additional discussion of mobile media and tablet computers. Chapter 2 has updated examples of the various media functions and Chapter 3 has an expanded discussion of the cultural impact of the social media.
- Part II: As mentioned above, the reworked Chapter 4 now leads off this section and is titled “The Internet and Social Media” to better reflect the increasing importance of social networks. This chapter now contains a look at the leading companies in the digital field: Apple, Amazon, Google, and Facebook. The newspaper industry is experimenting with new online models to generate revenue, and this development is discussed in Chapter 5 along with an examination of popular apps for newspapers. Speaking of apps, Chapter 6 looks at how magazines are using apps to bring digital versions to tablet computers and how the industry is using social media to increase readership. Chapter 7 now contains a new section on how e-readers are changing the book publishing industry. The Internet has paved the way for hundreds of new radio stations, and Chapter 8 examines the impact of this trend for traditional radio and looks at how radio networks and local stations are using apps to expand their listenership. The sound recording industry has been profoundly changed by the digital revolution. Chapter 9 now contains an expanded discussion of the impact of MP3 players and smartphones on the industry along with an analysis of the changing revenue streams. Chapter 10 has a new discussion of the rise (and potential fall) of 3-D movies and a revised section about how Hollywood relates to the home video industry. Chapter 11 describes how broadcasters have embraced social media and how apps have turned the iPad into a TV set. Chapter 12 describes the explosion of Web-based TV, including an updated analysis of its economic basis.

- Part III: Chapter 13 opens with a discussion of the most recent report on the news media from the Pew Research Center and looks at the newest trends in hyperlocal reporting. Chapter 14 opens with an analysis of the public relations problems for BP as the result of the Gulf oil spill. The chapter also contains an expanded section that considers how PR professionals are using the Web and social media in public relations campaigns. The advertising industry has also welcomed social media, and Chapter 15 illustrates how social media have been incorporated into modern advertising campaigns.
- Part IV: Chapter 16 contains an updated status of legal issues. Chapter 17 now includes a discussion of the ethical issues involved in the *New York Times's* decision to publish documents it obtained from WikiLeaks.
- Part V: Chapter 18 brings up to date the latest findings from social science research, including a revised section on the impact of violent video games.

Box Score

As in past editions, the boxed inserts in each chapter provide background material or extended coverage of topics mentioned in the text and raise issues for discussion and consideration. The 12th edition includes more than 80 new or revised boxes.

The boxes are grouped into several categories. The Media Talk boxes refer students to the Online Learning Center and introduce important issues in mass communication. Instructors can use these as discussion starters.

The Social Issues boxes highlight matters of social concern that have generated some controversy. Examples include a discussion of how media coverage confers status on fringe groups and a consideration of whether we still need newsmagazines.

As the name suggests, Ethical Issues boxes raise questions about the proper way to act in difficult circumstances. For instance, what ethical problems are involved in “negative” public relations or in posting cell phone videos on video-sharing sites?

Critical/Cultural Issues boxes illustrate how this perspective can be used to further our understanding of mass communication. Examples include the influence of department stores on the development of radio and how the Food Network maintains traditional images of masculinity and femininity.

The Media Probe boxes take an in-depth look at subjects that have significance for the various media. Some examples include an examination of payola, how corporations are supporting rock groups, and the disappearing soap opera.

The Decision Makers boxes profile individuals who have made some of the important decisions that have had an impact on the development of the media. Examples include James Cameron, Tina Brown, and Catherine Hughes.

And, as before, the Soundbytes are brief boxes that highlight some of the strange, ironic, offbeat, and extraordinary developments that occur in the media, such as coffins made of newsprint and George Washington’s overdue library books.

Continuity

The organization of the book has changed a bit since the 11th edition. Part I, “The Nature and History of Mass Communication,” presents the intellectual context for the rest of the book and is unchanged from the 11th edition. Chapter 1 compares and contrasts mass communication with other types of communication and notes that the distinctions are becoming fuzzier. Chapter 2 introduces two perspectives commonly

used to understand and explore the operations of the media: functional analysis and the critical/cultural approach. Chapter 3 takes a macroanalytic approach and traces the general history of media from the invention of printing to the explosion of social media.

Part II, “Media,” represents the core of the book. Chapter 4, as noted earlier, is a revised and expanded version of Chapter 12 from the 11th edition, retitled “The Internet and Social Media.” Chapters 5–12 then examine each of the traditional media. The organization of each chapter follows a similar pattern. First, there is a brief history from the medium’s beginnings to how it is transforming itself in the digital age. This is followed by sections that describe how the medium is becoming more mobile, how it has been affected by user-generated content, and how it is using social media. Next comes a discussion of the defining characteristics of each medium and a description of the industry structure.

I have kept the emphasis on media economics. Since the major media in the United States exist to make a profit, it is valuable for students to appreciate where the money comes from, how it is spent, and why making a profit these days is harder than ever. This is even more important today with several media industries struggling to survive as traditional revenue streams dry up and their online efforts cannot make up the shortfall.

Part III, “Specific Media Professions,” examines three specific professions closely associated with the mass media: news reporting, public relations, and advertising. Similar to the approach in Part II, each chapter begins with a brief history, examines the structure of that particular profession, considers the changes brought about by the digital revolution, and discusses key issues in the field.

Part IV, “Regulation of the Mass Media,” examines both the formal and informal controls that influence the media. These are complicated areas, and I have tried to make the information as user-friendly as possible.

The concluding Part V, “Impact of the Media,” continues to emphasize the social effects of the mass media. As noted earlier, Chapter 18 in the 11th edition, “International and Comparative Media Systems,” has been dropped and its key sections distributed to the appropriate chapters.

Once again, I have tried to keep the writing style informal and accessible. Whenever possible, I have chosen examples from popular culture that I hope all students are familiar with. Technical terms are boldfaced and defined in the glossary at the end of the book. The book also contains a number of charts, graphs, diagrams, and tables that I hope aid understanding.

Supporting Materials

Online Learning Center

The Online Learning Center houses the Media Talk video clips, all of the instructor resources (Instructor’s Manual, Test Bank, and PowerPoint slides), and the traditional student quiz materials. Access the Online Learning Center at www.mhhe.com/dominick12e.

Create

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The Audience

As most instructors will attest, the introductory course in mass communication attracts two types of students. One type is interested in following a professional career in some form of media (a career path made even more challenging by the current market conditions). This student wants to know the nuts and bolts of the media—how they are organized, how they work, who does what, and what career possibilities are out there. The second type of student will probably never pursue a career in the media but will become a member of the audience and consume a great deal of media content. These students are more interested in analyzing and understanding how the media operate and what impact they have on society. To use an overworked expression, they want to become “media literate.”

An original goal of the first edition of *Dynamics* was to present an up-to-date, detailed, and comprehensive look at contemporary media that would benefit aspiring media professionals and at the same time provide a useful foundation for those who will end up in other careers. A second goal was to help both students and faculty understand and appreciate the fast-changing world of mass communication a little better. As has been the case 11 times before, it is hoped that this new edition still fulfills both of those goals.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joseph R. Dominick', written in a cursive style.

Joseph R. Dominick
Dacula, Georgia