

Case Studies on
Media and Entertainment Industry – Vol. II

Edited by

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OVERVIEW

Right from the days primitive human beings quelled nomadic life for settlements, they indulged in various-after-work-activities to relinquish the hardships of a day's work to reenergise themselves for the following day. These activities entered into the common lexicon as entertainment. As any other human activity, these activities also evolved with times. In the pre-electricity days, people relied majorly on human performers, circus, drama and related events for entertainment. Another popular entertainment format was stories in the form of books. Radio took the mantle and then movies caught the imagination of the populace. Invention of television changed the entire gamut by capturing all these in a single contraption, called the 'idiot-box'. This has further been changed by the invention of DVDs. Somewhere in the journey of this transition, entertainment was bitten by the bug of big buck and the modern entrepreneur created an industry around peoples' pastimes and named it – Media and Entertainment Industry.

The entertainment habits of pre-historic man were not appropriately documented. It is widely believed that a sect of people, usually limited to one place, used to sing and dance in groups as a part of passing over their traditions and customs to the younger generation. These art forms varied from region to region depending on the lifestyles and habits. Even today, some of those popular art formats are available in classical dance forms in various parts of the world. Salsa and Belly Dance from Latin America, Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, etc., from India, Royal Court dances of the semi-divine cultures of the Zhou, Tang and Song Dynasties from China, Ballet from continental Europe and Russia are among the chief ancient dance forms that entertain the world even today.

Apart from the enactment of popular plays of great authors by mobile drama companies, stage-depiction of overly religious-based folklores and circulation of fiction and non-fiction novels, not much was accounted about the pastimes of medieval man. Reading became more an informative and research activity than mere entertainment, once the Renaissance in Europe put-forth the wisdom of great people to common public, which was restricted by Church till then. As Renaissance had a profound effect on every walk of human life, it also affected entertainment by turning music (and also other art forms like painting) the mainstream medium of public entertainment. Till that time only religious tunes were composed, and music was restricted only to prayers. Self-expression became the major theme of the times and great musicians were born, unleashing the potential of music as an entertainment medium.

Music's place in popular entertainment was further strengthened by Marconi through his invention of radio. During the 19th and 20th century, the whole world underwent a sea-change with developments in science and technology. And so did the art forms. Art has so much been influenced by technological developments that imagining art without

science is almost impossible for modern man. Art has challenged science and science has inspired art. Many a new stream of technology is being developed for better depiction of art forms and many a new art form is being nurtured using technological marvels.

The most significant among such developments were printing on both the sides of a paper (around 1815), radio transmission (developed during 1880s and 1890s), feature films (first made in 1906), tape recorder (developed during late 1920s and early 1930), television (developed during 1920s and 1930s), computer (1940s), integrated circuit (late 1950s) and compact disks (early 1980s). These innovations have altered, beyond recognition, the art forms and the way they are made available to general public.

The media and entertainment industry, as we know it today, includes a wide variety of products and services that entertain everyday consumer or are used as informative tools. The industry is categorised into a number of segments, each of which provides a different entertainment form or a piece of information around the world. These segments include traditional print media, television, radio broadcasting, film entertainment, video games, and perhaps most importantly, music videos. The importance of technology developers for these segments cannot be overlooked when looking at the industry as a whole; after all, none of these segments would have been so popular and so deeply intertwined with the life of consumers without reliable technology. Due to this dependency on technological developments, the industry is always disruptive – with new segments constantly coming up.

Topping all this up is the internet, which has become the most significant technological development in recent years. It has redefined the way many segments function in the industry, especially the print media, and has helped for the evolution of other segments and industry as a whole. This technology alone is responsible for the way media products and services are consumed, creating entirely new sectors and platforms for mainstream entertainment. Though these new formats are still in the early stages of development, they have the potency to define the future of the industry – as the next generation audience cannot imagine life without internet!