

Digital Transition of Nepali News Media: A Case of Kantipur Publications

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This presentation is about the digital transition of a private news media, Kantipur Publications since 2000. However, this foray into the digital world is the second attempt in the history of Kantipur Publications, the first being the phase when selected contents of The Kathmandu Post, the English daily of the media house was made available on the internet in 1995 in collaboration with Mercantile Communications. In 2000 Publications launched www.kantipuronline.com as a new division of the news media consisting of a dedicated team of several journalists and technical staff to run and maintain the website. Since 2000, it has changed its domain name few times. The major changes are www.ekantipur.com in 2006 and www.kantipurdaily.com in 2017. The tempo of this transition has increased after Kantipur Digital Corp, digital company, was launched in 2014 inside Kantipur Media Group with a mantra of “digital disruption” which contends that start-ups can disrupt established companies.

In this talk, I will discuss the factors which have facilitated the transition: institutional decisions, the changing environment inside the newsrooms, the affordability of the new technology, the increasing users inside the country, and the entry of other online media in the contemporary market. I will argue that the concept of “disruptive innovation” or “digital disruption” is a useful to understand the case of Kantipur Publications’ digital transition. I will further argue that Kantipur Publications has made the successful move to the digital platforms by gradually appropriating unique capabilities of the internet technology such as streaming audio/video content and interactivity, slowly “integrating” online and print newsrooms, and reacting to the decisions taken by its competitors. As Kantipur Publications has started to give more emphasis on digital, this traditional media, has become a trendsetter and powerful actor in Nepali digital media landscape.