



What's IN-cubating?

April - June 2024



Prof Edson C. Tandoc Jr.
Director, IN-cube

I am very happy to share that we have just completed data collection for the Wave 8 of our semi-annual State of the Internet and Media in Singapore (STIMS) survey that tracks and analyses internet and media use and effects in Singapore. We are currently analysing the data and will be ready to share the most recent results very soon.

In the meantime, you can now access the findings from the 2024 Singapore Digital News Report, which is part of the global survey conducted by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at Oxford University. IN-cube is the Singapore partner for this annual survey that examines news consumption patterns in the country, including the use of, and trust in, specific brands.

IN-cube's student researchers have also won international and local awards for their work related to popular culture, videoconferencing, and the use of ChatGPT. You will find more details about these cutting-edge research in this issue of our newsletter.

Please visit our website at ntu.edu.sg/incube to learn more about our work and send us an email if you're interested in any of our research. We would love to hear from, and hopefully work with, you.

Singapore Digital News Report 2024

Top social, messaging, and video networks in Singapore

Brand	For news	For any purpose
WhatsApp	34% (-4)	77%
Facebook	32% (-4)	58%
YouTube	28% (-2)	67%
Instagram	20% (+1)	48%
TikTok	15% (+3)	33%
Telegram	15% (-3)	40%

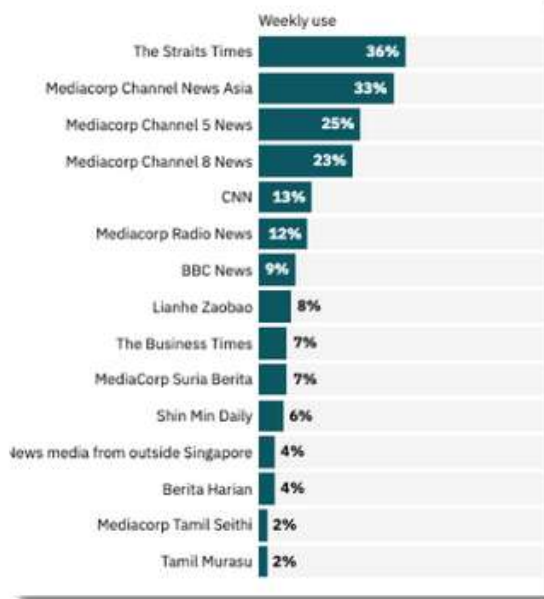
s indicate change from previous year.

TikTok has made significant gains in Singapore, with its user base in the island-nation steadily increasing , from 29% in 2023 to 33% in 2024, based on the Singapore 2024 Digital News Report.

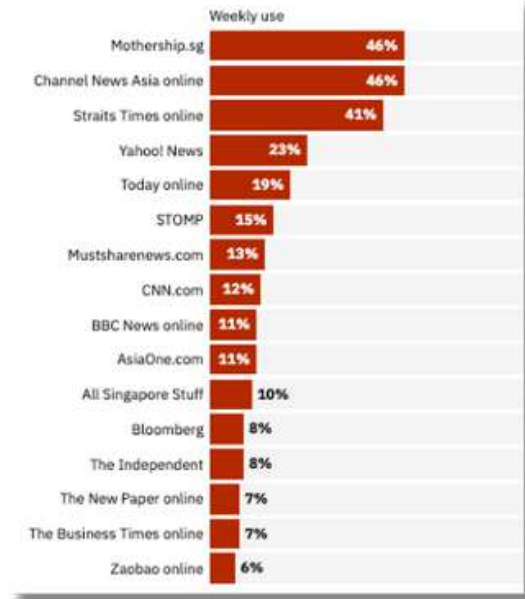
The number of people using TikTok for news is also on the rise, from 12% to 15%. WhatsApp (34%) and Facebook (32%) remain to be the most-used social media platforms for news, followed by YouTube (28%).

These numbers, however, are lower than previous years, with only TikTok and Instagram (from 19% to 20%) showing slow but steady gains. Telegram use for news has also declined, from 18% to 15%.

Weekly Reach (Offline)



Weekly Reach (Online)



IN-cube is the Singapore partner of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ) for the 2024 Digital News Report, which is based on an online survey of nearly 100,000 participants from 47 countries. You can read more about the report [here](#).

74th International Communication Association Conference

IN-cube student members win top paper awards



The International Communication Association (ICA) is one of the most important and the biggest academic conferences for communication studies.

This year's ICA conference was held in Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia on June 20-24. IN-cube's faculty and student researchers presented their work at the conference.

IN-cube is proud to share that its student members have clinched top paper awards in the different divisions in the conference. You can read more about them below.



Desire and Despise: Chinese Female Audiences’ Attitudes Toward Thai BL Drama [*Intercultural Communication Division*]

As Thailand became the powerhouse for BL (boys’ love) drama production, many Chinese audiences turned to Thai BL to fulfill demands left unaddressed by the censored domestic media market. But how do Chinese female audiences feel towards these BL cultural products imported from Thailand? Siqi Feng and colleagues examined this question through textual analysis of messages in Douban BL interest groups and found that Chinese female audiences expressed mixed feelings toward Thai BL drama.

While appreciating Thai BL as an alternative channel for their desires for queer content, the audiences also scrutinized the Thai BL products via imperialist and nationalist lenses, criticizing Thai BL dramas as inferior to their counterparts in China.

“Online for You, Offline for Us:” Understanding Political Implications of Transregional News Repertoires During the US-China Tensions [*Journalism Division*]



In this study, Xue Zhang, a visiting PhD student at IN-cube, employed a news repertoire approach using survey data (N=2275) and introduced the concept of a “transregional news repertoire” to comprehensively investigate news consumption patterns among Chinese Mainland audiences within the context of the U.S.-China trade war.

Xue found that cross-regional news omnivores are still restricted to a specific elite segment. When compared to limited news users, pro-China mainstream only users and pro-China hybrid news users are more likely to trust the government but less inclined to engage in offline civic activities. In contrast, cross-regional news omnivores primarily contribute to online civic engagement when compared to limited news users.

Exploring Employee Videoconferencing Expectations in a Post COVID-19 Work Environment [*Interpersonal Communication Division*]



Guided by the Expectancy Violations Theory, Shruti Malviya used semi-structured interviews to understand employees’ experiences while videoconferencing. She explored expectations that employees have of themselves and others, and expectations others have of them; how they navigate if their expectations are violated, and how they negotiate upon these expectations among themselves to effectively communicate. She also examined the implications videoconferencing has on their presence, which becomes an essential factor in determining their expectations and subsequent norms and guidelines.

AI and Fake News Panel @ Mothership

To connect IN-cube researchers with the industry and the public, IN-cube hosted a panel session on April 19, 2024 at Matchbox @ Mothership. This session was the culminating activity of the Singapore Social Science Research Council's (SSRC) inaugural Ideas Festival 2024.

During the session, the principal investigators of the incubator labs at IN-cube (Asst Prof Saifuddin Ahmed, Assoc Prof Lee Chei Sian, and Assoc Prof Chen Lou) shared with the audiences their latest research findings. NTU Associate Provost Prof May Lwin, NUS Prof Lee Mong Li, and Pand.ai founder and CEO Chuang Shin Wee also discussed the social implications of AI technologies.

This in-person event attracted over 70 participants which include PhD students, civil servants, general public, and researchers.

IDEAS FESTIVAL
INSIGHTS FROM THE HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

AI and Fake News

19 April 2024
1.00pm – 5.00pm
Matchbox by Mothership
30A Kallang Place,
#05-02

With generative AI lowering barriers to digital editing, deepfakes and other types of AI-powered manipulations will become more widespread and convincing. What can we do to prepare our communities? Join us as we bring together academic, policy, and industry partners to discuss interventions targeted at the problem of fake news.

This session will focus on:

- The role of AI in exacerbating the fake news problem.
- Use of AI-powered solutions for fact-checking and detection.
- Ethical and regulatory considerations of employing AI in addressing fake news.

REGISTER NOW



Public Engagement

Conference on AI and Disinformation: Democracy in the Age of Deepfakes



IN-cube director, Prof Tandoc, was invited to present at the Conference on AI and Disinformation: Democracy in the Age of Deepfakes, organised by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

This conference was organised in partnership with the Parliament of Singapore and hosted by the British High Commission and attended by over 40 Parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth and aims to raise awareness about the latest developments in artificial intelligence and synthetic media, the implications of these developments for public discourse, and how Parliamentarians can work with other stakeholders to develop legislative environments and policies to ensure the integrity of digital democracies.

ICA Preconference Keynote: A Computational Turn in Journalism



IN-cube director, Prof Tandoc, gave a keynote speech at the National University of Singapore on June 18 as part of the International Communication Association Preconference on the Computational Turn in Journalism.

Organised by scholars from NUS, Chinese University of Hong Kong, University of Georgia, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, and University of Münster, the preconference was attended by about 100 journalism scholars from all over the world. Prof Tandoc shared about how the framework of a computational turn in journalism can help to explain his trajectory as a digital journalism researcher, studying the impact of emerging technologies on news production, dissemination, and consumption.

10th Macao International Communication Week



Prof Tandoc delivered a keynote speech at the 10th Macao International Communication Week organised by the Macao University of Science and Technology (MUST) on May 8, 2024.

In his sharing, Prof Tandoc talked about IN-cube's research on generative AI and its implications on news production, news consumption, academic work, and the lingering problem of online falsehoods. He raised concerns on how the use of generative AI may also reflect the linger digital divides that already mirror different forms of social inequality.

Webinar

ICA Communication & Technology

On April 17, IN-cube hosted the Global Dialogue on Communication Technology: Digital divides, human migration & mobile technology, and youth activism virtually. Moderated by Prof Rich Ling and organised by Assoc Prof Hyunjin Kang, this session examined how mobile communication play a part in supporting activism and social change.

Three speakers presented their latest studies: Assoc Prof Marcelo Santos, from Chile, presented about subversive affordances as a form of digital transnational activism in Telegrams. Dr Michele Ferris, from Costa Rica, examined the interconnections between media technology and human migration by analyzing the case study of Central American migration to the United States. Prof Tanja Bosch, from the University of Cape Town, reflected on youth activism in social media spaces.

SPEAKERS:

- Marcelo Santos, Assoc Prof, Universidad Diego Portales
- Michele Ferris, Doubles, University of Costa Rica
- Tanja Bosch, Professor, University of Cape Town

MODERATOR:

- Rich Ling, Professor

Scan QR code to sign up

ICA COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

VIRTUAL BROWNBAG

GLOBAL DIALOGUE ON COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (SESSION 2): DIGITAL DIVIDES, HUMAN MIGRATION & MOBILE TECHNOLOGY, AND YOUTH ACTIVISM

WEDNESDAY 17 APRIL

830AM-10AM EST; 1230PM-2PM UTC/GMT

More Info & Registration
<https://tinyurl.com/CommAndTechBrownbag>

International Communication Association | NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY SINGAPORE | Centre for Information Integrity and the Internet, Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information

Journal Publication

Original Article

News you can refuse: If news is important, why aren't more people willing to pay for it?

Edson C Tandoc Jr., Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
Seth Seet, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Abstract
Guided by public goods and uses and gratifications theories, this study examines the link among motivations for news consumption, perceived importance of news, and willingness to pay for news. Through a national online survey in Singapore (n = 818), this study found that both entertainment and socialization motivations are positively related to willingness to pay for news, while surveillance motivation was not. The analysis also found that perceiving news to be personally important is positively related to willingness to pay for news; in contrast, perceiving news to be important to society was unrelated to willingness to pay for it. While surveillance motivation was not directly related to willingness to pay for news, it exerts an indirect effect through perceived personal importance of news. These findings challenge conventional assumptions about the drivers of news subscriptions and offer pivotal insights for news organizations seeking sustainable revenue models in an era of media transformation.

Keywords
News, news consumption, news importance, public goods theory, uses and gratifications, willingness to pay

Introduction
Many news organisations globally are struggling to find alternative revenue streams. Advertising, where many traditional newsrooms had depended on, has followed

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Perceiving news to be personally important is linked to willingness to pay for news, but importance to society is not

Do people really consider news to be important? And if they do, will they pay for it? In this study, Prof Edson Tandoc and Seth Seet question whether the assumption that news is important still holds, and whether importance of news is related to paying for it.

Using an online survey in Singapore, they found that while people perceive news to be more important to society than to themselves, only importance to self is related to willingness to pay for news. Moreover, using news for informational needs does not directly drive willingness to pay, unlike socialisation and entertainment needs. Hence, this study raises important questions on what actually drives audiences to pay for news and whether news is considered a public good.

About IN-cube

IN-cube stands for Centre for Information Integrity and the Internet, a research centre at the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information at Nanyang Technological University Singapore. It aims to contribute to promoting information integrity in online spaces, especially in an era of misinformation and disinformation, through timely, rigorous, and relevant research that links academics, policymakers, industry players, and the public. Learn more about IN-cube by visiting our website: ntu.edu.sg/incube