



What's IN-cubating?

July - September 2024



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

In this newsletter, we share with you the recent studies from IN-cube members and labs, focusing on a range of topics, from online harms, deepfakes, to AI. Related to this, we are also organising a symposium on October 18, titled "Journalism in the Age of AI." Speakers from the biggest newsrooms in Singapore will be sharing their perspectives. We have more information on this in the newsletter and we hope you can join us if you're free (seats are limited so please register if you're interested in attending).

The last quarter also included some changes in our centre. IN-cube now has two new Assistant Directors: Assoc Prof Hyunjin Kang and Mr. Ian Tan. They are taking over Assoc Prof Edmund Lee and Ms Karen Ho, both of whom were instrumental in establishing IN-cube. I express my sincerest thanks to both of them. Edmund is staying with IN-cube as the lead of one of our two new international affiliate incubator labs, and Karen remains to be a committee member for IN-cube.

We also attended many international events last quarter, sharing results from IN-cube's panel data. This quarter, we will be launching Wave 9 of our panel survey that examines how media and internet use in Singapore is evolving. If you are interested in our panel surveys, I am very happy to chat. In the meantime, you can get to know more about our initiatives at IN-cube by reading this issue of our newsletter.

IN-coming Assistant Directors



Assoc Prof Hyunjin Kang's research focuses on the psychological effects of interactive communication technologies on consumer behavior and communication processes. Her work has been published in leading journals, such as *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *New Media & Society*, *Media Psychology*, *Computers in Human Behaviors*, *Mass Communication & Society*, and *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*.



Mr Ian Tan has over 22 years of experience in media, consumer technology, and gaming. He has held leadership roles at Lenovo, Razer, and Microsoft, driving growth and innovation in AI and gaming technologies. A former award-winning journalist, Ian combines his expertise in technology, storytelling, visual art, and pedagogy to help people grow and learn using the power of words, visuals, and AI.

IN-cube Symposium



**NANYANG
TECHNOLOGICAL
UNIVERSITY**
SINGAPORE

Centre for Information
Integrity and the Internet
Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information

NTU, WKWSCI
TV Studio

SYMPOSIUM

JOURNALISM IN THE AGE OF AI



Date :
18 October, 2024



Time :
2:00pm – 5:00pm

REGISTER NOW



SCAN ME

How is AI transforming journalism? While AI has improved efficiency in the newsroom, it has also raised concerns about ethics and quality. Join us for an engaging panel discussion featuring industry leaders, where we explore the evolving role of AI in shaping the future of news. Learn from the experts, share your thoughts, and meet with industry leaders.

SPEAKERS & MODERATOR



George Anders

Author, journalist &
Pulitzer Prize honouree



Ang Yiting

Associate Editor
Lianhe Zaobao



Chua Chin Hon

Lead, AI Strategy & Solutions
Mediacorp News Group



Edmund Chua

Head of Consumer Insights
& Analytics, AsiaOne



Prof Edson Tandoc

Director, IN-cube
Associate Chair, Research &
Strategy



Dr Sherwin Chua

MODERATOR
Lecturer, WKWSCI



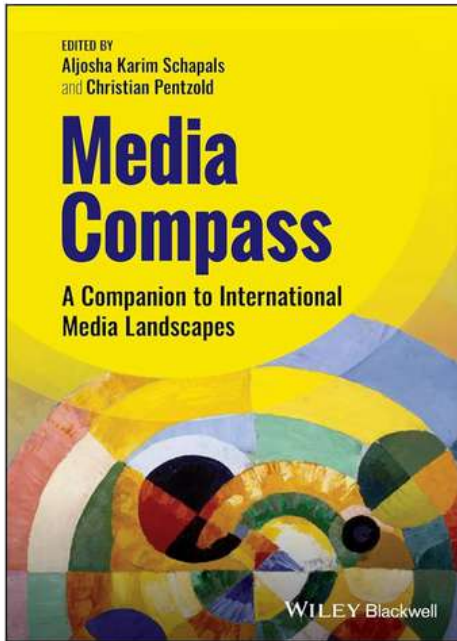
Prof Ang Peng Hwa

Senior Advisor, IN-cube
Director, University Scholars
Programme

For any queries about the event, email us at
incube@ntu.edu.sg



Singapore: Navigating Media Regulation and Digitization



Dr Goh Zhang Hao, our Ph.D. student, Matthew Chew, and Prof Edson Tandoc contributed a chapter in this important collection that maps out media usage across different media systems around the world. In their chapter focusing on Singapore, the IN-cube team discuss current patterns of media use in the country based on our panel surveys as well as describe the state of the news media in Singapore.

Read the chapter [here](#).

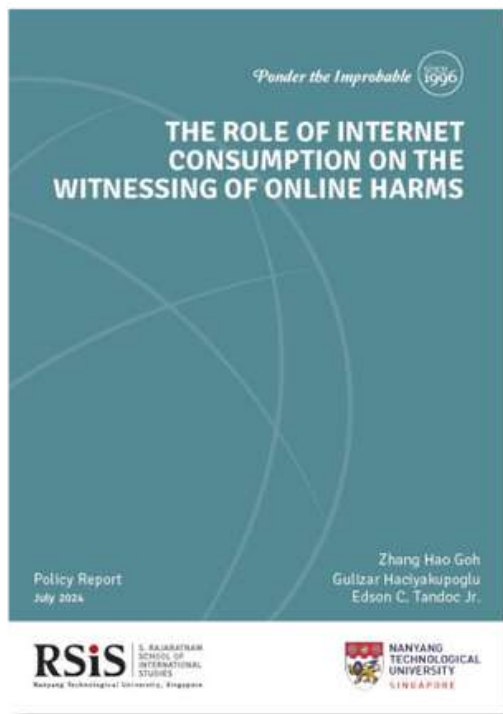
Hashtagging for Inclusion: Complex Identities in Singaporean Gay Men's Social Representation on Instagram



This article investigated how gay men in Singapore used hashtags to represent their complex identities and create a shared meaning of being gay in Singapore. Through a textual analysis of identity-related posts, our Ph.D. student, Zhang Langcheng, and Prof Edson Tandoc identified two patterns of the use of gay-related hashtags: habitual and contextual. Both patterns rely on and demonstrate the identity complexity of gay users. By using non-gay hashtags and juxtaposing them with gay ones, users could disseminate outreach information, establish social connections, and improve the digital inclusion of their group.

Read the article [here](#).

The role of internet consumption on the witnessing of online harms



In this policy report, Dr Goh Zhang Hao, Dr Gulizar Hacıyakupoglu, and Prof Edson Tandoc investigated how gender, daily internet activities, and use of internet-enabled devices can impact one's frequency of witnessing online harms. Building on IN-cube's national survey conducted in Singapore in Dec 2022, this study found that men engage in daily Internet activities and use Internet-enabled devices more frequently than women, explaining why men witness more online harms than women. The policy report calls for further studies into the relationship between online harms witnessing and perpetration, along with greater attention to gender-based differences.

Read the report [here](#).

"He looks very real": Media, knowledge, and search-based strategies for deepfake identification



Deepfakes are a potential source of disinformation and the ability to detect them is imperative. In this article, Prof Dion Goh investigated how people identified deepfakes. During semi-structured interviews, participants were asked to identify real and deepfake videos and explain how their decisions were made. Three categories of deepfake identification strategies emerged: the use of surface video and audio cues, processing of the messages conveyed in the video, and the searching of external sources. Participants often used multiple strategies within each category. The findings provide guidance on how people can identify deepfakes, which can also form the basis for the development of educational materials.

Read the article [here](#).

What Else is New about Social Media Influencers? Uncovering their Relation and Content Strategies, and the Downsides of Being Famous

frontiers | Frontiers in Psychology

What else is new about social media influencers? Uncovering their relation and content strategies, and the downsides of being famous

Chen Lou* and Xuan Zhou

Wei Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, Singapore

Prior research on social media influencers (SMIs) often examined questions such as their model of communication with followers, ethical concerns, motivations, and ways of gaining capital. How influencers curate intense and intimate relations and strategize their content creation, and how the influencer industry takes a toll on their physical and psychological wellbeing should be carefully addressed. To fill in this gap, we conducted in-depth interviews with 20 SMIs. The findings advance the literature on influencers and influencer advertising by explicating the ways through which influencers maintain intimate and engaged relations with followers, including *providing value, creating emotional bond, interacting and co-creating with followers, and disclosing personal life*. Second, this research identifies and theorizes four principles – *authenticity, topic sensitivity, fact-checking, and strategic sharing of privacy* – under which influencers strategize content creations in building human brands. Last, our findings add to the ongoing literature on digital labor by expounding the downsides of influencers being digital labor. This research contributes to the understudied aspect regarding influencers' wellbeing and strategies employed in content creation and relation management in the current influencer literature.

KEYWORDS

social media influencers, parasocial relation, human brand, self-branding, digital labor, well-being, in-depth interviews

How do influencers curate their intimate relations and strategize content creation? Does the influencer industry take a toll on influencers' physical and psychological wellbeing? Assoc Prof Chen Lou and our Ph.D. student, Zhou Xuan, conducted in-depth interviews to understand influencers' well-being and strategies employed in content creation and relation management. The findings explicated the ways through which influencers maintained intimate and engaged relations with followers, including providing value, creating emotional bond, interacting and co-creating with followers, and disclosing personal life.

Read the article [here](#).

Study finds Chinese and Russian disinformation flourishing in some African countries

THE CONVERSATION

Academic rigor. Analytical tools.

Chinese and Russian disinformation flourishes in some African countries – anti-US sentiment helps it take hold

Published: September 8, 2024 | 7:45 AM EDT

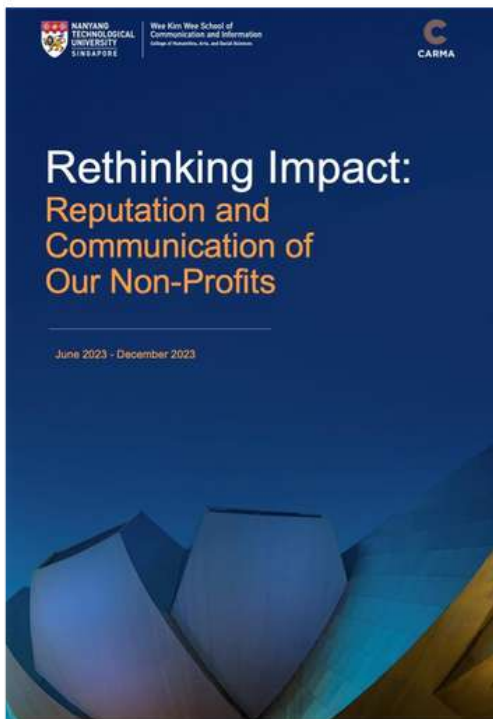


Chinese president Xi Jinping and Russian president Vladimir Putin. Mike Tressell/Reuters/Corbis/Bettmann/PP via Getty Images

The article explored the spread of disinformation in Africa, focusing on the influence of foreign powers like Russia and China. Through a survey of 4,600 people across Angola, Ethiopia, South Africa, and Zambia, Asst Prof Saifuddin Ahmed and his co-authors found that anti-US sentiment was the main driver of belief in Russian and Chinese narratives. Russian disinformation, portraying itself as a defender against Western imperialism, was more widely accepted than Chinese narratives. The study concluded that merely debunking false claims is insufficient; counter-strategies must address deeper geopolitical histories, alliances, and attitudes that make disinformation resonate with the public.

Read the article [here](#).

Rethinking Impact: Reputation and Communication of Non-Profits



The Management Issues in Strategic Communication lab led by Ferdinand de Bakker and Amanda Huan published two reports this quarter. The first report is about their applied research of 35 leading non-profits in Singapore. It is a project undertaken with some 60 graduate students of the Master of Media & Communication (MMC) Programme, and supported by Carma, a research firm. Various events to discuss the research will be organised, including a seminar on Monday 28 October.

The second report is based on a project done by 15 Chinese students of the MMC Programme in the AY23-24. They studied the relative power of popular influencers and their impact, not always positive, on 10 Chinese and 10 international brands, in the following industries: sports, food, beauty, tech companies and consumer product brands.

Read the two reports [here](#).

Social Science Research Thematic Grant

Smart health IoT systems for self-guided health management



Congratulations to our new Assistant Director at IN-cube, Assoc Prof Hyunjin Kang, who received a Social Science Research Thematic Grant (SSRT-G) for her new project examining smart health IoT systems for self-guided health management. Assoc Prof Kang has formally started the project last quarter. The SSRT-G is one of the key initiatives of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) in Singapore and promotes high-quality and impactful research in social sciences and humanities that are relevant to Singapore. It supports projects that address key societal and economic issues in Singapore and encourages collaboration among researchers.

Prof Kang and her multidisciplinary team will test and develop a theory-based approach to designing an IoT application that fosters sustained usage of smart health IoT systems for self-guided health management among seniors, considering both technological (i.e., application design) and individual (i.e., psychological reactance) factors.

Public Engagement

Global News Forum: The Future of News

IN-cube Director, Prof Edson Tandoc, was invited to speak at the Global News Forum organised by the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union and held in Bangkok in July.

This event was hosted by the Thai Public Broadcasting Service and attended by over 500 journalists from across Asia. With the focus on the future of news, the panel discussed the importance of using AI responsibly to enhance the production and distribution of content in the news industry.



Seoul AI Policy Conference: "Combating Mis/Disinformation in the Era of AI"

Prof Edson Tandoc was invited as a speaker at the AI Policy Conference, held in Seoul in August. This event was hosted by the Seoul National University and attended by over 300 lawmakers and journalists.

The panel discussed the social implications of AI, especially on the persisting problem of online falsehoods.

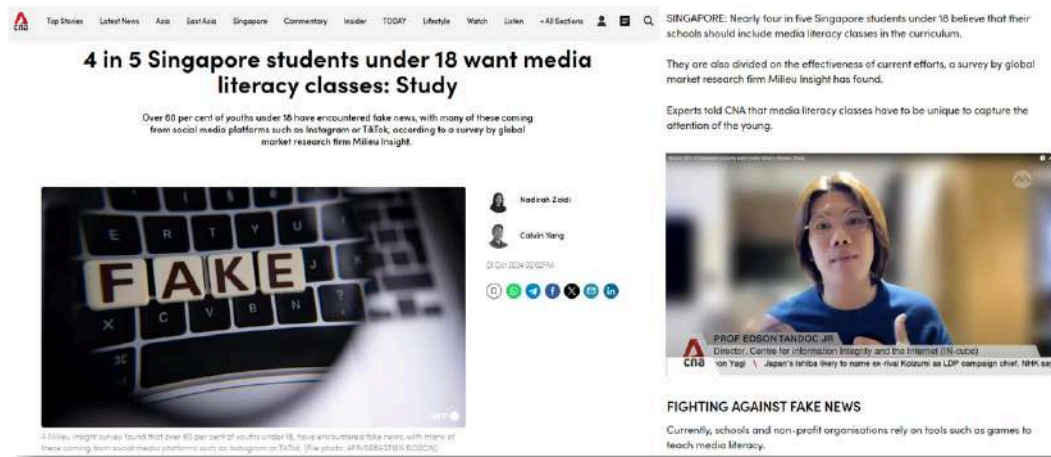


Seoul International Forum for Fact Checking: Authenticity and Misinformation

Assoc Prof Jung Younbo shared ongoing research from IN-cube at the Seoul International Forum for Fact Checking in September, where he discussed Singapore's approach to managing fake news in the digital age. He shared key insights from IN-cube's study on fake news and fact checking, offering a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.



Channel NewsAsia: Almost 80% of Singapore students want media literacy



Prof Edson Tandoc was recently interviewed by Channel NewsAsia for a report that discussed the effectiveness of current media literacy initiatives in schools. Prof Tandoc highlighted how most research has found that increased time spent on social media results in a higher likelihood of believing in online falsehoods. He emphasised the importance of encouraging children to adopt more mindful practices while using social media.

Read the article [here](#).

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