

**THE INDISPENSABLE ROLE OF COMPUTER
ON PRINT MEDIA EFFICIENCY
(A CASE STUDY OF NEWSLINE NEWSPAPER
CORPORATION, MINNA)**

BY

Ugwu Romanus, Ezike.

PGD/MCS/2000/2001/1032

TO

**THE DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS/COMPUTER SCIENCE,
SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND SCIENCE EDUCATION,
FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, MINNA.**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN COMPUTER
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APRIL, 2002

TITTLE

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DEDICATION

This project work is dedicated to the Almighty God for his mercies, my parents for their endurance and to a progressive, Uncle Michael Ozor.

CERTIFICATION

This project has been submitted, accepted and certified in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Post-graduate Diploma in Computer science of the Department of Mathematics/Computer Science of the Federal University of Technology, Minna.

Prof. K.R. Adeboye
Project Supervisor

Date

Mr. L.N. Ezeako
HOD. Maths/Computer Science

Date

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If I have seen further and farther, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants. With total humility and respect therefore, I salute the courage, patience, zeal, and contributions of the entire lecturers in the department of Maths/Computer Science who nurtured me to stardom.

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ABSTRACT

It is quite unnerving and retrogressive that in this information age, Nigerian media, which supposedly should be in the frontline of the crusade in connecting the Country to this global information development thread still basks in the upthorial of the glorious blessing of the obsolete concatenation of manual and mechanical process of sourcing, packaging and production of print Media.

They have not been jump-started, mechanically to the global information media age that breaks the barrier of time and distance. It is high time we jettisoned our economic, political, Socio-cultural and psychological attitude that have persistently made this mission and vision impossible.

We must change and such change must be anchored on the mechanized computerization of our media of communication especially the print media which has the archiving and documentary advantage. Using three approaches can do this:

Some richly formatted pre-written packages like Microsoft Word, Microsoft Publisher, and Adobe PageMaker can be used to format the page layout of print media. Others include, using Internet facilities to source foreign news story editorials, and networking the environment to improve the confidentiality of the media house style.

Our media should act now to correct the disparity and lop-sided global information flow system before it is too late. Our realization that information is power is the beginning of our wisdom.

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CHAPTER ONE

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PRINT MEDIA AND COMPUTER SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

As man's experiments in science and technology improved, so did his communication abilities and information dissemination. The twenty-first (21st) century ushered in a knowledge-based society where information remained the most critical and valuable resources for development. With the technological development of this century, all aspect of information, and communication are propagated by a simple carrier referred to as computerized media.

So far, nations have moved from the three basic services of telephone, telegram and telex into the realm of value-added information services such as voice mail, print media (paging), truck electronic services and phones.

These media of information now involve the application of modern technique to the sourcing, storage, production and calculation of message and or news stories. Obviously, the possession of these media of information is now a strategic resource that can contribute immensely towards enhancing the form, the editorial packaging, timeliness, value of the massage and the economic recovery cum development of nations.

Information through the application of this modern technology-computer, to news media has reduced the whole world into a global village. It is therefore a common place to see that the moves from industrial to information age posses a great challenge on nations.

Information is a strategic imperative hence in the nearest future, it is believed that it will provide man with unprecedented capabilities to raise aspirations, multiply his choice altar values and develop a new knowledge-base human society.

Within this parametre, it can be safely predicated that in the next foreseeable future, information will continue to dictate the pace of development of the world economy.

Nigeria should not be left out, she should understand that the gateway to handle this threat successfully anchored on change. Our society most change, other society, and nations have changed tremendously using technology as the springboard.

This change must be rooted on the improvement of our key systems of information sourcing and dissemination, which simply means the integration of computer into our media of information like print media. We need to establish new framework for change by applying a radically new approach to information and databases for a sustainable development and creation of wealth.

Allied to the above is that this improvement will not only enhance development of our living standard but also that the prosperity of a new economy mainly depends on the structure and value of timely information for the nation's media workforce to create, innovate and complete globally.

Information age in a nutshell is the rapid movement of large blocks of packaged news stores, messages and information to a targeted audience through a reliable medium. Print media have an edge over others by their singular quality of sourcing, circulating and storing or documenting issues and events in a permanent form. What then is the meaning of print media.

1.1 AN OVERVIEW OF PRINT MEDIA

1.1.0 . MEANING OF PRINT MEDIA

Print media are channels for the circulation of editorial and non-editorial materials gathered and packaged by professional writers in a newspaper and or magazine form to the audience or members of the societies who need such information either to widen their horizon or formulate economic, political and or social policies.

It is prevalent to see the products of print media-Newspaper and magazine, these days in every part of the world. This is irrespective of the linguistic, political and environmental variation of the area.

Print media are ubiquitous and institutionalized reality with scopeless capacity. This is because they document stories of incidents, statements of the rich and the poor, crimes, sports, views of individuals, government actions/inactions and statements that are significant and of relevance or consequence within a given area of publication and circulation.

1.1.1 THE HISTORY OF PRINT MEDIA

The history of Nigerian Print media can broadly be divided into four segments:- The era of missionary journalism, The era of the Alien-dominated press, The emergence of the indigenous Press, and The dawn of modern Nigeria Print media.

The pacesetter of the era of the missionary media has its root in colonialism and through the missionary effort of one white prolific Reverend gentleman called Rev. Henry Townsend. This missionary- turned-journalist in 1859 founded the "Iwe Irohin fun a wonera Egba ati Yoruba." Although the 6"x 8" pamphlet with a circulation strength of 3000 published such news as church related activities, Missionary/ colonial activities, commercial news, and announcement from local Chiefs, the missionary paper did not exert a very wide influence on West African society apart from producing the greatest weapon of inspiration and enlightenment to Africans in employing newspaper to fight colonialism.

The era of alien-dominated press refers to print media founded by non- Nigeria. They are print media established by alien from neighbouring African countries. The chain of media in this category are: Anglo-African, established in June 6, 1863 by Robert Campbell, the Lagos times and Gold coast Colony Advertiser by a Sierra Leonean Businessman Richard Beale Blaize in November 10, 1880.

Others are Lagos Observer, Iwe Iroyin Eko, The weekly Times, The Standard, the Lagos Eko and the Lagos Reporter, all founded between February 4, 1882 to September 12, 1898. One significant thing about this era was that militant Journalism geared towards colonial, political and administrative criticism characterized it, and as such there was noticeable government hostility.

The indigenous press, like its name suggests was the era of Nigerian professional journalists' active participation in the establishment and running of print media. Such print media were; Nigerian Pioneer by Kitoyi Ajasa in 1914, African Messenger founded by a seasoned Journalist, Ernest Ikoli, and the Nigerian Daily Times by Alakija and Barrow.

Others were the chain of Zik's Newspapers-the West African pilot, Eastern Nigerian Guardian, Nigerian Spokesman e.t.c. The chain of this era is long but one thing of significant was that they were nationalistic newspapers used to bring about political changes in the country.

The modern Nigerian Newspapers signify the entrance of government in the establishment of print media. These post independence print media include - Morning Post by Tafawa Balewa regime. By 1974 almost all the states in the country had newspapers of their own. Some of them are Daily star, Herald, Triumph e.t.c. Apart from government participation in media ownership, the era also marked the more independent privately owned daily Newspapers and magazines. Guardian, vanguard, Punch, News watch, This week, Concord Magazine e.t.c. More importantly, the media of this era serves as the megaphone and watchdog of government.

1.1.2. TYPES OF PRINT MEDIA

Print media as mentioned earlier are products of two commodities; viz. Newspaper and Magazine. Newspaper then means a part of print media, which chronicles the events, news and views happening within a particular or extended area of circulation. The frequency of newspaper occurrence can be dailies, weeklies, fortnightly, or monthlies with local, national, or both in outlook. It can be produced in coloured, black and white, or combination of both.

Magazine on the other hand is a limitless institutionalized expression material that carries a wholesome package of news stories, events or views of societal occurrences, which can be weekly or monthly in frequency.

For better appreciation and understanding of the products, magazines and newspapers are both permanent historical stuff that are handy, portable, creditable, currency and objective in their reportorial functions.

1.1.3 IMPORTANCE OF PRINT MEDIA

The importance of print media is limitless, however it is pertinent to note that print media are veritable tools for the Socio-cultural, political, religious and or academic expression of people. They are the immaculate conscience of the mighty, the strenght of the downtrodden, the heartbeat of the society and the nemesis of the dictator.

Print media have an important skill and ability of recapitulating, packaging and documenting historic events. They have the skill of enabling individual, through the ingredient of their packaged information to be more viable, competent, and adaptive in their respective environment. Print media are source of power because information is power. It is the event, and issues chronicled by print media that provides the source of information that gave individuals power.

Suffix it to say that the human ideological and their hetro-dimensional components in every society are meant to germinate and flourish, it is the print media that will bring them to the knowledge of the society in a clearer and defined nature. Print media are the custodians of culture because the society is their orbit which every editorial content must reflect its taste and thirst choice. Obviously, the print media are like weather since they are always with us to provide constant material for conversation.

1.2. AN OVERVIEW OF COMPUTER

1.2.O. DEFINITION OF COMPUTER

Authorities have variously defined computer. However, for the purpose of this research work, only one professional definition will be accommodated. Computer therefore can be defined as a programmable, Electro-mechanical device, made up of physical and non-physical components that are looped or interconnected for the purpose of inputting,

processing, saving, and retrieving data in an extremely high degree of speed and accuracy.

To expantiate this definition, it is worthy to note that that computer is Electro because it cannot function without electricity power. The physical and non-physical components refers to the Hardware, the Software and the Humanware that made up the components of computer while all these components are interconnected to enhance the function of entering, processing, saving data and retrieving information either in soft copy or hard copy.

1.2.1. HISTORY OF COMPUTER

The origin of computer dates back to 1940 when John Attanasoff required a calculating device to perform mathematical operations for twenty (20) masters and doctorate degree students of a college in IOWA at AMES in USA. When none of the existing calculators was able to do that, the need for an improved system for calculations and other repetitive function hitherto difficult for man to complete in a short while answered.

Since then, several machines ranging from Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC), Electronic Delay Storage Automatic Computer (EDSAC), Universal Automatic Computer (UNIVAC), Vacuum tube, solid state translator, artificial intelligence and Expert systems were developed, and improved upon.

This generational development was gradually intended to suggest different improvements on the hardware components but recently it is applicable to both hardware and software systems of the computer.

1.2.2. USES OF COMPUTER

The uses of computer are as varied as can be imagined, but the following are some of the principal uses.

PAPER WORK

The present day society run on paper work and computer has revolutionized the way paper work is handled. Computers are used to prepare documents, letters, memoranda,

and presentations of all categories. Computerized print media packaging, bookkeeping, record keeping, and document sending have also made paper work more efficient.

FINANCIAL TRANSACTION

Computer has brought the age of do-it-yourself banking with an Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) available for simple transaction. It contributed maximally in the widespread use of credit cards and instant credit checks by banks, department stores, and other retailers. Some petroleum marketing companies are now using credit card-activated and self-service petrol pumps.

GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

Computers are used in most government activities for processing immigrants, meeting out Justice and collecting taxes

TRANSPORTATION

Computers are used to run rapid transit systems, load containers, and ships, keep tracks of railroads, and taking off and landing of airplanes to keep them from colliding. Besides scheduling airline reservations, they are also used in modern automobiles, to monitor fluid levels, temperatures, and electrical systems

HOME USE

Computer is gradually getting into homes principally as an educational tools for the children. With the introduction of low cost storage devices such as the CD and online services that offer Video-on-demand service, computer has replaced the video players and television as entertainment in the homes.

Other uses include educational institutions, and commercial industries.

1.2.3. COMPONENTS OF COMPUTER

Ordinarily, there are basically three components of computer, Viz. The Hardware, Software and Humanware. The hardware is the physical and or tangible part of computer. The hardware components are the physical make up of the part of computer.

The examples are; Casing/system unit, motherboard, CPU and fan, Hard disk drive and floppy drives, Mouse, Keyboard, CD-ROM, Monitor, Speakers, and Modems.

The casing/system unit is the housing unit of the computer and is normally made of metals designed to be either a stand alone or Desktop. The tower casing, which comprises of Minitower, Miditower, and full tower, and desktop casing are the main two types of computer casing. Mouse and keyboard are the two types of input device used in coding or entering data into the processing device.

The monitor and the printer are the two types of output device used in decoding or retrieving soft or hard copy of data entered into the computer. The processing devices are the main types of mass storage device used in reading the disks-hard disk and floppy disk. They are the auxiliaries, non-volatile memory, the common type of hard drives has three popular interfaces; IDE, EIDE and SCSI.

The range of hardware components which determines the category of any system continues, however, the software, which is the general term used to denote all forms of computer programs that control all the activities of computer, is very necessary in complimenting the components of computer.

1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

It will not only be a mission impossible but an effort in futility using a wide scope like the entire product of print media to study this project topic, the indispensable role of computer on print media efficiency. Therefore, this research work will only be restricted to Newspapers, using Newline Newspaper Corporation Minna, Niger State as the scope of the study.

The questions of whether the aim of establishing the print media has been met, whether the current situation and constraints that have contributed to the dissolution, desolation and partial demise faced by the print medium can be improved by installing sets of computers to the production and management, are the underlining reason for the choice of Newline as the case study for this research work.

1.4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study will among other things target at pointing out the indispensability of computer in improving the efficiency and overall productivity of print media using Newsline News paper as the of contact.

It will also restore the confidence of practitioners and owners alike, that the integration of computer into the sourcing, accessing, storing and or documenting of the editorial contents of newspaper will ensure the reflection of the taste and thirst choice of the society. This is because the society is the orbit of every Newspaper's credibility, survival, and improvement.

1.5. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Ideally, some of the professional terms that will be recurring throughout the process of this research work needed to be defined. Some have been defined but the ones that should be officially defined are: News, editorial, media, circulation, sourcing of news and society.

1.5.0 NEWS

News is an account of an event, published in print media or aired in the electronic media that is of great importance to a large number of people in a society at a particular point in time. News can be current, breaking and or staled.

1.51 EDITORIAL

Editorial is the purse of the media because it encompasses the news, features, sports, foreign affairs, and other important arms of the news collecting, collating, and processing department. In other words, it is the authoritative corporate image of the news media expressed in a carefully supervised language and edited in conformity to the house style of the media.

1.5.2. MEDIA

The media means the channel of communication or channel of information dissemination. Media represent the print and electronic channels of mass communication.

1.5.3 CIRCULATION

Circulation refers to the number of print media products and other periodical sold to the publics, audience, or readers. The circulation strength of any print media is the determinant of their financial progress because advertisers who are the major print media financiers give their patronage to the media with wider circulation strength.

1.5.4. SOURCING OF NEWS

Professionally, news sourcing means a meticulous process or various methods applied in gathering editorial materials for packaging of print media products. Sourcing can be done through interviews, library exploration, breaking news and recently the use of computers through softwares programmes and internets.

1.5.5 SOCIETY

Society contextually means a geographical area or a social orbit that gives credibility, stories, breath, and survival to the print media.

CHAPTER TWO

THE APPLICATION OF COMPUTER TO PRINT MEDIA

2.1. PRE-WRITTEN SOFTWARE APPLICATION TO PRINT MEDIA PRODUCTION

Pre-written application software like its name suggests, is a documented software program that can be loaded into computer for the performance of or carrying out a particular or specific computer operation or task.

Print Media production specially means the application of mechanical process to the mass production of print media products. These Mechanical processes involve Compugraph, graphics, photolithograph, and photo/camera. Compugraph is the process of typesetting materials, making corrections, and editing where necessary and formatting.

Graphics involves pasting-up, designing artwork, page make-up, and copy fitting. Photolithograph mean filming of the artwork, opaqueing, cropping, and plate making. Photo/camera improves the cosmetics quality of the print media products by the record of events with camera.

Obviously, all these print media production process can be simplified and or complemented by the application of computer pre-written Software application packages. More importantly, these pre-written Softwares have eclipsed the manual “dummy” method of print media page production layout. The process of page planning, column layout and column link of same stories have better artistic and simplified approach if down with pre-written software application packages.

Such application packages are Microsoft publisher 98, Microsoft Word, and Adobe page maker. Microsoft publisher 98 can be used to create and produce distinctive newsletters or Newspapers by the application and manipulation of some basic tools and skills used for working with publisher even without any publication experience.

The available tools involve the use of Wizard. Once stepped through the wizard to create publication, it provides flexibility at any time to make changes. The wizard can be used to change the colour scheme, format, and manipulate other element of publication layout.

It provides facilities such that story could flow from one column to the next of the same page by using a multiple column within one text frame, separate stories in adjacent columns on the same page, create a separate text frame for each story so that in "Jumped" stories, the text frame can be connected elsewhere in the publication by flowing there automatically. Therefore, with picture tool, design gallery, Clip gallery, and drawing tools, Microsoft publisher has simplified the planning of any newspaper page layout.

To gain access into the facilities provided by the publisher has been simplified to users friendly. On loading Microsoft publisher, follow the wizard, which will provide other facilities for formatting, planning and editing print media page layout.

Microsoft Word, a word processing package also offers facilities in its column format that allows text in Newspaper columns to flow from the bottom of one column to the top of the next. To specify the number of columns, adjust the space between the selected columns, change the width of the selected columns and to change the number of columns in addition to applying colour and graphics while planning newspaper page, Microsoft word is another pre-written software that provided reliable and efficient facilities.

Unlike publisher, that uses Wizard to make production a reality, Microsoft word simplified the action with the use of its format on the menu bar. After loading Microsoft word, the column facility can be seen on the column in the format menu of the menu bar. Every other action can be accomplished by building option on the column dialog box that will appear on clicking column in the format menu.

However, to produce the hard copy of this newspaper computer-aided-design in a standard newspaper size, a printer that can print an A3 paper should be the surest

option to be attached to the computer system. Also before sending the layout for computer printing, tabloid should be selected on the paper size during set-up.

2.2. IMPACT OF NETWORK ON PRINT MEDIA EDITORIALS

2.2.0. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Technology (IT) for short involves the application of modern techniques especially computer to the creation, sourcing, processing, storing, and communicating of information. On the other hand, communication encompasses the dissemination of information either to a large or small group or confidentially to a private individual or mass audience.

The important distinguishing factor of information technology is the application of electronics, which have enable large volume of information to be speedily collected, processed, distributed/circulated, stored and retrieved by computer. Computerized media have played key role in global information revolution witnessed for a decade now, particularly in developed countries.

Obviously, it has made meaning the scientific principle of "Butterfly effect", which states that the World of nature is so small and interdependent to the extent that a butterfly flapping its wings in the Amazon rain-forest can violate storm on other side o the earth".

This is because information technology can now be used to enhance the form, time and value of information. Information is power that has aggressively been utilized and harnessed by the Western world to increase productivity and development.

However, to redress and counterbalance the disparity, imbalance, gap between the developed, and developing countries in terms of information flow and dominance, the developing countries should embrace the new invention of computerized media of communication.

2.2.1 INTERNET

Simply put, the Internet is a large computer network that communicates with each other often over telephone lines. It is an invention that enable companies, organizations, individuals, schools, mass media and governments to source and share information, files, news stories, etc across the world.

Internet is used to plan trips, shop on line news editorials, books, and check out sports scores including reading outline print media editorials from around the world. All these and many more subjects under the sun are all in the Internet. With Internet Relay Chat (IRC), Internet offers users live communication ability in real time with other Internet users.

Sourcing and packaging of print media editorials remain the most indispensable contribution, which Internet offers to owners and practitioners of print media in particular and other media of communication in general. This is because the quality and credibility of every print media lie on the reliability and authenticity of the source of their editorials. Internet offers the most reliable medium of local, national, and international editorial sourcing.

Allied to the above is the long time clamour and crusade for the New World information flow order. Among other things, it calls for the concerted effort of the third world media to counter-balance the lop-sided western world information flow, which report negative news and oddities like wars, famine and maladministration about the third world countries.

It is believed that with the information facilities offered by the internet, the third world media can easily access the western world editorials of all kinds and publish the same negative western news to the reading audience of the third world to uplift their psychologically traumatized illusion of western superiority and dominance.

Effort should be made to connect the third world to this new age of information flow and globalization efforts currently in place. By this effort the media will empower the third world with information about the current and breaking news of world concern. The print media stand the most reliable medium to efficiently make this effort a mission possible

because of its appeal to the learned audience readers who dictates the pace and tune of development.

2.2.1.0 WORLD WIDE WEB (WWW)

The World Wide Web is an Internet tool, which contains a vast amount of information available on the Internet today. It enables users to access information in a richly formatted text or pictures. World Wide Web can “browse” information and view graphics, video, audio, print media and other information. It contains many Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) servers with which user clients interact.

Over the years, the quality and credibility standard of every print media editorial contents have formed the parameters to improve the rate of circulation, readership and targeted progress. Therefore, to ensure and consolidate their overall successes in the trade of information dissemination, media practitioners and publishers should be connected to the web so as to enable them access the vast amount of information available on the internet, which will diversify and enrich the editorial content of their print medium.

2.2.1.1 ELECTRONICS MAIL. (E-MAIL)

To stay in touch with business associates, correspondence of media house, families, and friends, the e-mail has simplified the delivery of message in a matter of seconds. E-mail is another Internet tool, which allow Internet users to send message back and forth. To effectuate this exchange of mails, each user will have an account set up on an e-mail server. The address is the user’s e-mail account name and the host name of the e-mail server.

Correspondence report of eyewitness accounts of media, local and foreign reporters form the bulk of media editorial. However, this correspondents, which should be current, timely and custodian of breaking news can beat the media deadline with this advantage offered by E-mail.

Related to the above is that print media operates in a fire-brigade format so as to “go to bed” timely. The e-mail offers those mail transaction quality that will enhance and

speedize the exchange of editorial correspondent report between the media house and their foreign and local reports.

Feedback through letters from readers/audience to the editor helps media to evaluate their performance. Print media engage the e-mail facilities to receive this feedback letters and also their message online.

2.2.2. LOCAL AREA NETWORK (LAN)

Using computer in a professional environment without any kind of network is unthinkable these days. From the call-up local area network connection of a consultant's laptop to company information distribution on Internet via Wide Area Network (WAN), are essential for every company's success.

Before the invention of the Multi-user operating system or networking operation system (NOS), the sharing of resources were done with the aid of auxiliary memory, floppy drive. The network came into existence to speedize the transfer and or exchange of resources like files and share printers.

A Local Area Network (LAN) means a collection of computers interconnected in a geographically closed network for the purpose of sharing the resources as stated above. Different organization sizes, structure, and budget needs a different type of networks. A local print medium needs a network different from a Multi-national company.

Print medium industries have departmentalized structures. Such departments like editorial, advertorial, production, circulation, and managerial departments are interdependent and need to be interconnected to share resources, management decisions, progresses and lapses so as to effectuate the smooth running of the print media.

The Local Area Network connection can enhance these departmental sharing and exchange of resources. However, so long as change of information and news stories remains the stock in trades of the media house a peer-to-peer network can serve a print medium outfit. A local Area Network with peer-to-peer connection will certainly hasten

communication and exchange of editorial, advertorial, materials and computer editing of files during the file brigade production process.

2.3 THE RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY TO NATION BUILDING

The relevance of this research work to nation building is numerous and Multi-faceted. Specifically, there has been vigorous campaign and persistent crusade to connect the Northern media into the national information flow so as to counter-balance the dominance of the so-called Ibadan—Lagos western axis press over the northern media.

This situation, in many ways has polarized the nation instead of fostering the unity associated with this information age. This study anatomized the application of different styles of sourcing or gathering and packaging of print media, the method of getting, and enjoying editorial and advertisement patronage.

Therefore, it will contribute in building the nation by bridging the hitherto operational disparity of the western and northern Nigeria media information flow. The Newline newspaper, the Niger state print corporation, which is the case in study will serve as a model for the entire northern media when the subjects addressed in the study are utilized fully.

Generally, the study will contribute to nation building by awakening and popularizing the integration of computer and other mechanical method in sourcing, packaging, cosmeticing the production of print media.

The effective application of these will mount vigorous corrective measure to the New World lop-sided information flow against the third world, Nigeria inclusive and ensure our connection to the current information globalization.

CHAPTER THREE

SYSTEM ANALYSIS AND DESIGN

3.1. THE EXISTING SYSTEM

Newsline newspaper corporation is the Niger State print medium corporation established in the year 1986 during the regime of Major General David Mark (Rtd) to mark the tenth (10th) anniversary of the state creation.

In the word of the print corporation's New Editor, Mr. S. Adama. It was established to provide the information needs of the Nigerlites in addition to their entertainment education, promotion of culture and promoting the pollicies/programmes of the state government.

The print medium operated for eight years using Compugraphic edit writer 7500 machine as a computer alternative for the typesetting, editing and planning the page layout of the newspaper. The machine is computer-like considering some of its features like undetarchable keyboard, an auxiliary/secondary storage disk, and a print option called processor.

The Compugraphic edit writer was used to set news stories in column formats with the aid of a gauge. It has facilities for printing in single and double columns, the gauge is set at 9ems an equivalent of 1½". To print the formatted page into hardcopy, the edit writer undergoes four chemical processes. The stages are; activating, stabilizing, water bathing, and drying processes. These processes are like the conventional photo studio chemical developing and printing process.

More importantly, page printing in Compugraphic edit writer requires the use of special printing paper called photochemical paper which are usually difficult to get. Because the machines do not have the final page layout to be filmed, it has an added process of using a special paper called layout to finish the page planning.

In 1994, and in response to the medium house repeated appeals to the state government, two computer systems were procured to help improve the production quality of the newspaper. The computer sets are below average considering their specifications. They are branded 386sx gateway 2000 with hard disk drive capacity as low as 2.1GB and windows 3.1 operating system.

As a little relieve, an upgrade computer set was added to the existing systems in the year 2000. It is an average system of Pentium II 200 series. Although the same hard disks drive capacity, the operating system windows 98 are far much higher than the existing windows 3.1.

Also in the line of the existing system is a Hewlett Packard LaserJet 4 printer, the only printer option attached to the three Computer sets. The manual typewriter is also used to compliment the editing and layout of the Newspaper production. The manual typewriter is the first machine contact with the reporters news story and or other editorials that helps improve the decipherable quality.

The existing systems have their developmental advantages and shortcomings. The Compugraphic edit writer was the best that can be gotten in our third world country at that time for print media page layout planning. This is because apart from being the machine in vogue, it requires little human training to handle the operation process unlike the then use of computers which was entirely strange and mystical.

Moreover, as at the time the computer eclipsed the Compugraphic edit writer, more news stories that would have been edited out due to space are accommodated into the page simply by reducing the font size of the text. The shortcomings of the existing system are reflected below in the problems of the existing system.

3.2 PROBLEMS OF THE EXISTING SYSTEM

By today's standard, these existing systems are deficiencies in many ways. The Compugraphic edit writer for instance had boring, tedious and retarding processes. The chemical processes impose some risk in addition to its manual intensive and wasteful process. The chemicals in use are inimical and hazardous to health due to repeated its

manual refilling process. It can also damage the scarce photo chemical printing papers when handed without the touch of professional dexterity. Edit writer cannot meet up with the haste, speed and timeliness required of the print media deadline. No wonder it was abandoned for a better mechanical option computer.

The procurement of the computer sets in 1994 arrested some of the problems associated with the Compugraphic machine. However, the standard required in computerizing the print medium still remains a mission impossible. This is because the capacities of the purchased computer sets are considerably very low and below standard.

According to the Head of Department (HOD) computer unit of Newslite Newspaper, Mr. Michael Ogene, the system have very low response time and as such waste much unnecessary length of time during saving, formatting, printing and other resource utilization. "Considering the below average configuration of the system, inefficiency is always the result," he said.

It is retrogressive that at this information age when expert system, 40GB Hard disk drive memory capacity of Pentium IV, Multimedia, Networked system and windows 2000 operating system are in vogue, Newslite newspaper is still using only three computer sets of below processing standard and operating system average in the highly intense and competitive media market. Obviously, the category of the existing system holds no promising and progressive future for such medium with enormous roles to the citizenry and government of the state in this 21st century.

Another problem confronting the print medium is the total absence of networking and internet facilities that would have assisted in sourcing news stories and accessing cum sharing resources. Much has been said about the relevance of Local/Wide Area Network and Internet exploration facilities to print media especially in enriching the editorial quality. The lack of all these information age provision by the print medium is another problem facing the existing problem.

Perhaps, the most inviting problem of the existing system is the type of computer printer in use. The Hewlett Packard LaserJet 4 only prints an A4 paper instead of computer printer that can print an A3 paper, which is the equivalent of Newspaper size. To meet up with the page-printing requirement, the printing paper is set at landscape, printed in two pages and senotaped together. The existing printer makes a lot of noise and takes long period of time to print.

This page duplication also extends to the use of manual typewriter. This machine has no professional relevance, All of these problems, which pose a big threat to the professional competitiveness in the operational existence of the print medium can be overcome by the system to the proposed below

3.3 THE PROPOSED SYSTEM

It is an axiom saying that Newspaper house is a market of information, an archival excavation, and a custodian of historic events. Consistent with the afore stated, it is therefore expected that the realition of these X-rayed roles should be proposed.

The system to be proposed should be computer system with high classifications and options. A computer set with a high capacity memory size, high rate of processing speed, Multi media, and network options should be proposed. Also software programs should be written, and personnel trained to handle the operation. On the computer system specification, an at least 20GB Hard disk drive capacity with high a speed processor should be considered because of long time file storage and quick response time to compliment media house fire-brigade production process.

The proposed system should involve the upgrading of the low computer system in existence to the current mechanical and technical standard. While additional computer sets should be procured and added to the existing ones, the editorial and production departments should be networked. One of the newly proposed computer sets should be dedicated for Internet exploration.

All the computer sets should be networked so as to quicken the rate of exchanging, accessing resources and on-screen editing of news stories and page layout. More

importantly, the editorial comment, which is the authoritative opinion of every media on certain current national and or global issues, should be given every desired and deserved secrecy and confidentiality by making it an exclusive reserve of the newspaper editor.

With the network, other editorial materials can be edited on-screen to check mate libelous and scandalous offenses. Also, Printers of A4 paper printing facility should be added to the production line.

3.4 BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED SYSTEM

The primary objective of the benefits is to ascertain whether it is economically worthwhile to invest in the proposed system. So much has been said about the benefits derivable from the proposed system but however, some of the benefits that will in a concrete term accrue from it are the following. Better services, easy storage, and retrieval of information, sourcing and packaging of credible print media, fast communication, production, and computer aided editing facilities.

All the shortcomings of the existing system like tedious page layout process, low memory, and processing capacity will be arrested by the proposed system. The legal threat that contributes to the bane of print media progress will be taken care in the proposed system.

In addition, the credibility of every media is tested on the source of their editorial materials. This credibility test is assured and can be improved through the proposed Internet exploration for sourcing news stories within and across the globe. In the word of the news editor, " we want o be hooked to the news agency of Nigeria (NAN) who is the authorized local and international news story vendor.

3.5 THE SYSTEM DESIGN

DESIGN CRITERIA

According to Niklous Writh–Programming in Module-2, it is worthy of note that a program is irrelevant unless it exists in some form in which human can understand it and also have confidence in its design.

A well-designed system must possess the following features;

1. **RELIABILITY:** - A program is reliable if it is correct and robust, the one that meets its specifications. A robust program is one that continues to execute despite such problems as invalid input data, hardware malfunctioning, and even errors within the program itself. In this research work, all efforts have been made to make the system design reliable.
2. **TESTABILITY:** - This refers to the ease of the situation with which the program can be tested for operation. The program is testable.
3. **COMPREHENSIBLE:** - This means understandability. It refers to program that are clearly written and documented with detailed comments. All possibilities have been manipulated to ensure an adequate comprehension of this program and system design.
4. **EFFICIENCY:** - The primary resources used by a computer program are; the user's timer, the throughput, the computer primary memory (RAM) and the disk capacity, that is the auxiliary Memory (HDD). An effective program minimizes the use of each of these resources while accomplishing the program's objectives. This has been achieved in this design.
5. **PORTABILITY:** - A program is portable if it can readily and easily be adaptable for use on computer systems other than the system for which it was originally written. This system design has that portable facility.
6. **RETAINABILITY:** - This means the ability to maintain the design system. It refers to the ease at which a program can be modified to correct bugs or to improve the system performance to meet up with the demand of current changes. This system design will stand the test of time because of its ability and retainability potential.
7. **USABILITY:** - A good system design should be user's friendly. This implies that the users should be able to learn easily how to use the system. One of the underline motive of his system design is usability.
8. **COST EFFECTIVENESS:** - This involves the comparison of the social cost-benefit analysis of using a particular system. For a system to be Cost-effective, there should be the need for incurring the cost of the system.

3.6 CHOICE OF PROGRAMMING LANGUAGE

The choice of the programming language to use depends on the features of the problem the project is trying to solve and also the nature of the result that is to be generated. The problem at hand “the indispensable role of Computer on print media efficiency” requires the programming language with the following qualities;

- A. Adequate memory capacity for keeping of data records and interrelationships between files and tables.
- B. Setting of relationship between data and activities.
- C. A user captures interface.
- D. Multi-user environment.
- E. Access and handle time management.
- F. Perfect handling of enhanced graphics.

The efficiency and effectiveness of any programming language lies in the ease with which it handles problems and the flexibility of its usage. The language of the database series such as Visual Basic (VB) Fox pro, Clippers, and their likes will definitely be a wise choice.

In view of the demand for a window-based program with familiar operating system, I decided to use Visual Basic (VB) because of its potentials to adequately handle most of or all the condition mentioned above.

CHAPTER FOUR

SYSTEM TESTING AND IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE REQUIREMENT

As stated in the preceding chapter, the software program used for this programming aspect of this project is Visual Basic (VB). This is due to its flexibility to handle both data and graphics. As the case with any installation, it should be ensured that the computer to be installed this software meets the requirements for the program. This is because if the hardware requirement is not attained, the installation will fail. The system requirement for the programming is as follows:

4.1.0. HARDWARE SPECIFICATION

Hardware by simple definition means the physical and or tangible components of the computer such as the system unit, memory capacity, processor size, keyboard, Visual Display Unit (VDU), mouse, printer, etc.

The hardware specifications involve the following;

1. An enhanced Windows 98 keyboard
2. A serial mouse
3. At least 14" monitor
4. An AT or ATX casing
5. A DeskJet/ LaserJet printer
6. Optional CD-ROM.

The operating system requirements include Microsoft Windows 95, Windows 98, or Microsoft Windows NT workstation 4.0.

4.1.1. STORAGE CAPACITY

This is the memory device used to store and or save documents. It is both the primary/main memory or secondary/auxiliary memory. The main memory which in the form of Random Access Memory (RAM) requires at least 16MB RAM for Windows 95 or Windows 98 and 32MB RAM for Windows NT workstation.

For the auxiliary storage, which is the permanent memory, at least 4.2GB Hard disk drive is required for large storage capacity. This program can also be transferred from one system to another with help of floppy drive as an alternative auxiliary memory capacity.

4.1.2. PROCESSOR SIZE

The processor is one of the determinant of the speed, response time, and efficiency of the program. For this program, done on Visual Basic, the processor requirement is at least 486DX/66MHz or higher processor. However, for better efficiency, a Pentium or higher processor is recommended and used.

4.2. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The developed program is a small program to keep the track record of newspaper headlines and important boxed quotations that can be referenced and or accessed at any point in time with ease. It is put in an executable file with the reasons for having faster compilation at run time and to create a direct path for visual Basic to check in case the needs to generate a setup disk or an executable file.

The program also gave users familiar interface for viewing and entering data into the database, provide a rich set of objects that can respond to users events so as to enable them accomplish their information management task as easily as possible. The output of the program developed is attached as appendix at the end of the pages.

4.3. TRAINING AND MAINTENANCE.

Because every program is liable to human error and correction from time to time, this program provided the facility for the maintenance or updating so as to meet up with the future situational requirements.

However, users of this program should be trained on how to use it though the simplicity provided an added advantage to users who are already familiar with some pre-written computer packages.

CHAPTER FIVE

DOCUMENTATION AND ITS IMPORTANCE

5.1 DOCUMENTATION

To assist in the inter-personal communication in computer, a program must be well documented. Documentation simply means intelligible description of what the program does and how it does it.

The proper documentation of this program is essential for many reasons. First, anyone using this program must know what will and will not be done, how to prepare data for it and how to interpret the output.

Secondly, because this program has to be maintained, the structure and mode of operation were meticulously recorded to make things as easy as possible for the maintenance programmer.

Thirdly, because this program may be modified in the future to make it more useful or provide it with additional facilities, it provided the ease so that whoever wants to update this program must have access to full information. It also includes problems that presented themselves or ideas that occurred to me, the original writer but which I did not have time to incorporate.

Summarily, documentation is about making programs intelligible to human reader. The intelligibility can be improved by other means besides the use of comments. This program is neatly and consistently laid out, blank lines are used to separate chunks of code which have different purposes.

Input statements are put together as output statements. Also, the sequence in which the program is listed is as close as possible to the sequence in which it was executed. Variable names are meaningful but not too long.

5.1.0 INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DOCUMENTATION

Documentation can be internal and or external. Internal documentation means when the intelligible description of what the program does and how it does it is within outside the computer program itself. Specifically, external documentation means a documentation that is associated with a program but not contained it within it. Such things include; user manual, operator's manual, maintenance programmers manual, a list of test data and results, and program specification.

In its internal documentation, this program provides a means of editing, updating and including informative statements within the program. These statements are called comments and have no effects on the computer's execution of the program, they are purely for the information of the human reader.

5.2 PROBLEM ENCOUNTERED

Saying that no problem was encountered during the course of writing this project is tantamount to stating the obvious that I am guilty of gross plagiarism. Therefore, on the course of carrying out this research work, I had so many numerous obstacles ranging from intellectual blank wall especially on the programming aspect of it to the financial involvement.

The first major set back of this project research was my initial inability to prepare a suitable and acceptable table of content, which will provide the compasses to navigate to the actualization of this mission and vision.

When at last the table was drafted and approved, progressively I discovered that the topic I am writing on is not programmable. When even at last I discovered it was programmable, I still lack sound programming background and or foundation to assert authority in deciding the how and what to do.

From time to time the situation which looks hopeless and helpless will make me feverish especially the strenuous and challenging supervision that usually stressed me beyond my inelastic intellectual and psychological limit. The supervision is strenuous and unnerving but it was the greatest motivation.

Apart from all these, the most challenging situation was my absolute destitution due to my many years of joblessness. All these should be channeled to the annals of history.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The rapid growth and development of information technology and its concomitant effect on print media in particular and other media communication in general are on the increase.

The dynamism and indispensability of computer on print media in particular should be enkindled and rekindled if our nation should have taste and thirst for greater height in the apex and or climax of world information flow that has reduced the whole earth into a global village.

Worthy of note is that the current world wide disparity and lop-sidedness in the new world information flow order has been stifled, jettisoned and bridged by the application of computer to the news sourcing, planning and packaging of the editorial content of the print media especially, and other media of communication in general.

Recently, the awareness concerning the all-faceted application of computer in the nation building, growth, and development is rising by the day. We must join this campaign and crusade to connect our national media to the international information grid.

This research work x-rayed the indispensable role of computer on print media in three aspects. The first is the simplified formatting of newspaper page layout with some pre-written packages, the second is the use of Internet to source foreign news stories and third is the increase of the confidentiality of news materials by networking the environments.

Some of the pre-written computer software packages that can aid the formatting of the page layout of newspaper are Microsoft word, Adobe PageMaker, and Microsoft Publisher Wizard. The Internet on the other hand will assist in exploring or accessing all

the forms of local, national and international news report ranging from sports, crime to breaking news stories.

The networking of limited geographical location of the media can enhance the confidentiality and secrecy associated with the house style of every media of communication with particular reference to the case under study, the Newline Newspaper.

The programming aspect will assist in archiving, documenting or keeping a historical track record of newspaper headline and comments with the facility to be accessed at any point in time with ease.

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Private Sub Command1_Click()
Load DataReport1
DataReport1.Show

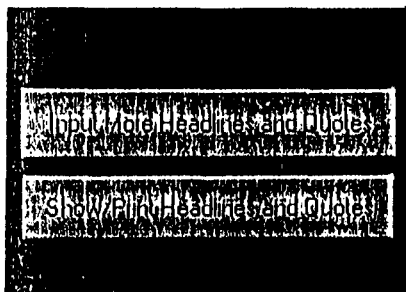
End Sub

Private Sub Command2_Click()
Load frmDataEnv
frmDataEnv.Show

End Sub

Private Sub Form_DblClick()
Me.PrintForm
End Sub

HeadLines And Quotes			
HeadLine	Date	Quote	
IBB on the run Again @	12/1/1		
Abubakar Showdown in	3/3/02		
Where Do the Run to	2/3/11		
1	2	3	4
1	IBB on the run Again @	Who will Go for him. Diy	
2	IBB on the run Again @	I shall See how Nigeria	



News Paper HeadLines And Quotations

Date:

12/1/1

HeadLine

IBB on the run Again @ 2003

Quotes

Who will Go for him..Diya

Quotes

I shall See how Nigerin will See.. Lagos Lawyer

Date:

3/3/02

HeadLine

Abubarkar Showdown in the U.K.

Quotes

How Money..Lasu Student

Quotes

Let Him Alone..Adamu

Date:

2/3/4

HeadLine

Where Do we Run to

Quotes

Run to God.. Pastor

Quotes

Fly away...Bird