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**Saudi e-Newspapers Publishing
In the Light of the Communicative
Features of the Internet
*A Descriptive Analytical Study***

**A Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for
the Masters Degree in Mass Media**

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In the name of God the Merciful

Abstract

Praise be to God alone, thank befits His Majesty, and great authority, and blessings and peace be upon the master of messengers Muhammad ibn Abdullah, and his family and companions, and his follower to the Day of Judgment, and ...

The Internet is one of the most modern methods that have emerged as a result of the technological developments that have been witnessed in the field of modern communications. This network has contributed to the removal of barriers between personal and public interests; it has also contributed, through the interactive dimension it offers to free the mass media from passive recipient, as the audience have no longer sufficed with the role of the recipient of the published or broadcasted information material, as was the case in the traditional methods that were incapable of adding the interactive nature which we are witnessing now. Recipients are now able to dialogue and put forward their viewpoint to other participants on the Internet. The information media, through the utilization of the Internet technological capabilities, are able to provide specialized informational alternatives addressed to specific groups unlike the limited alternatives that are addressed to all public.

The electronic press is one of the most important communication alternatives offered by the Internet. This modern means contributed to the maximization of the communicative impact of the informational process through what it makes available of readable, visible, and audible elements and means.

Recent years have witnessed the emergence of several Saudi electronic newspapers, which is the result of the effort to benefit from the communicative capabilities of the Internet. Despite the growing rate of publishing of Saudi newspapers online, such growth is not accompanied by adequate efforts towards evaluating the journalistic input provided by these newspapers in terms of content and form, particularly with regard to the functional role of these newspapers publication, which assumes the necessity of adopting formal patterns and methods of communication that contribute to provision of excellent press services commensurate with the especial nature of the Internet as an intermediary communicative medium with its own special formalities. For that, this study which is entitled (Saudi e-Newspapers Publishing in Light of the Communicative Features of the Internet) is analytical descriptive study, in an attempt to describe the reality of Saudi e-newspapers publishing in terms of fixed and variable design including electronic design units; and to evaluate the extent to which the publishing of these newspapers is committed to the communicative formal features of the Internet, such as browsing speed,

ease of previewing, and the use of multimedia. This has been done through two studies, a qualitative one and a quantitative one.

The first aims at the analysis of the reality of Saudi e-Newspapers publishing depending on the method of analyzing the form. The Saudi e-Newspapers issued by the Saudi press institutions constitute the community of this study. Therefore, the study was conducted on websites of Al-Jazeera, Al-Riyadh, Al-Watan, Okaz, Al-Youm, and Al-Madina newspapers. The study continued for a period of six months set by the researcher from the first of Muharram 1426 AH to the end of Jumada II of the same year. The sample items were selected from the six newspaper websites depending on the method of random sampling; accordingly the researcher made (24) industrial weeks where the items of the study totaled (144) items at (24) from each single newspaper.

The second was a quantitative field study aimed at soliciting the opinions of newspapers designers, and some Arab websites on the Saudi e-Newspapers publishing. The study adopted the survey method in accordance with the intended sample type consisting of 100 individual designers and developers of electronic newspapers and websites, along with a number of workers of companies and institutions specialized in the design, management, and development of websites, where the study sample included workers in this field in several cities within the Kingdom which are: Riyadh, Dammam, Jeddah, as well as the United Arab Emirates, particularly Dubai dwelling Dubai Internet City, in addition to Arab Republic of Egypt, where the study was conducted on a number of developers in the city of Cairo, which is the industry leader in software development, and Arabicization of computer operating systems in the Arab world.

What distinguishes this study from other studies is its quest to establish firm foundation for the formal features of communication through the Internet and their applications in electronic newspapers field, and then take advantage of this in evaluating the conformity of Saudi e-Newspapers publishing with these features, which is a new dimension achieved by this study. Most studies, which dealt with the form aspects of the Arab electronic newspaper, focused on describing the websites of those electronic newspapers without linking and evaluating the features of these sites in view of how should be the publishing of electronic newspapers. Thus, the major focus of this study is on the communicative role that can be played by the form in electronic newspapers, and the extent to which this functional use of this aspect in the Saudi e-newspapers through the analysis of the form in which these newspapers are issued. In addition the study aims to identify the opinions of designers of Arab electronic newspapers and websites towards the extent to which the publishing of the Saudi electronic newspapers observes the special nature and communicative features of the Internet.

Therefore study aimed to describe the reality of the Saudi e-Newspapers publishing along with evaluating the conformity of this reality with these formal features of the Internet through the analysis of the basic form in which the Saudi e-Newspapers publishing in terms of constituent units of such form, and the electronic components used in its construction. In addition to the analysis of the changing designs of these newspapers in terms of electronic units, and methods of distribution into pages, as well as to identify the professional and aesthetic goals, which Saudi e-Newspapers publishing seeks to achieve. In addition to assessing the extent to which the Saudi e-Newspaper's publishers are aware of the special nature of the electronic journalism, and the extent of their efforts to adopt publishing style patterns that are commensurate with the nature of the Internet.

The researcher divided the study into to an introduction, two chapters and nine sections, in addition to supplements and indexes of the study.

The researcher devoted the first chapter of the study to the theoretical framework and comprised two sections, which are: the communicative features of the Internet consisting of two subsections the first of which deals with the communication and information services of the Internet, while the second subsection deals with the formal features of communicating over the Internet.

The second section of the theoretical framework has dealt with the electronic newspapers publishing, and comes in three subsections: the first section: the electronic newspapers and their concept and their appearance on the Internet. The second section: The special nature of publishing the electronic newspapers. The third section: features of electronic newspapers publishing, and its communicative dimensions.

The second chapter of the study is devoted to the applied study which comes in three sections, which are:

The first section, in which the researcher presented the findings of the analytical results with respect to the Saudi e-newspapers publishing, is divided in two subsections. Subsection I: the methodological procedures for the analytical study. Subsection II: the findings of the analytical study.

The second section was devoted by the researcher to present the findings of field study composing of the views of designers and developers and electronic newspapers and websites on Saudi e-Newspapers publishing. This section consists of two subsections, the first of which deals with the methodological procedures of the field study, while the second deals with the findings of the field study.

The third section of the practical study is devoted to analyze and discuss the findings of the analytical and field study as well as the recommendations.