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VU TRUNG DUY

**CURRENT DIGITAL CONTENT TRANSFORMATION
IN VIETNAMESE JOURNALS AND MAGAZINES**

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**SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION IN
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INTRODUCTION

1. The urgency of the thesis

The contemporary world has entered the digital age—also referred to as the digital era—characterized by the pervasive accessibility, exchange, and utilization of information in electronic form. This era began in the 1970s with the emergence of computers, the internet, and early digitization processes, marking the onset of the Third Industrial Revolution. Subsequent developments in high-speed computing, broadband infrastructure (e.g., 4G and 5G), and the widespread availability of compact, affordable smart devices have significantly accelerated digital transformation worldwide, tightening the link between the real world and cyberspace. Especially, the advent of artificial intelligence (AI) and other disruptive digital technologies has catalyzed the shift from automated to intelligent production systems, constituting the core of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which is exerting profound and far-reaching impacts on contemporary society. [94]

New-generation broadband internet, combined with digital technology and innovation, has revolutionized content production and distribution, fundamentally changing how people access information. Social media has emerged as the most widespread and fastest communication platform, driven by its vast user base and high interactivity. Personalized content and the use of digital technologies to enhance user experience are shaping up to be defining trends.[94]

Methods of journalism production worldwide are undergoing a profound transformation fueled by digital technologies. Leading global media organizations are increasingly leveraging digital platforms to optimize content production and distribution, adopting multimedia and creative journalism, especially AI-powered “automated journalism” for information gathering and processing. This shift enhances the efficiency, creativity, and accessibility of journalism in the digital era—an inevitable trend shaped by the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

In recent years, the Party and State of Vietnam have issued several key directives for active participation in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. They include Resolution 52-NQ/TW (September 27, 2019) on guidelines and policies for proactive engagement in Industry 4.0; the Prime Minister’s Decision 749/QĐ-TTg (June 3, 2020) approving the National Digital Transformation Program until 2025 with an orientation to 2030; and the Politburo’s Resolution 57-NQ/TW (December 22, 2024) on breakthroughs in the development of science and technology, innovation, and digital transformation. Resolution 57 emphasizes that “The development of science and technology, innovation, and digital transformation are vital for the development of nations. It represents the prerequisite and the best opportunity for Vietnam to become a prosperous and powerful country in the new era the era of national rise.”[65] The Party and State underline that “Digital transformation is not simply applying digital technologies to socio-economic activities, but creating a new, modern ‘digital mode of production.’”[48] To this end, accelerating the transformation from the traditional mode of production to a digital one is urgent.

In journalism, the Prime Minister’s Decision 362/QĐ-TTg (April 3, 2019), which approved the national press development and management planning until 2025, provides a legal basis for restructuring press models, organization, and management in order to build an information society in Vietnam. The implementation of this plan will ensure the development and effective management of a revolutionary, professional, modern, high-quality, and efficient press. It will also help meet the public’s information needs, disseminate Party guidelines and State policies, unite the public, foster social consensus, and shape ideological and aesthetic values, contributing to improving public knowledge, developing Vietnamese culture and human resources, and aligning the Vietnamese press with global trends in science, technology, and communication.

The digital transformation strategy for the press until 2025, with an orientation to 2030, says, “The press will evolve into multi-platform, multimedia, and multi-service models, developing digital journalism products, digital content distribution platforms, and the ability to control content distribution in cyberspace. Citizens, organizations, and businesses will have unrestricted access to information in the digital environment—on demand, anytime, anywhere, without spatial, temporal, or geographical limitations. By 2025, 50% of electronic media agencies will have adopted a converged newsroom and multimedia model,

producing content aligned with digital journalism trends such as personalized content, multi-platform publishing, mobile journalism, social journalism, and data journalism. By 2030, 100% of electronic media agencies will have completed this transformation.” [72]

Under Resolution 18-NQ/TW of the 12th Party Central Committee on streamlining the political system for greater effectiveness and efficiency, periodicals affiliated with central Party commissions will cease operations, with their functions and responsibilities transferred to the Communist Review. Each ministry or ministry-level agency is permitted only one newspaper (print or online) and one journal, provided it meets academic recognition standards both domestically and internationally [142]. Non-essential newspapers and periodicals under the Vietnam Fatherland Front, political and social organizations, and mass associations assigned by the Party and State will be merged or discontinued [141].

The urgency of shifting from traditional to digital production methods, along with the need to streamline the apparatus, highlights the imperative for comprehensive reform to modernize, streamline, and improve the quality and effectiveness of journals and magazines in line with domestic and global media trends. Particular emphasis should be placed on comprehensively renewing content, format, and technology to meet the evolving reading habits of the Industry 4.0 era, contributing to the “development of a professional, humanistic, and modern journalism and communication sector” [18, Vol. I, p.145] in line with the 13th National Party Congress Resolution.

In the current context, a comprehensive and effective reform of Vietnamese journals and magazines must be grounded in scientific reasoning and the practical realities of the Vietnamese press. These factors underscore the theoretical and practical urgency of the doctoral research topic: ***“Current Digital Content Transformation in Vietnamese Journals and Magazines.”***

2. Research objectives and tasks

2.1. Research objectives

This thesis aims to explore the theoretical and practical dimensions of digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines, identify emerging challenges, and propose comprehensive solutions to accelerate the process, both within these publications and across the Vietnamese press as a whole. It also offers policy recommendations for relevant ministries, agencies, sectors, journal and magazine organizations, and training institutions to support and advance digital content transformation in the journal and magazine sector.

2.2. Research tasks

The thesis aims to:

- Identify existing gaps and define key research issues, building on the findings of previous studies;
- Systematize, supplement, and clarify the current understanding of digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines, drawing on prior research and relevant literature;
- Survey and analyze the current state of digital content transformation in these publications, highlighting achievements, limitations, and challenges;
- Propose solutions to promote effective digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines in the near future.

3. Research subject and scope

3.1. Research subject

Digital content transformation in Vietnamese journal and magazine organizations.

3.2. Surveyed subjects and scope of research

Surveyed subjects: The Communist Review, the Vietnam Journal of Science and Technology,

Ngày nay (Today) Magazine, and Znews Magazine.

Scope of research: From April 6, 2023 to December 30, 2024 (20 months)

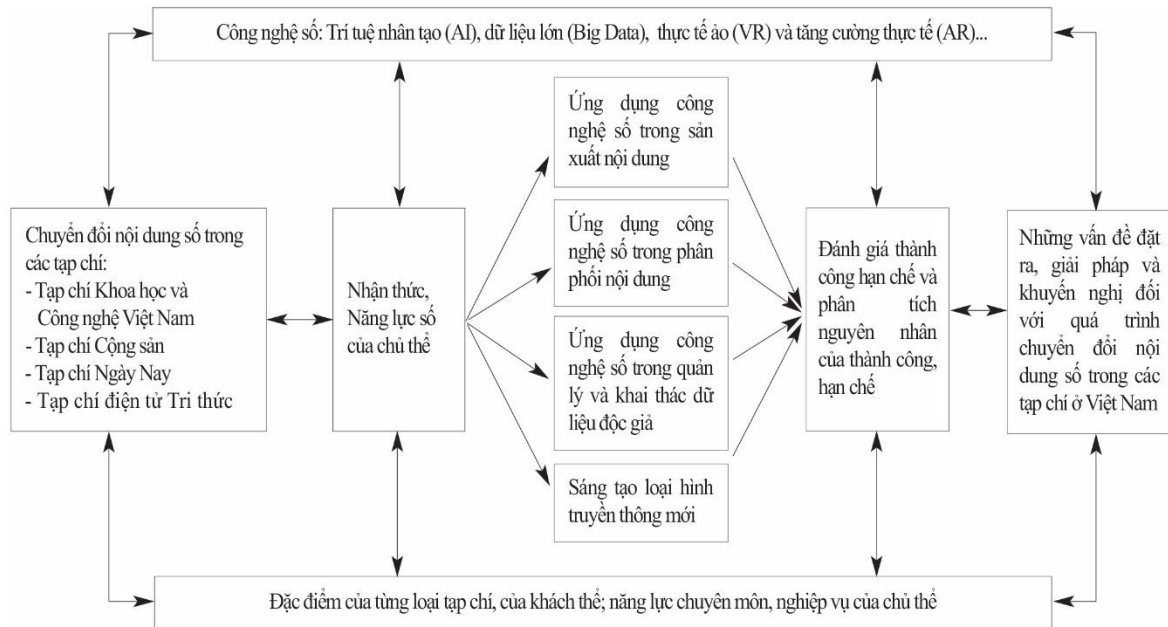
4. Research questions and hypotheses

4.1. Research questions

This study seeks to explore the following key questions:

- Are there any in-depth and comprehensive theoretical and practical studies on digital content transformation in journals and magazines?
- What is the current level of awareness and implementation among editorial boards of Vietnamese journals and magazines regarding digital content transformation?
- What is the current status of digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines?
- What are the challenges and what solutions are needed to ensure successful digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines in the coming time?

4.2. Analytical framework



4.3. Research hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Amid globalization and the rapid advancement of science and technology, the application of digital technologies has profoundly transformed methods of digital content production in the global journalism and communication sector. However, many journals and magazines in Vietnam continue to struggle with digital content transformation, primarily due to the absence of well-established scientific and practical foundations to guide this process.

Hypothesis 2: The editorial boards and digital content transformation teams at journals and magazines are acutely aware of the pressing need to accelerate this process. They acknowledge the critical importance of formulating a digital content transformation strategy and are committed to its effective implementation.

Hypothesis 3: In response to profound changes in the needs, psychology, and habits of digital audiences, journals and magazines must not remain on the sidelines. Instead, they must proactively reach audiences to fulfill their missions and ensure their survival and growth. Digital content transformation allows them to enhance the application of digital technologies in content creation aligned with emerging journalism trends, such as personalized content and multi-platform, mobile, social, and data journalism, while distributing content tailored to the expectations of the digital public.

Hypothesis 4: Accelerating digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines requires a focus on the following key solution groups:

1. Amending and supplementing relevant mechanisms and policies to keep pace with the rapid development of science, technology, and modern communication;
2. Improving the quality and digital capabilities of human resources;
3. Ensuring sufficient financial resources for digital content transformation.

5. Theoretical basis and research methods

5.1. Theoretical basis

The thesis is grounded in Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's thought, and the Party and State's perspectives, guidelines, and policies on the press. It also draws on modern journalism theories, including information society theory, media convergence theory, and Diffusion Of Innovations Theory.

5.2. Research methods

Literature review: Literature review is employed to build a comprehensive database for the study by collecting and analyzing relevant materials.

Digital survey: This method involves conducting surveys on widely used digital platforms to collect, synthesize, analyze, and compare data. It aims to assess the needs, behaviors, and reading habits of the target audience of the surveyed journals.

Secondary data: The thesis utilizes secondary data from reputable global research institutes on trends and forecasts in journalism, communication, and technology.

In-depth interview (interviewing experts): A total of 20 interviews were conducted with leaders of selected journals and magazines, press management agencies, digital transformation experts from major telecom and technology corporations, as well as reporters, editors, graphic designers, and technical staff from various journal and magazine organizations.

Panel discussion: Panel discussions were organized with the participation of leaders of press agencies, media management bodies, training institutions, reporters, editors, graphic designers, technical staff, and experts in digital content transformation in Vietnam's magazine and journal organizations.

Case study: The thesis examines digital content transformation in several representative journal and magazine organizations, assessing their strengths and weaknesses to propose specific solutions for successful implementation.

- The Communist Review: A central-level political theory journal under the Party Central Committee. It is Vietnam's only journal responsible for disseminating the Party's political ideology.

- The Vietnam Journal of Science and Technology: A ministry-level specialized scientific journal under the Ministry of Science and Technology, covering disciplines such as natural sciences, engineering and technology, medical sciences, agricultural sciences, and social sciences and humanities.

- Ngay Nay (Today) Magazine: A federation-level informational and advisory magazine under the Vietnam Federation of UNESCO Associations.

- ZNews Magazine: An association-level entertainment-focused magazine under the Vietnam Publishers Association. A purely digital publication, it boasts one of the largest readerships in Vietnam, primarily targeting younger audiences.

6. New contributions of the thesis

This study is one of the first systematic, methodical, and in-depth examinations of digital content transformation in journal and magazine organizations, offering several new scientific findings:

- It systematizes the concept of digital content transformation in journals and magazines, clarifying its roles, characteristics, and influencing factors.
- The study provides entirely new and validated scientific insights.
- It identifies key challenges affecting digital content transformation in journals and magazines and proposes comprehensive solutions to ensure seamless digital access to information—on demand, anytime, and anywhere, without spatial or temporal limitations.

7. Theoretical and practical significance of the study

7.1. Theoretical significance

The thesis contributes to establishing a theoretical foundation and framework for journals and magazines, including their categorization and digital content transformation.

It raises awareness among press management officials, leaders, reporters, and editors at both central and local journal and magazine organizations about the critical role and urgency of comprehensive digital content transformation in line with the digital transformation strategy for the press until 2025, with an orientation to 2030.

It serves as a valuable reference for research on journals and magazines, their digital transformation, and broader digital transformation in the press.

7.2. Practical significance

The thesis serves as a reference for journals and magazines to successfully implement digital content transformation, supporting the goal that by 2030, 90% of press agencies in Vietnam will have comprehensively modernized their content production systems in line with digital journalism trends. These trends include content personalization, multi-platform distribution, mobile journalism, social journalism, data journalism, creative journalism, and super journalistic works.

Additionally, it provides a valuable reference for press management agencies, journal and magazine organization, and journalism training institutions.

8. Structure of the thesis

The thesis includes an introduction, literature review, conclusion, references, and appendices. The main research content is structured into three chapters:

- Chapter 1: Fundamental theoretical issues in digital content transformation in journals and magazines
- Chapter 2: Current state of digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines
- Chapter 3: Key challenges and solutions for promoting digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Foreign language documents

1.1.1. Documents related to journals and magazines

Encyclopedia Britannica online [137] provides a comprehensive overview of magazine publishing history worldwide from the 17th to the 20th century. This resource gives the author a broad perspective on the formation, development, and classification of magazines across different historical periods.

Hogarth's 2013 study, *"How to Launch a Magazine in this Digital Age"*, outlines strategies for magazine publishing in the digital era [112].

Tan Kwan Hong's 2016 study, *"Singapore's Magazine and Digital Media Industry: An Analysis of Key Market Forces and Competitive Dynamics,"* examines the structural aspects of Singapore's magazine and digital media industry. It explores demand-side factors (such as consumer preferences and consumption models), supply-side factors (including competitor analysis and key competitive dynamics), and trends in the growth of print versus digital media [113].

The study, *"The effects of the integration of external and internal communication features in digital magazines on consumers' magazine attitude"* by Rauwers, Fabienne, Voorveld, Hilde, and Neijens, Peter (2016) investigates the effects of external and internal communication features on consumers' digital magazine attitude, and the processes (i.e., perceived interactivity and social presence) underlying these effects [122].

The study *"Editorial Policy of Gadis Magazine in Creating Digital Content"* by Larasaty, Past (2018) shows that magazine is one of the mass media that also benefitted from the technology development and internet connection, as it can produce online or digital version [114].

The book *"Transforming Magazines: Rethinking the Medium in the Digital Age"* by Carla Rodrigues Cardoso and Tim Holmes (2022) is a vital contribution to the development of magazine studies. It shows the urgent need to find solutions for the challenges faced by magazines as they transition to digital formats [103].

1.1.2. Documents related to digital technology, digitization, and digital transformation

Oscar Westlund's 2012 study *"Mobile news - A review and model of journalism in an age of mobile media"* explores the production of mobile news, by discussing and synthesizing the findings of the contemporary literature found in the nexus of journalism and mobile media. It posits a model of journalism focusing on the roles of humans and technology in activities characterized by customizing or repurposing [133].

The book *"The New World of Transitioned Media: Digital Realignment and Industry Transformation"* by Gali Einav (2015) says the media industry is undergoing an accelerated pace of change, driven in large part by the proliferation of digital platforms [109].

Alberto Cairo Tourino's 2017 dissertation *"Nerd Journalism: How Data and Digital Technology Transformed News Graphics"* explores the deep transformations that news graphics - charts, graphs, maps, diagrams in news publications - have experienced in the past 20 years [99].

"The Routledge Handbook of Developments in Digital Journalism Studies" offers a unique and authoritative collection of essays that report on and address the significant issues and focal debates shaping the innovative field of digital journalism studies [130].

The book *"Digital Transformation in Journalism and News Media Media Management, Media Convergence and Globalization"* by Mike Friedrichsen and Yahya Kamalipour (2018) analyzes various digital transformation processes in journalism and news media [117].

The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism's 2024 Journalism, Media, and Technology Trends and Predictions report highlights AI's disruptive impact on the media industry. Additionally, the rise of new electronic devices is expected to drive innovation in media formats, particularly in video, audio, and augmented reality (AR) [134].

1.1.3. Documents related to digital content and its transformation in journals and magazines

The article *"Print Magazines: Linking to the Digital World"* by Swartzlander, Stephanie (2011) shows how magazines and their advertisers are using print to send their readers to digital sources of

information [127].

“*The Routledge Handbook of Magazine Research The Future of the Magazine Form*” by David Abrahamson, Marcia R. Prior-Miller (2017) shows that scholarly engagement with the magazine form has, in the last two decades, produced a substantial amount of valuable research. Authored by leading academic authorities in the study of magazines, the chapters in *The Routledge Handbook of Magazine Research* not only create an architecture to organize and archive the developing field of magazine research, but also suggest new avenues of future investigation [129].

“*The Handbook of Magazine Studies*” (2020) is a wide-ranging study of the ways in which the political economy of magazines has dramatically shifted in recent years—and continues to do so at a rapid pace. Essays from emerging and established scholars explore the cultural function of magazine media in light of significant changes in content delivery, format, and audience. This volume integrates academic examination with pragmatic discussion to explore contemporary organizational practices, content, and cultural impact [131].

Dora Santos Silva’s 2022 article “*Print magazines in the digital environment: editorial and positioning strategies*” examines how the magazine media industry is innovating in the digital environment, regarding editorial process and media brand positioning. The focus is on magazine media brands with print foundations that expanded to digital [128].

1.2. Documents in Vietnamese

1.2.1. Documents related to journals and magazines

The article “*Some thoughts on the Party’s political theory journal*” by Nguyen Phu Trong, published in the Communist Review in August 2003, emphasizes that each media agency has its own principles, objectives, target audience, functions, requirements, and style.

The four-part book “*Perspectives of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Vladimir Lenin, Ho Chi Minh, and the Communist Party of Vietnam on journalism*” by Le Văn Toan, Ngo Kim Ngan, and Nguyen Thi Phuong Thao (2011) compiles and excerpts statements, writings, and articles by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Ho Chi Minh, and Party and State documents on the press. It highlights key issues such as the role, function, and mission of the revolutionary press; principles and methods of journalistic writing; newspaper organization and management; media publishing and distribution; and the role of journalists [85].

The 2020 book “*Modern Journalism and Communication: Current landscape, Issues, and Perspectives*” by Ta Ngoc Tan analyzes and clarifies the profound impact of new communication technologies on the press in the digital age [81, p.6]. It serves as a valuable resource for researchers, policymakers, lecturers, reporters, and editors in media organizations.

The 2019 book “*Fundamentals of Magazines and Journals*” by Nguyen Quang Hoa provides a comprehensive study of magazines and journals. It systematically defines key concepts related to these publications, explores their history and development worldwide and in Vietnam, distinguishes between newspapers, journals and magazines, and categorizes magazines and journals both globally and domestically [41].

1.2.2. Documents related to digital technology, digitization, and digital transformation

The 2013 book “*The Elements of Journalism*” by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel provides fundamental knowledge of journalism, highlighting the major challenges posed by science, technology, and financial economics to traditional journalistic values. It also addresses the role, ethics, principles, professional skills, sensitivity, and conscience of journalists [13].

Notable studies on the concept of social media and journalism, as well as their interaction, include “*Journalism, Communication, and Socio-Cultural-Economic Affairs*” by Le Thanh Binh (2005); “*Modern Journalism and Communication*” by Nguyen Van Dung (2011); “*Online Journalism: Fundamental Issues*” by Nguyen Thi Truong Giang (2014); “*Journalism and Social Media: A Monograph*” by Do Chi Nghia (chief author) and Dinh Thi Thu Hang (2014). “*Journalism and Social Media*” by Do Dinh Tan (2017) introduces social media, its influence on journalism and communication, and its positive and negative aspects, aiming for a safe and healthy media ecosystem.

The 2020 book “*Q&A on Digital Transformation*” by Ho Tu Bao, Nguyen Huy Dung, and Nguyen

Nhat Quang shares the authors' initial insights and experiences on digital transformation [4, p.18]. The Ministry of Information and Communications' *"Digital Transformation Handbook,"* published by the Information and Communications Publishing House in 2021, provides fundamental concepts of digital transformation, covering its application in society, businesses, and State agencies.

Thomas M. Siebel's 2021 book *"Digital Transformation: Survive and Thrive in an Era of Mass Extinction"* explores how breakthrough technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, big data, and the Internet of Things are driving major changes across nations, industries, and corporations.

David L. Rogers' *"The Digital Transformation Roadmap"* (2024) provides actionable strategies and a clear roadmap tailored to different stages of digital transformation. It emphasizes the importance of adapting strategies to various organizational contexts while maintaining flexibility in execution [19, p.6].

The seven-chapter book *"Digital Transformation – International Experiences and Roadmap for Vietnam"* by Bui Quang Tuan and Ha Huy Ngoc (2022) analyzes Vietnam's current digital transformation status and compares it with other countries through key pillars: digital government, digital economy, and digital society [94, p.6].

1.2.3. Documents related to digital content and its transformation in journals and magazines

Paul Bradshaw's 2020 *"The Online Journalism Handbook: Skills to Survive and Thrive in the Digital Age"* focuses on four increasingly important roles of journalism in the networked era [57].

The book *"Digital Transformation in the Vietnamese Press: Some Theoretical and Practical Issues,"* a collection of papers from a 2022 conference organized by the University of Social Sciences and Humanities and the Ministry of Information and Communications, discusses theoretical aspects of digital transformation in the Vietnamese press, along with experiences, models, approaches, and future directions in various media organizations [91]. The paper *"Applying Artificial Intelligence in Digital Journalistic Content Creation,"* presented by Do Thi Thu Hang at the 2022 conference *"AI and Content Creation Management in Newsrooms,"* states that digital journalism involves the simultaneous utilization of digital technology in creating, trading, and distributing content and digital products across digital platforms within a digital ecosystem [143].

David Randall's 2022 book *"The Universal Journalist"* argues that globalization is no longer a new phenomenon but has truly made the world "flat" in many ways. Never before has access to information been so easy, yet concerns over the authenticity of news have never been more pressing [20]. Alan Rusbridger's 2023 book *"News and How to Use It: What to Believe in a Fake News World"* serves as a glossary for navigating this bewildering age. Covering topics from AI to bots, the climate crisis to fake news, and clickbait to trolls, it provides a definitive user's guide to staying informed, distinguishing truth from fiction, and holding those in power accountable [2, tr.8]. The 2023 *"Digital Transformation Handbook for the Press,"* compiled by the Press Authority of the Ministry of Information and Communications, provides guidance on assessing digital transformation in press agencies, utilizing digital technology, and navigating the transformation process. It also introduces the initial outcomes of the digital transformation strategy for the press until 2025, with an orientation to 2030 [11].

1.3. Evaluation of the published literature related to the thesis, and identification of gaps for further research

1.3.1. Findings from the published studies in foreign and Vietnamese languages related to the thesis

Studies related to journals and magazines

First, these studies have systematized the evolution of journals and magazines from print to digital formats. Advancements in science and technology have resulted in modern content production and publishing methods using digital technology. However, the digital era has intensified competition in journalism and communication, extending beyond news gathering and reporting to the integration of multimedia products. This shift enhances content quality and value, reduces production time, and fosters the creation of new media products and product and value chains within press and communication agencies [81, p.6].

Second, the studies show that magazines and journals, as a form of mass media, have benefited from technological development and internet connectivity. The introduction of online or digital versions has enabled greater reader interaction, reduced production and distribution costs, and expanded accessibility across multiple platforms, reaching a wider audience.

Studies related to digital technology, digitization, and digital transformation

First, these studies have identified key trends in journalism during the digital age, including multi-platform journalism, mobile journalism, social journalism, data journalism, artificial intelligence (AI), graphic journalism, and creative journalism. However, there is no consensus on defining these emerging journalism and communication trends, nor do existing studies provide an insight into the current communication ecosystem and its impact on press management in Vietnam.

Second, the studies have systematized perspectives, approaches, and interpretations of urgent issues in Vietnam's digital transformation, focusing on the following areas:

- The development of smart and secure digital infrastructure to enable digital transformation and create a new living environment for the people.
- Artificial intelligence as a foundational technology driving Vietnam's Fourth Industrial Revolution.
- The development of a digital economy, digital society, and digital government as a pathway for Vietnam to align with global trends.

Third, some studies highlight how disruptive technologies such as AI, cloud computing, big data, and the Internet of Things are driving significant changes in countries, industries, and corporations in the digital age.

Studies related to digital content and its transformation in journals and magazines

Some studies emphasize that "digital journalism involves the simultaneous utilization of digital technology in creating, trading, and distributing digital content and products across digital platforms within a digital ecosystem. Digital transformation in the press is essentially a shift from single-format journalism to a model that prioritizes digital platforms and integrates digital technology into all operations of a converged newsroom." [143]

In short, the published foreign and Vietnamese studies relevant to this thesis analyze emerging technological trends such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and big data; global and Vietnamese experiences in digital transformation; and the evolution of journalism in the digital era. These studies offer in-depth insights into digital transformation in the press and publishing sector, serving as valuable references for this thesis.

1.3.2. The gaps in the published foreign and Vietnamese studies relevant to this thesis that need further research

These studies explore the shift from print to digital magazines and journals and the methods of digital publishing across various countries, offering a scientific and practical foundation for systematizing the theoretical and practical aspects of digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines. However, none of the reviewed studies provide a comprehensive analysis of both the theoretical and practical dimensions of *digital content transformation in journal and magazine agencies*—a key segment of the press with specialized content tailored to distinct audiences. To address this gap, the author will further examine the following aspects.

From a theoretical perspective, it is necessary to establish a foundation for studying digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines by:

- Systematizing relevant concepts;
- Analyzing and proposing new research perspectives while building on existing theories to explore the characteristics and role of digital content transformation in these publications;
- Identifying factors influencing their digital content transformation;
- Developing principles for their digital content transformation.

From a practical perspective, the study will survey, analyze, and evaluate the current state of digital content transformation in journals and magazines using methods such as expert interviews, digital tool-based analysis, and panel discussions. Based on a scientific assessment of digital content

transformation in these publications amid globalization and rapid technological advancements, the thesis will identify successes, limitations, underlying causes, and key issues that need to be addressed. By combining a solid theoretical framework with empirical research, the thesis will offer solutions and recommendations to accelerate digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines.

Summary of published studies

The published studies fall into three main categories:

- Studies on journals and magazines;
- Studies on digital technology, digitization, and digital transformation;
- Studies on digital content and its transformation in journals and magazines.

While digital transformation in journals and magazines has been extensively studied in countries like Singapore, Malaysia, the UK, and Arab nations, a comprehensive, in-depth study on this subject has not been found in Vietnam. Therefore, researching digital content transformation in these publications is a novel, urgent, and highly relevant topic in the country.

Chapter 1:

DIGITAL CONTENT TRANSFORMATION IN JOURNALS AND MAGAZINES– FUNDAMENTAL THEORETICAL ISSUES

2.1. Related concepts

2.1.1. Concept of magazines

According to Encyclopedia Britannica online, “The magazine as it is now known came into existence only after the invention of printing in the West. The modern magazine had its roots in the spate of pamphlets, broadsides, ballads, chapbooks, and almanacs that printing had made possible. Much of the energy that went into those texts gradually came to be channeled into publications that appeared regularly.” [137]

Throughout history, magazines have evolved to meet the needs and interests of diverse audience groups. Various types have emerged, each catering to a specific readership, such as cultural and educational magazines (Erbauliche Monats-Unterredungen), entertainment magazines (Mercure de France), political magazines (Time), and scholarly journals.

In Vietnam, magazines and journals are classified into three main categories, based on their principles, objectives, and content: political theory journals, scientific journals and magazines, and popular magazines. Each category has further subdivisions:

- Political theory journals include the Communist Review of the Party Central Committee and specialized political journals published by agencies, departments, institutes, and academies under central non-business units.

- Scientific journals and magazines are divided into theoretical and informational scientific journals, specialized scientific journals, and popular scientific magazines covering disciplines such as political science, economics, sociology, law, philosophy, and medicine.

- Popular magazines consist of informational and advisory magazines, as well as entertainment magazines, such as Information and Communications Magazine, Ngay Nay (Today) Magazine, Tourism Magazine, Vietnam Mot (Fashion) Magazine, and Arts and Literature Magazine.

Compared to daily newspapers, magazines and journals tend to have a more selective and specialized readership. Some publications also serve as hybrids, overlapping between political theory and specialized scientific journals or between specialized scientific journals and popular magazines.

Online magazines and journals are periodicals that publish specialized articles and news online [52]. Unlike print magazines and journals, these online versions are not constrained by page count, sections, or target audience. Advancements in science and technology have enhanced their design and interface, making them modern, visually appealing, and user-friendly across smart devices such as mobile phones, tablets, and desktop computers.

2.1.2. Concepts of digital technology, digitization, digital transformation, digital content, digital content transformation, and digital content transformation in magazines and journals

Concept of digital content:

In journalism, digital content refers to journalistic works or products that are digitized, stored, and transmitted online. It can be viewed, listened to, read, or interacted with through electronic devices such as computers, smartphones, and tablets. Digital content plays a crucial role in providing information, entertainment, and education in today's digital landscape.

In the process of digital transformation in the press, digital content results from content digitization, which occurs in three stages: digitization, leveraging digital opportunities, and digital transformation. Digital content is an outcome of digital transformation—without digital transformation, digital content cannot exist.

This thesis focuses on magazines and journals whose content has been fully digitized and published online. "Digital content transformation" is considered the second stage of digital transformation in the press—leveraging digital opportunities.

Concept of digital content transformation:

Digital content transformation is the process of applying digital technologies in the creation, production, and distribution of digital journalistic works and products across digital platforms.

Concept of digital content transformation in magazines and journals:

Digital content transformation in magazines and journals refers to the application of digital technologies in the creation, production, and distribution of digital journalistic works and products on digital platforms aligning with the characteristics, nature, and target audience of these publications. Since content production is the core activity of a magazine or journal organization, digital content transformation is the key factor determining the success or failure of the entire digital transformation process.

Factors influencing digital content transformation in magazines and journals:

Five key factors are essential for the success of digital content transformation in these publications: digital infrastructure; digital competency and human resource quality, institutions, digital data, and digital audience.

2.2. Role and characteristics of digital content transformation in magazines and journals

2.2.1. Role of digital content transformation in magazines and journals

For the national press industry, digital content transformation helps build professional, humanistic, and modern magazine and journal organizations, enabling them to fulfill their mission of information dissemination in service of the Party's revolutionary cause and national renewal efforts. It plays a crucial role in enhancing information delivery, supporting supervision and social criticism, improving reader experience, increasing revenue, and driving the growth of the digital content industry [72].

For the governing bodies of magazines and journals, digital content transformation enhances their presence across digital platforms and serves as a forum for interaction and discussion on sector-specific issues. It also helps press management authorities monitor magazine and journal operations, ensuring compliance with their principles and objectives, preventing the "newspaperization" of online magazines and journals, and clarifying the responsibilities of both governing bodies and magazine and journal organizations.

For magazine and journal organizations and their staff, digital content transformation is the "key" and "lever" for expanding their reach. It enhances interaction between journalists and readers, fosters data journalism and visual journalism, and enables the creation of personalized content tailored to individual reader preferences. This, in turn, enhances user engagement and optimizes audience experience in the digital era.

For the audience, digital content transformation allows magazine and journal organizations to enhance content quality and produce diverse, engaging formats such as megastories, long-form articles, infographics, podcasts, and videos, catering to readers' needs, preferences, and consumption habits. Additionally, it strengthens interaction between magazine and journal organizations and their audience [31].

2.2.2. Characteristics of digital content transformation in magazines and journals

General characteristics: Digital content transformation in magazines and journals involves

creating and enhancing content through digital technology, converting data into new, higher-values. It also leverages digital tools to analyze audience needs, psychology, and habits, enabling the creation, production, and distribution of digital content across suitable platforms to optimize the effectiveness of these publications in delivering information.

Specific characteristics:

- Digital content transformation in magazines and journals follows a science and technology-driven model, leveraging digital information, knowledge, and data as core production factors. It operates primarily in cyberspace, using digital technology and platforms to enhance productivity and increase the value of journalistic works and products.

- Digital technology enables new media formats, such as storytelling-based articles and VR/AR-integrated content powered by 5G, immersive journalism using xR technology, and blockchain-based solutions for copyright protection and paid content access.

- Digital tools analyze audience data to align content with readers' needs, psychology, and consumption habits.

- Content production and distribution are guided by audience insights, ensuring relevance, engagement, and optimization for digital-era readers.

2.3. Political and legal foundations for digital content transformation in magazines and journals in Vietnam

Over the past years, the Party and State have issued numerous resolutions to promote science and technology and active participation in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Political foundations:

- The 11th Politburo's Resolution 36-NQ/TW dated July 1, 2014;
- Documents of the 13th National Party Congress;
- Resolution 57-NQ/TW on breakthroughs in the development of science, technology, innovation, and national digital transformation;
- Decision 362/QD-TTg approving the national press development and management planning until 2025.

Legal foundations:

- The 2013 Constitution;
- The Law on Science and Technology (No. 29/2013/QH13), issued on June 18, 2013;
- The Press Law, passed by the 13th National Assembly on April 5, 2016, replacing the 1999 version with six chapters and 61 articles—32 new and 29 revised;
- The Intellectual Property Law (No. 50/2005/QH11), which was enacted by the 11th National Assembly and later amended through Law No. 36/2009/QH12, Law No. 42/2019/QH14, and Law No. 07/2022/QH15.

2.4. Subjects, objects, content, methods, principles, and requirements for digital content transformation in magazines and journals

2.4.1. Subjects, objects, content, and methods for digital content transformation in magazines and journals

Subjects of digital content transformation: The key actors are the leadership and management, who serve as decision-makers. In a ministry-level publication like the Communist Review, these include the editor-in-chief, the standing panel of the editorial board, the full editorial board, and the heads and deputy heads of relevant departments. In a department-level organization, key actors include the editorial council, the editorial board, and the heads of relevant departments or sections.

The authority of each actor is assigned based on their position within the organization.

Objects of digital content transformation: Reporters, editors, collaborators, technicians, experts, and scientists at magazine and journal organizations are directly responsible for creating and distributing journalistic content across digital platforms. Their roles in this process are assigned by the editorial board based on their positions and expertise. Digital content transformation should optimize the capabilities of this team while aligning with the organization's development strategy.

In summary, successful digital content transformation requires continuous enhancement of

expertise among leadership and staff. Regular training programs should be held to improve professional competencies and digital skills.

Content and methods for digital content transformation in magazines and journals

Content: Digital content transformation in magazines and journals involves leveraging digital technology for content organization, production, and distribution; managing and utilizing reader data; and developing new media products. Specifically, it includes integrating digital technology into content creation, using AI to enhance production speed, applying digital tools in graphic design, optimizing digital content distribution, introducing new media formats, and collecting, analyzing, and managing reader data.

Methods: To ensure successful digital content transformation in magazine and journal organizations, production must follow a digital-first approach. A digital newsroom is the most effective model, operating on digital platforms and employing advanced technologies tailored to the organization's scale, nature, principles, and objectives.

2.4.2. Principles, requirements, and evaluation criteria for the maturity of digital content transformation in magazines and journals

Principles

- Must align with the functions, tasks, principles, and objectives of each magazine or journal organization.

- Should be relevant to the target audience of each magazine or journal category.

- Must ensure information security.

Requirements

- Clear, scientific orientations, guidelines, objectives, and roadmaps.

- A strict regulatory framework for managing digital content transformation.

- Sufficient funding to support implementation.

- A high-quality workforce.

Evaluation criteria

A scoring system assesses the maturity of digital content transformation based on key pillars: digital infrastructure, digital platforms, organizational and professional integration, and readership.

Scoring System (Total: 40 points, 19 criteria):

- Level 1: Below 20 points (Weak)

- Level 2: 20 to below 25 points (Average)

- Level 3: 25 to below 30 points (Fair)

- Level 4: 30 to below 35 points (Good)

- Level 5: 35 points and above (Excellent)

Summary of Chapter 1

Building on previous studies while expanding research on digital transformation and its application in the press, the thesis has systematized, refined, and introduced a new approach to digital content transformation in magazines and journals. Key factors influencing this process have been identified, including digital infrastructure, digital capabilities, digital data, and digital audiences. Additionally, a set of criteria has been developed to assess and measure the maturity of digital content transformation in magazine and journal organizations. In summary, the thesis has established an analytical framework for evaluating the current state of digital content transformation in Vietnamese magazines and journals, providing a scientific basis for further research.

Chapter 2:

CURRENT STATE OF DIGITAL CONTENT TRANSFORMATION IN VIETNAMESE MAGAZINES AND JOURNALS

3.1. Introduction to the surveyed publications

3.1.1. A brief development history

The Communist Review, the Vietnam Journal of Science and Technology, Znews Magazine, and Ngay Nay (Today) Magazine

3.2. Survey on the current state of digital content transformation in Vietnamese magazines

and journals

3.2.1. Subjects and objects of digital content transformation

3.2.1.1. Subjects of digital content transformation

The key subjects of digital content transformation in magazines and journals are the editorial board, including the editor-in-chief, deputy editors-in-chief, and board members. They are responsible for leading, directing, and establishing the orientation, plans, and roadmap for the transformation.

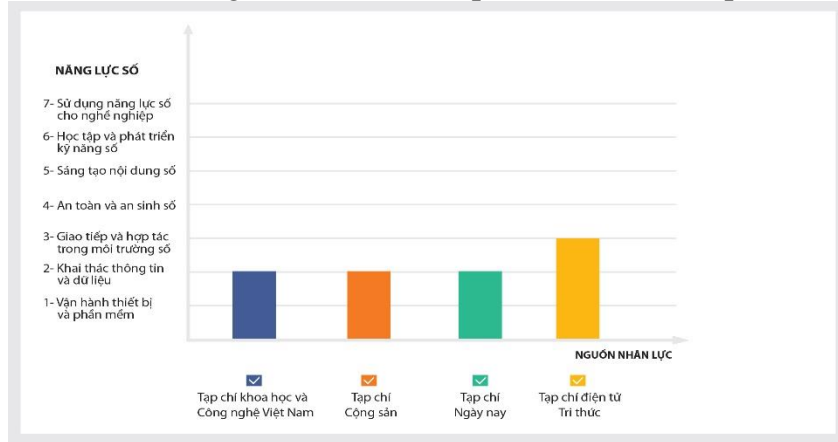


Figure 5: Digital competence of editorial boards in surveyed publications

The analysis of digital transformation subjects in the surveyed publications indicates that the leadership possesses a clear and comprehensive understanding of the role and significance of digital content transformation. This is demonstrated through their development of plans, programs, and roadmaps, as well as the designation of specific focal points responsible for implementation. Additionally, these leaders have sufficient digital competence to effectively guide their staff through the transformation process.

3.2.1.2. Objects of digital content transformation

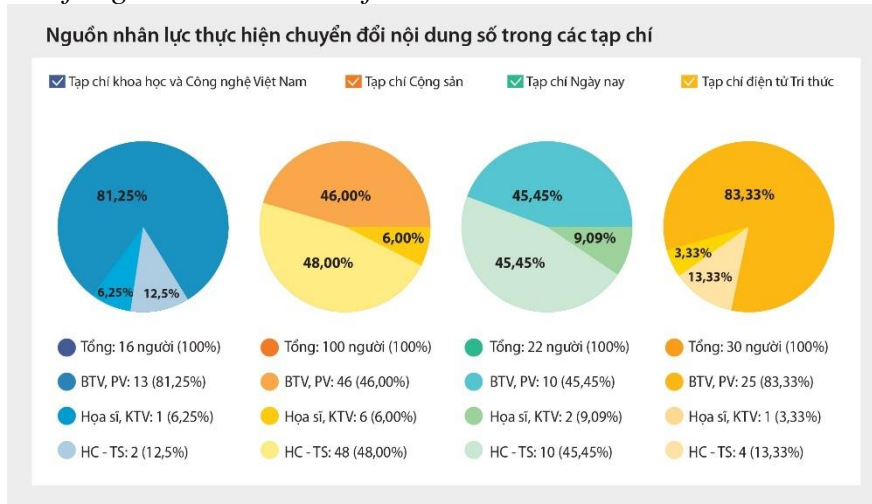


Figure 6: Human resources of surveyed publications

The professional qualifications of all four publications are strong. The content team at the Communist Review, a specialized political theory research institution, has exceptionally high academic credentials, comprising mainly researchers, scientists, and journalists. In contrast, the content team at Znews Magazine primarily consists of reporters focused on news and article writing.

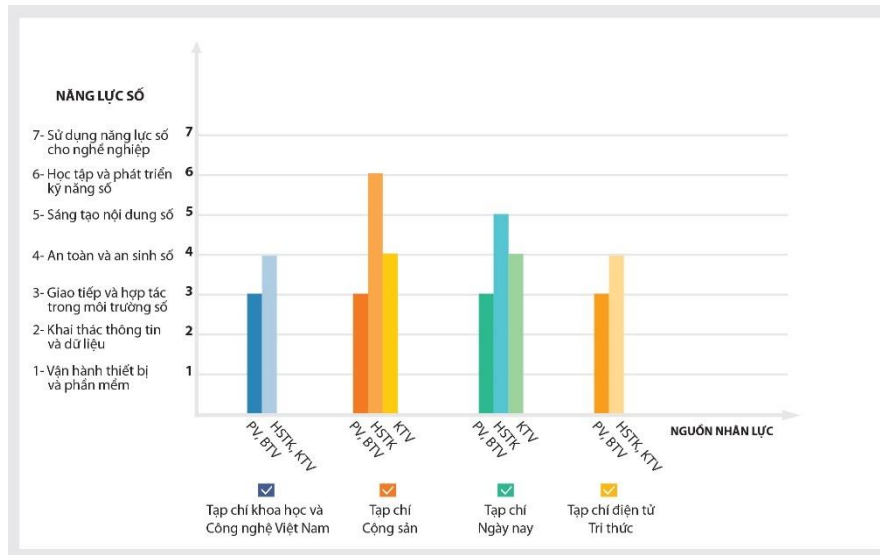


Figure 7: Digital competence of surveyed publications' staff

The reporters and editors from the four surveyed publications have a digital competency framework at level 3 (digital communication and collaboration), while the IT team has reached level 4 (digital safety and well-being). Notably, the layout design team at the Communist Review has achieved level 6 (digital learning and skill development), whereas that of Ngày Nay (Today) Magazine has reached level 5 (digital content creation).

Overall, the digital transformation stakeholders in these publications are well-trained, possess professional expertise, and have a level of digital competency sufficient for current operations, enabling them to apply digital technology in content creation and multi-platform distribution.

3.2.2. Content and methods of digital content transformation

3.2.2.1. Content of digital content transformation

All the surveyed publications have applied AI in content production, including information retrieval, verification, article assistance, and content moderation.

Ứng dụng công nghệ số trong sản xuất nội dung				
Ứng dụng công nghệ số				
AI hỗ trợ tìm kiếm, xác định thông tin	ứng dụng	ứng dụng	ứng dụng	ứng dụng
AI hỗ trợ viết bài, kiểm duyệt nội dung	ứng dụng	ứng dụng	ứng dụng	ứng dụng
AI tạo ảnh minh họa, đồ họa, infographic	không	ứng dụng	ứng dụng	ứng dụng
AI trong đọc tự động (audio)	không	ứng dụng	ứng dụng	ứng dụng
Thực tế tăng cường AR, thực tế ảo VR	không	không	không	không
<div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí khoa học và Công nghệ Việt Nam <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí Cộng sản <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí Ngày nay <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí điện tử Trí thức </div>				

Figure 15: Application of digital technology in content production in surveyed publications

All surveyed publications use Google Analytics (integrated into the system's source code) and SimilarWeb (third-party data) to analyze reader trends, needs, psychology, and habits. However, the free versions used provide only basic metrics. They also gather offline reader data through surveys, feedback, and interviews, using survey software or direct methods.

Ứng dụng công nghệ số trong quản lý và khai thác dữ liệu độc giả				
Ứng dụng công nghệ số				
Thu thập dữ liệu độc giả trực tuyến (ứng dụng cài trên mã nguồn của tạp chí)	ứng dụng	ứng dụng	ứng dụng	ứng dụng
Thu thập dữ liệu độc giả ngoại tuyến (thông qua khảo sát, dữ liệu phản hồi từ độc giả, phỏng vấn)	ứng dụng	ứng dụng	ứng dụng	ứng dụng
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí khoa học và Công nghệ Việt Nam <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí Cộng sản <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí Ngày nay <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí điện tử Trí thức				

Regarding new media formats, the publications primarily produce simple storytelling articles, often as their key features. In Mega Story features, they mainly incorporate full-background images, high-quality medium-sized visuals with strong visual appeal, along with graphics, infographics, and embedded video clips.

Ứng dụng công nghệ số sáng tạo loại hình truyền thông mới				
Ứng dụng công nghệ số				
Sản xuất bài dạng storytelling, kết hợp VR và AR	Không	Không	Không	ứng dụng
Tạo báo nhúng bằng ứng dụng công nghệ xR	Không	Không	ứng dụng	Không
Bảo vệ bản quyền và thu phí	Không	Không	ứng dụng	Không
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí khoa học và Công nghệ Việt Nam <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí Cộng sản <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí Ngày nay <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tạp chí điện tử Trí thức				

Figure 22: Creation of new media formats

All surveyed publications use AI in content production, but its application is selectively tailored to align with each organization's principles, functions, and specific characteristics. The Vietnam Journal of Science and Technology utilizes AI to scan for duplication and plagiarism in submitted articles, ensuring the credibility of its scientific publications. The Communist Review applies AI for summarizing documents, proofreading, citation checks, and verifying image sources using AI-integrated tools like Gemini, Poe, and ChatGPT. Its design team also employs AI-powered software for image editing, graphic design, and video production. Ngày Nay Magazine leverages AI for illustrated covers and article visuals, incorporating digital identity technologies such as Nomion and blockchain to create unique content while ensuring traceability. However, these high-tech applications are mainly reserved for special editions and major events. Znews Magazine focuses its AI applications on storytelling-based content creation, using AI-integrated Photoshop for image editing, AI-generated illustrations, infographic design, and podcast production for key features.

In summary, the surveyed publications apply AI technology in content production based on their specific needs. AI is a highly useful tool and a prevailing trend in the digital age.

3.2.2.2. Methods of digital content transformation

SimilarWeb and Google Analytics were used to analyze data from the surveyed publications over a one-month period (February 2024).



Figure 23: Surveyed publications' traffic measured using SimilarWeb digital analytics tool (monthly average).

Lưu lượng truy cập				
Hệ mét	vjst.vn	tapchiconsan.org.vn	ngaynay.vn	znews.vn
Thăm viếng hàng tháng	45.490	672.265	92.775	49.56M
Số lượng khách truy cập duy nhất hàng tháng	Không có	Không có	Không có	Không có
Lượt truy cập / Khách truy cập duy nhất	Không có	Không có	Không có	Không có
Thời gian của một chuyến thăm	00:01:00	00:01:44	00:07:01	00:03:33
Số trang mỗi lần truy cập	2,14	1,52	1,88	2,54
Tỷ lệ thoát	54,22%	73,22%	45,38%	44,48%
Lượt xem trang	97.141	1.021 triệu	174.545	125,7 triệu
Truy cập vào nhiều thông tin chi tiết hơn NĂNG CẤP				

Figure 25: Surveyed publications' traffic over time

A comparison of traffic metrics reveals significant differences in readership size and engagement across the publications. The Vietnam Journal of Science and Technology and the Communist Review, both featuring highly academic and theoretical content, attract a niche audience. However, despite an average article length exceeding 2,000 words, the average reading time per article is under two minutes, suggesting that readers mostly skim before exiting and that these journals are primarily consulted for specific in-depth research rather than regular engagement. In contrast, Ngay Nay and Znews magazines show much deeper engagement, with readers frequently revisiting articles. This suggests their audience actively checks for updates and new content. The Vietnam Journal of Science and Technology and the Communist Review should, therefore, consider strategies to improve reader engagement and retention.

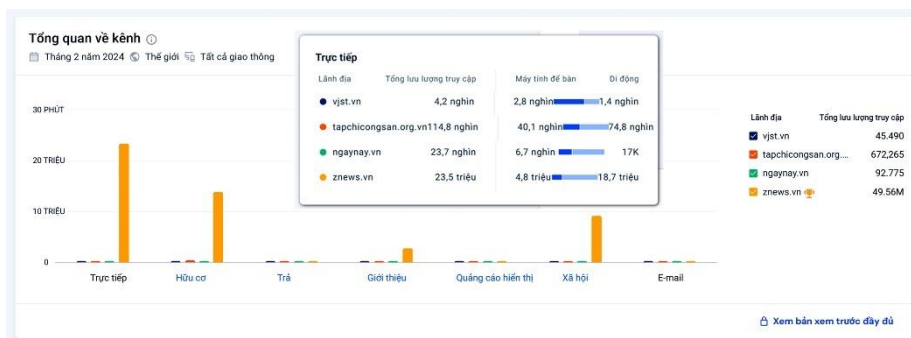


Figure 27: Traffic sources by device type

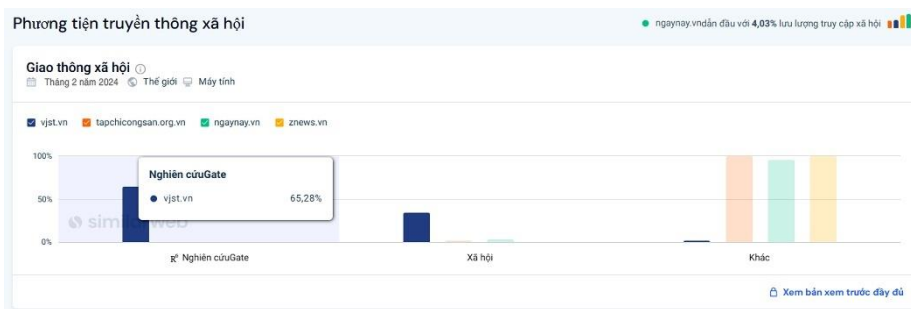


Figure 28: Social media traffic sources

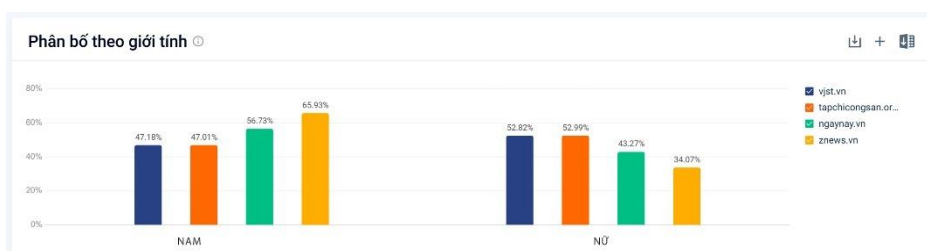


Figure 29: Traffic distribution by gender

The analysis of reader data from the surveyed publications highlights the distinct characteristics, engagement patterns, and digital distribution platforms of each publication type. As a result, the

application of digital technology in content production varies significantly. For specialized journals with niche audiences, such as the Vietnam Journal of Science and Technology, digital content transformation follows a different approach, method, and process compared to general-interest publications like *Ngay Nay* and *Znews*. While digital technology enhances the creation of high-quality journalistic content, excessive reliance on it at the expense of content quality may diminish reader engagement and lead to financial inefficiencies.

In the digital era, leveraging digital tools for in-depth audience analysis—measuring behavior, habits, access devices, geography, and psychological tendencies—is essential. This data serves as a foundation for journal and magazine organizations to build reader databases and develop digital technology application models tailored to their publication type and target audience. It enables the creation of digital journalistic content aligned with emerging trends such as content personalization, multi-platform distribution, mobile journalism, data journalism, visual journalism, and super journalistic works. However, organizations should avoid over-reliance on digital technology at the expense of content quality and take measures to prevent the 'newspaperization' of online journals and magazines. Among the surveyed publications, *Znews* employs a converged newsroom model for content production and publishing.

3.2.3. Overall assessment of the digital content transformation maturity in surveyed publications

Based on the Digital Content Transformation Maturity Index proposed in this thesis, each surveyed publication is assessed across five pillars, with a total possible score of 40 points:

- Digital Infrastructure: 4 points
- Digital Platforms: 10 points
- Organizational and Professional Integration, Readership: 3 points
- Reader Experience Management: 11 points
- Reader Experience: 12 points

The maturity levels of the surveyed publications are as follows:

- The Vietnam Journal of Science and Technology: 22 points (Average)
- The Communist Review: 26 points (Fair)
- *Ngay Nay* Magazine: 31.5 points (Good)
- *Znews* Magazine: 32.5 points (Good)

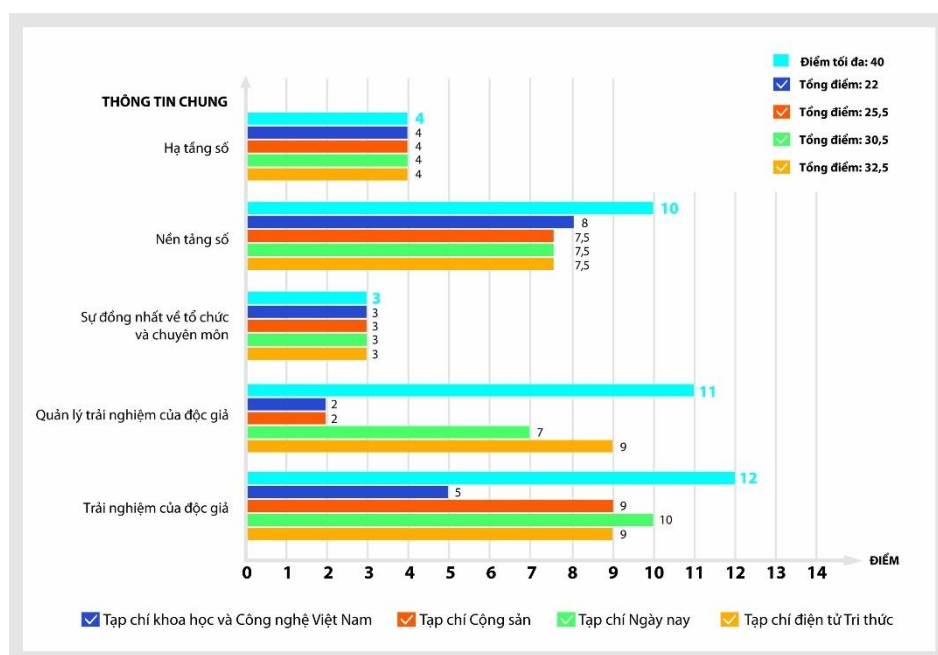


Figure 34: Assessment of digital content transformation maturity in surveyed publications (Based on the Index proposed by the thesis author)

3.3. Assessment of digital content transformation survey findings in Vietnamese magazines and journals

3.3.1. Achievements

The editorial boards of magazine and journal organizations prioritize developing a comprehensive digital transformation strategy, recognizing digital content transformation as a decisive factor. Each stage follows a clear roadmap with specific objectives. At the same time, efforts are underway to inspire and strengthen staff commitment to enhancing digital competencies.

Content production teams understand their roles and responsibilities in this transformation. Staff members are actively improving their skills to meet evolving demands. Magazine and journal organizations continue to invest in infrastructure, train high-quality personnel, and adopt innovative content production methods. As a result, they are emerging as key information channels across multiple platforms and formats, swiftly addressing public information needs.

The progress of digital transformation and digital content transformation in Vietnamese magazines and journals remains modest, with efforts primarily focused on:

- Producing multimedia content tailored to readers' needs, psychology, and habits;
- Applying technologies such as AI for automatic reading, podcast production, content creation, and illustrations; cloud computing, automation, and machine learning; and blockchain for copyright protection and paid content access;
- Expanding content distribution across social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok to reach diverse readerships.

All the surveyed organizations use converged newsroom software to manage content production for both print and digital publications. Their online versions integrate technologies, including content management systems (CMS) provided by domestic enterprises like Viettel, FPT, VDC, VCCorp, and VNPT. These systems, along with associated cybersecurity solutions and cloud storage, help consolidate resources into a centralized network that supports both content production and business operations.

3.3.2. Challenges

Magazine and journal organizations allocate little to no financial resources for digital transformation, limiting investments to basic computer systems and fundamental Content Management Systems (CMS). Many lack the funding needed for advanced digital content transformation, including dedicated CMS development, IT infrastructure, cybersecurity, cloud servers, and licensed software for graphic design, infographics, and video production.

Human resources for digital content transformation remain inadequate in both quality and quantity. The number of digitally proficient journalists, editors, and graphic designers is limited, and training in digital journalism is neither consistent nor regularly prioritized. As a result, knowledge—particularly in digital technologies—quickly becomes outdated. When these publications undergo digital transformation, the shortage of experienced personnel becomes especially evident.

Most platforms used by these organizations are designed for news agencies, leading to “newsification,” where journal interfaces resemble news websites. Additionally, many publications lack technological autonomy, with only a few developing their own CMS or fully managing their servers, security, or cloud services. High costs and a shortage of specialized personnel further hinder their ability to operate and maintain these systems.

3.4. Factors affecting digital content transformation in Vietnamese magazines and journals

The success of digital content transformation in journals and magazines depends on three key factors:

- Human resources: At its core, digital content transformation is a transformation of people. It is the most critical factor, as success hinges on the awareness and capabilities of key stakeholders—including the leadership of governing bodies, publication management, and content production teams.
- Institution: Digital content transformation operates within an institutional framework. A well-structured and supportive institutional system should be established and continuously improved.

- Technology: As the primary enabler, technology determines the quality and effectiveness of digital content transformation. This includes digital infrastructure, platforms, and specialized technologies tailored to the specific needs of each journal and magazine [10].

3.4.1. Subjective causes

The digital content transformation process in Vietnamese magazine and journal organizations remains slow, still primarily focused on integrating IT into workflows rather than developing innovative journalistic and communication products and services. In some organizations, the editorial boards have not been proactive or decisive in driving comprehensive improvements in product quality.

IT training quality remains relatively low, with only about 30% of graduates meeting industry requirements for digital transformation. Additionally, some magazine and journal staff have not received adequate training or retraining to adapt to the digital media landscape. Critical skills in digital journalism and communication, multi-platform journalism, digital media messaging, and big data analytics—essential for understanding audience needs and market trends—remain underdeveloped.

3.4.2. Objective causes

The legal framework for digital transformation in the press has not been updated promptly, resulting in regulatory gaps that fail to address emerging challenges. Issues such as media security, national security in communication, cybercrime, hacking, personal data breaches, and user data theft remain pressing concerns.

Vietnam's digital media market also faces unfair competition from foreign platforms. In recent years, cross-border platforms have gained near-total control over content display and advertising algorithms, forcing users to comply with their rules. This dynamic benefits these platforms in terms of revenue and data while offering little to no advantage to Vietnam's national interests.

Meanwhile, rapid advancements in science and technology, along with new trends in journalism and communication, are placing immense pressure on media organizations to continuously innovate and adopt modern technologies. These require significant financial investment and highly skilled technical personnel, making resource constraints the biggest challenge in the digital content transformation of magazines and journals.

Summary of Chapter 2

Digital content transformation in Vietnamese journal and magazine organizations offers significant opportunities, including expanded influence, greater reader engagement, diversified content, and access to a global audience. However, it also presents major challenges, such as intense online competition, changes in content production and distribution models, and the growing impact of automation and AI on human roles in content production. Additionally, legal and ethical concerns—particularly regarding the protection of readers' personal data—remain pressing issues. To maintain credibility and ensure sustainable growth, magazine and journal organizations must invest in high-quality content, leverage technology prudently, comply with legal regulations, and effectively protect readers' personal data.

Chapter 3

KEY CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS FOR ACCELERATING DIGITAL CONTENT TRANSFORMATION IN VIETNAMESE JOURNALS AND MAGAZINES

4.1. The evolution of the press and its impact on digital content transformation in Vietnamese magazines and journals

4.1.1. General issues

Globalization and the globalization of information have created both opportunities and challenges for the press, including magazines and journals. The advancement of communication technologies and infrastructure, and Industry 4.0 technologies—such as AI, big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT)—has made cyberspace an integral part of daily life.

The globalization of information has placed immense pressure on media organizations, driving intense competition across multiple fronts: between traditional and digital media, journalism and social platforms, different journalistic formats, and even among publications themselves.

The rapid advancement of science and technology:

The world has entered the digital era, marking a shift from an industrial economy to one driven by science and technology. Advances in high-speed computing, broadband internet—including next-generation networks like 4G and 5G—and the rise of AI and other breakthrough technologies have propelled production from automation to smart manufacturing. These innovations are at the heart of Industry 4.0, profoundly shaping modern society.

The rise of the digital audience

Previously, audiences primarily consumed information and knowledge through traditional print magazines and journals. However, advancements in science and technology have transformed how content is accessed and engaged with. Readers now consume content via digital platforms, interact directly with magazine and journal organizations through comments, shares, and opinions, and actively participate in content creation, distribution, and feedback processes.

4.1.2. Key challenges facing digital content transformation in Vietnamese journals and magazines

For the subjects: Effective implementation of innovative content creation models using digital technology hinges on strong leadership commitment. The head of the magazine or journal organization must take direct responsibility for driving digital content transformation and integrating technology into content production. These organizations must establish clear strategies on digital technology application and innovation with well-defined objectives, missions, and concrete short- and long-term implementation plans.

For the objects: Currently, the digital skills and competencies of journal and magazine professionals in Vietnam remain limited, meeting only 3 out of 7 criteria in the digital competency framework. As a result, they can only partially meet the demands of digital content transformation. Moving forward, journalists must be trained to handle multiple roles, including issue identification, information processing, writing, content design, filming, digital recording, data analysis, and audience engagement.

Content: Journal and magazine organizations must clearly define digital content transformation as the application of digital technology in content creation, production, and distribution. This includes leveraging AI, big data, and 5G technology to develop innovative media formats.

Methods:

- Developing digital infrastructure
- Establishing technology-integrated digital newsrooms
- Personalizing and customizing journalistic products to better meet public information needs

4.2. Solutions for digital content transformation in Vietnamese magazines and journals

4.2.1. Solutions for subjects and objects involved in digital content transformation in Vietnamese magazines and journals

For the subjects: It is necessary to improve the understanding of media leaders about digital content transformation, as well as enhance awareness of the role and characteristics of journals and magazines. Focus should be placed on specialized, in-depth, high-quality, and analytical content that adheres to the organization's principles and objectives. It is important to promote the research and application of cutting-edge technologies in digital content production, upgrade equipment and infrastructure, and foster innovation in content production.

For the objects: Raising awareness of the significance and urgency of digital content transformation is essential for fostering a unified understanding, shared responsibility, and strong commitment among stakeholders. This involves cultivating a digital mindset, enhancing digital skills, staying informed about emerging technologies, and deepening specialized expertise.

4.2.2. Solutions for content and methods of digital content transformation in journals and magazines

For content: Building a digital magazine or journal system requires a clearly defined style and identity aligned with its principles, objectives, and core tasks. This distinct character should be reflected in all aspects, including interface design, presentation, and content. Developing a modern CMS with advanced SEO capabilities, upgrading server infrastructure, and investing in state-of-the-art content

production equipment are essential. Additionally, maximizing the use of cutting-edge digital technologies in content creation will enhance the effectiveness of information delivery and communication.

For methods: A digital magazine or journal newsroom model should be developed following a multi-platform, multi-service, and multimedia approach. It must serve as the central hub for content production, information guidance, and public opinion shaping. Operating on digital platforms, this model integrates suitable digital technologies based on the scale and objectives of each organization. It primarily involves digital production organization and management, and digital product distribution. Designed as a universal digital newsroom, it follows a convergent content and technology model, consisting of a content production division, a content production organization division, IT infrastructure, and distribution channels.

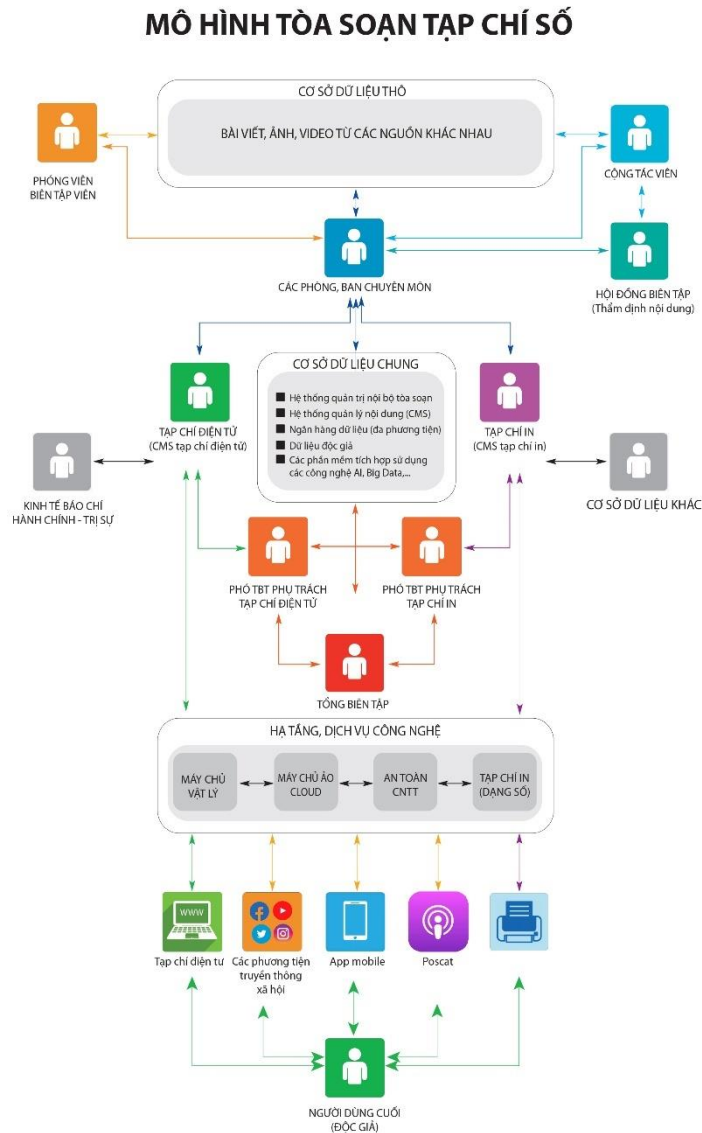


Figure 35: Universal digital magazine/journal model

This model enables the development of a shared digital content transformation platform for magazines and journals.

4.3. Recommendations

4.3.1. For legislative and policymaking agencies

It is essential to refine or establish institutions that guide, support, and regulate the development of online magazines and journals. The magazine and journal system should be reorganized, and their structures and operations streamlined to enhance efficiency and effectiveness, based on the evaluation of the national press development and management plan through 2025. A new national press development and management plan should be formulated for 2030, with a vision toward 2050, ensuring feasibility, practicality, and alignment with emerging trends.

4.3.2. For press management agencies

The Ministry of Information and Communications and the Ministry of Science and Technology should support the development of digital newsroom management platforms for magazines and journals. Given the unique characteristics and production workflows of each magazine or journal group, the State should provide initial investment ("seed funding") to create shared digital content transformation platforms tailored to their needs. These platforms should include content management and distribution systems (CMS), social media information and public opinion analysis tools, and data management systems. Organizations with strong financial and technological capabilities should be encouraged and supported in developing their own digital content transformation platforms.

4.3.3. For magazine and journal organizations

Strengthening the application of digital technology, particularly AI, is essential for enhancing writing, editing, content creation, design, and diversification in journalism. The content production and distribution system must undergo comprehensive reform to align with digital journalism trends, including personalized content, multi-platform journalism, mobile journalism, social journalism, data journalism, and super journalistic works. Digital technology should be leveraged to assess the effectiveness and impact of communication efforts after each campaign and event, as well as on a quarterly and annual basis.

4.3.4. For journalism and communication research and training institutions

Timely and appropriate guidance from journalism and communication experts is essential for adapting to industry realities. Training programs should balance theory and practice, ensuring students develop key skills such as content creation, project management, and proficiency in modern digital tools and technologies.

Summary of Chapter 3

Digital content transformation in magazines and journals must be driven by practical needs and each organization's internal capabilities, from strategy, direction, and investment to operational organization. Vietnamese magazines and journals are actively adapting to evolving technology and communication trends, integrating diverse formats and platforms while expanding their reach domestically and internationally. This transformation aims to meet the increasing demands for information and communication in the new context.

CONCLUSION

Digital content transformation in magazines and journals has been widely studied around the world, but no doctoral-level research on this topic has been conducted in Vietnam. This thesis, therefore, presents a novel and non-duplicative research topic within recent academic work. Building on previous studies on digital transformation and digital transformation in magazines and journals, it systematizes, expands, and introduces a new approach to digital content transformation. The thesis establishes research criteria to assess the current state of digital content transformation in Vietnamese magazines and journals. With a strong theoretical foundation and an appropriate research methodology, the study provides an objective and scientific evaluation of the transformation process based on a survey of four representative publications across different categories. The findings reveal that both subjective and objective factors influence the success and challenges of digital content transformation, with subjective factors playing a decisive role in determining its overall effectiveness.

**LIST OF PUBLISHED SCIENTIFIC WORKS
BY THE AUTHOR RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC**

1. Vu Trung Duy (2020), *Avoiding the "newspaperization" of journals and magazines while preserving the in-depth analytical nature of online publications: Lessons from the Communist Review Online*, Journal of Political Theory and Communication, No. 5/2020.
2. Vu Trung Duy (2023), *The system of basic concepts in research on digital content transformation in journals and magazines in Vietnam today*, Communist Review Online, August 26, 2023.
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