Times are changing, and society is progressing. Do newspapers need to keep up with the trends? We are always innovating.

- Advertisement for the digital version of Japan’s Asahi Shimbun, 2014

Preface

The cover photo was taken by the editor in March 2014 at the Ikebukuro subway station in Tokyo and it was a subway advertisement for a digital application newly launched by the well-known Japanese newspaper, Asahi Shimbun. Unlike most typical ads, neither the newspaper nor the app is shown. Instead, an innovative approach was taken: to tell a story through a family. In this way, readers who access Asahi Shimbun’s news (whether through the medium of print, online, or mobile) are provided with an opportunity to discuss the latest newsworthy events together with their families, and thus creating and maintaining familial bonds. Viewed from another perspective, this ad reflects the forward push of a newspaper with 135 years of history, and its efforts to convey its ecosystem and reader positioning in this new media era.

Japan which has the most developed newspaper industry, boasts some of the largest newspaper in terms of circulations in the world, where newspaper kiosks are still ubiquitous on the streets and in subways. According to the 2013 data from the World Association of Newspapers (WAN), half of the top 10 circulated newspapers in the world are in Japan. At the same time, as one of the countries where smart devices are already widely adopted with a highly developed mobile internet network, Japan’s media industry is at the forefront of exploring and developing the possibilities of new media. Following the launch of the 2014 Asian Media Landscape Series, PR Newswire officially released the next white paper of this series in May 2014, the Japan Media Landscape, which delivers insight into Japan’s media sector.

- PR Newswire Asia, Audience Development Team
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Overview

When it comes to media, Japan is a big player. Its well-developed, advanced media industry is embodied in every aspect of the society. Japan can be said to be a world leader in all mediums, from traditional forms such as newspapers and magazines, to the most populist (insofar as media which serve the public interest) and widely available public radio and TV broadcasts, and nowadays to its fiercely developed digital networks. Japan’s Kyodo and Jiji are world-renowned wire services, while the influence of Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) is comparable to that of the BBC in the UK and CBS in the US. Even the country’s private TV stations, among them TBS, Fuji and Asahi, also have tremendous reach within the population, as they continue to innovate and better themselves and contributing to Japan’s giant media ecosystem.

According to a 2013 survey by the Hakuhodo DY Media Partners Institute of Media Environment, there are six main categories of media that Japan’s population is exposed to daily: traditional media (newspapers, magazines, radio and TV), online media (internet) and new media (social, multimedia and mobile). With the increasing prevalence of social media and rapid advancement of smart mobile devices and mobile network infrastructure in recent years, changes are currently taking place in how the Japanese are interacting with the media.
Traditional Media
1 Wire Services

Japan has two main wire services: Kyodo News and Jiji Press. [1]

Kyodo News
(kyodo tsushinsha, http://www.kyodonews.jp/)

Founded in 1945, the wire service was formerly Domei News Agency, which was set up in 1936. As the largest news agency in Japan, Kyodo is a nonprofit cooperative organization. Independent of the government, the wire service has a public service ethos, prioritizing the interests of society based on the principles of "promoting world peace, safeguarding democracy, and bringing about human happiness". Kyodo delivers news to virtually every newspaper, radio and television network across Japan. Located in New York’s Rockefeller Center, the subdivision Kyodo News International was founded in 1982. Satoshi Ishikawa is the news agency’s president.

Kyodo launched its online news service website, Kyodo News on the web in February 2001, and added a Chinese-language news service in April 2005. It defines itself as "a common organization in cooperation with newspaper offices and broadcasting stations for the purpose of receiving and sending

information”. The wire service works closely with newspaper offices and news agencies across the country, including NHK, to act as a prime source for their news. The service provides breaking news from Japan to news agencies around the world while simultaneously distributes news from every corner of the globe to domestic news agencies through its networks. On March 1, 2011, Kyodo News launched "NEWSmart", a free downloadable iPhone app that offered users news on the go. For users who want to access more in-depth content, a paid subscription upsell option is available.

In addition, Kyodo News provides information to more than a dozen Japanese government agencies, including the Prime Minister's Office, the Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Defense, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Metropolitan Police Department, and is commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to broadcast domestic news to Japan's overseas agencies. The wire service also issues publications such as the "World Yearbook".
Jiji Press

Jiji is Japan’s second largest news agency, and along with Kyodo News, forms the country’s top two news agencies. “JP” was previously the abbreviation for Jiji Press, but now is replaced with “Jiji”. Also formerly Domei News Agency, Jiji was founded on November 1, 1945. Upon the dissolution of Domei in October 1945, the overseas and economic divisions of the defunct news agency formed the foundations of Jiji Press. Headquartered at Ginza, Chuo in Tokyo, the wire service has 82 branch offices in Japan and 29 offices internationally. With foreign correspondents based in Beijing, Jiji signed a news cooperative agreement with Xinhua News Agency in 1980.

Jiji distributes domestic and international news daily and delivers flash headlines whenever big news breaks. Also, economic news that Jiji provides is considered to be a unique and well-known service, in which its "Economic Information Line" providing businesses and companies large amounts of industry information and stock market news. The agency also issues several publications including “World Weekly”, “Jiji Weekly”, “Jiji Comments” and “Jiji Yearbook”.

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Japan’s newspaper industry is one of the most developed in the world. According to the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA), Japan holds six of the “World’s Top 10 Newspapers” by circulation in 2010 and 2009. Furthermore, data from Japan’s Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) show that in 2012, Japan was home to 118 newspapers, averaging 0.88 newspapers per household. This correlates to the fact that the Japanese are avid readers, and also the efficient system of “delivering the newspaper to your door” policy from newspaper groups.

By size of distribution area, Japanese newspapers are classified into national, local and county newspapers.

There are five major national newspapers: Yomiuri Shimbun, Asahi Shimbun, Mainichi Shimbun, Nihon Keizai Shimbun and Sankei Shimbun. The five newspapers all boast large circulations and take leading positions among the world’s ranking of newspapers. At the same time, each newspaper is part of a media conglomerate which often also controls a television network. For example, Asahi Shimbun
controls TV Asahi as well as a range of affiliated local TV stations, which together form a television network. Yomiuri Shimbun controls Nippon TV, while the Sankei Shimbun Group is comprised of Sankei Shimbun and Fuji TV.

Local newspapers are defined as newspapers distributed by a distribution house with a considerable circulation and size in a given geographical or administrative region of Japan, for example Hokkaido Shimbun, Tokyo Shimbun, Chunichi Shimbun and Nishinippon Shimbun. Moreover, in terms of administrative divisions, Japan is made up of one metropolitan district (to), one circuit (du), two urban prefectures (fu) and 43 rural prefectures (ken), each of which has their own newspaper, lending credence to the Japanese phrase "one newspaper for every prefecture".

According to statistics from ABC [2], the daily average number of newspapers sold and the household penetration rate of the five national newspapers between the months of July and December 2013 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Avg. number of the daily edition sold per day</th>
<th>Avg. number of the evening edition sold per day</th>
<th>Penetration rate of the daily edition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yomiuri Shimbun</td>
<td>9,868,516</td>
<td>3,334,544</td>
<td>17.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asahi Shimbun</td>
<td>7,543,181</td>
<td>2,727,994</td>
<td>13.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainichi Shimbun</td>
<td>3,350,366</td>
<td>984,550</td>
<td>5.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nihon Keizai Shimbun</td>
<td>2,776,119</td>
<td>1,397,776</td>
<td>4.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sankei Shimbun</td>
<td>1,617,525</td>
<td>536,045</td>
<td>2.86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the mobile internet in a relatively mature state and a high adoption rate for tablets and smartphones, the traditional print newspaper market is rapidly shrinking. Though Japan's main newspapers still maintain high circulations, a downturn is gradually emerging. The five national newspapers have all experienced a decrease in circulation to different extents. Facing pressure from new media, an important countermeasure for Japan's newspaper industry is online paid subscription.
Japan’s largest newspaper by circulation, Yomiuri Shimbun was founded in Tokyo on November 2, 1874, and transitioned into a national newspaper from a local evening daily in 1924. The newspaper’s political leaning is slanted towards a conservative pro-American stance. The daily circulation passed the 10 million mark in 1994, and in 1995, the circulation numbers reached 14.5 million for the daily and evening editions combined, and in 2003, Yomiuri Shimbun entered the Guinness World Records for “Highest Daily Newspaper Circulation” and over the last two years, the newspaper has maintained the number one position on WAN’s “Top 100 Daily Newspapers by Circulation” worldwide. As a result, Yomiuri’s management has made it a top priority to maintain its ranking as the world’s most circulated newspaper. Thus, of the big five newspapers in Japan, Yomiuri has expended the least effort on its online version.

Yomiuri Shimbun only launched its online offering, “Yomiuri Online”, in autumn of 2012. Subscribers can have access to this service through an additional ¥157 per month. While “Yomiuri Online” also has similar features to that of Nikkei’s and Asahi Shimbun’s e-newspapers such as allowing readers to choose what they would like to read and clipping functionality, the service mainly targets existing subscribers of the print newspaper. As a result, even though the electronic version is nominally priced, there are still only approximately 50,000 subscribers to date. [3]

Asahi Shimbun
(http://www.asahi.com/)

The newspaper was founded in Osaka on January 25, 1879 and on September 1, 1940 published throughout the country under the unified name, “Asahi Shimbun”. Often categorized as a centre-left publication, its political slant still leans towards the left of the spectrum. In addition to Asahi Shimbun, the newspaper also publishes the Shūkan Asahi weekly magazine, AERA, and the Ronza monthly magazine, as well as distributing more than 700 magazines and books annually. Asahi Shimbun partnered with International Herald Tribune of the New York Times Group to jointly publish the IHT/Asahi, first released on April 2, 2001, which replaced Asahi Shimbun’s previous English-language daily, Asahi Evening News. Due to China’s frowning on some of Asahi’s political positions, the Chinese-language website of Asahi Shimbun has found itself blocked in mainland China since January 2013. On July 17, 2013, the four official microblogging sites in mainland China were all deleted. but the website http://www.asahi.com is still accessible until now.

Among the national newspapers, Asahi Shimbun was the first to launch an online paid subscription service. In May 2011, the paper rolled out a similar online paid subscription service to the one launched by Nikkei. By paying an additional ¥1,000 per month, subscribers can have access to
the digital version of the newspaper, whereas purchasing only the electronic version costs ¥3,800 monthly. In comparison, subscriptions to both the morning and evening price editions only cost ¥3,925; as such, readers do not see the online subscription as adding more value. Moreover, Asahi Shimbun also publishes news on its website, and so growth in sales of the digital newspaper has been proving difficult. To improve the marketability, Asahi Shimbun dropped the price in 2013, allowing print subscribers to access the online version for only an additional ¥500. In addition, the newspaper stopped publishing news stories on its website and undertook efforts to upgrade the quality of the content as well as promoted the online paid subscription heavily. As a result, the readership surpassed 100,000 subscribers on March 3, 2013. Meanwhile, the number of non-paying members, who are allowed to read up to three free articles per day, reached the one million mark. In addition to publishing news articles from the print edition as well as breaking news, the online version provides a curated “My News” service which feature up to 100 news based on selected keywords provided by readers, or based upon logging in. Readers can retrieve any news article published in the past year. Following a publicity campaign launched in 2013, Asahi Shimbun launched "Paper +", providing readers with online access to articles not published in the newspaper, as well as video clips and unabridged interviews. [4]

Mainichi Shimbun
(http://www.mainichi.co.jp/)

Mainichi Shimbun is a very common newspaper in Japan, and the oldest in the country. The paper was founded in Tokyo on February 21, 1872, and was originally Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun. It merged with Osaka Mainichi Shimbun on March 1, 1911. Both Mainichi Shimbun and Asahi Shimbun have traditionally been the papers with the largest circulations in Japan. However, due to an overly aggressive expansion during an intensively competitive period, Mainichi Shimbun came a step away from having to shut its doors in the 1970s. Now, it is notably smaller in size when compared with Yomiuri Shimbun and Asahi Shimbun. Furthermore, Microsoft's MSN, which previously partnered with Mainichi Shimbun, switched its allegiance to Sankei Shimbun in 2007.

At one time, Mainichi Shimbun's website mainichi.jp was the second most trafficked website in terms of visits in Japan after Yahoo! Japan. Later, to maintain its traffic, Mainichi Shimbun integrated the website with other blogs and social websites. For example, not only can readers have access to the main article, but also read comments and opinions of the same article from blogs and social websites. [5]

Nihon Keizai Shimbun
(http://www.nikkei.com, commonly called Nikkei)

Nihon Keizai Shimbun was founded on December 2, 1876 and given its current name in March 1946. The newspaper provides wide coverage across many sectors, including politics, economy, technology, education, culture, sports, foreign affairs and military affairs. Notably, the newspaper has expertise in subjects like macro- and micro-economy, high tech, financial securities, and commodities. Nihon Keizai or Nikkei, the business and finance newspaper with the largest circulation in the world, hit a record distribution of 4,635,000 copies in 2005. Nikkei’s strength lies in its influence, which extends well beyond just its circulation numbers, as its target audience are composed of middle-class readers, most of whom are leaders in their industries and in politics, as well as white-collar professionals.

Nikkei is the first newspaper to launch an online paid subscription service in Japan. Even before the digital newspaper, its website, NIKKEI NET, was already Japan’s only news website that was fully digitally-commercialized. In March 2010, Nikkei officially launched pay-per-view for its electronic version. In addition to the 300 some stories published daily for its morning and evening editions, readers can access 600 web exclusive articles. Visitors to the site can search articles by keywords, or choose to view the newspaper in the same layout as the print edition.
The predecessor of Sankei Shimbun, Nihon Kogyo Shimbun was founded in Osaka on June 20, 1933. Due to poor performance in recent years, the newspaper had to depend on financial assistance from Fujisankei Communications Group. With its political opinions leaning to the right, the paper is relatively close to the opinions of the Liberal Democratic Party.

Among the five major newspapers in Japan, Sankei Shimbun has always come in last place in terms of its circulation numbers, but its approach to the electronic version has been the most aggressive. Firstly, there is no charge to view the electronic version on a PC and, secondly, given the increasing adoption of smartphones, Sankei launched the iPhone and Android versions, both of which are also free.

Current rates for this service are, ¥4,000 a month for the electronic version only; subscribers to the print version pay ¥4,383 a month for both the morning and evening editions, and can add on access to the electronic version for an additional ¥1,000. When pay-per-view was launched, the goal was to sign up 300,000 subscribers. In 2012, the number of subscribers had already exceeded 200,000. In May 2013, Nikkei was able to proudly announce that the number of paid subscribers of the electronic version had surpassed the goal of 300,000. [6]
Fees are charged only when using the iPad version or Android tablets with a display size of 7” or bigger; nevertheless, pricing is considerably lower than the print version. In October 2007, Sankei partnered with MSN to launch sankei.jp.msn.com. To guarantee both the quality of the content and the overall profitability, the online version of the paper is not simply a carbon copy of what is available in print. Visitors to sankei.jp.msn.com have access not just to the articles provide by Sankei reporters but also to extracts from the reporter’s personal blog.\[7\]

3 Magazines

Japan’s entire publishing industry was built on the back of its magazines. Profits from magazine publishing and distribution have always been the economic backbone of publishing houses across the country, with magazine sales accounting for around 60% of total publishing turnover. 2012 saw a continued decline in sales of books and periodicals. In comparison to books, magazines experienced an even greater decrease. As a result of the ubiquity of smartphones, the value of magazines as a source of information is waning. The younger generation in particular, is “moving away from magazines” at an accelerating rate. In response to this change, many magazine publishers have launched their own e-magazines.

Influential business magazines in Japan [8]

Nikkei BP
A weekly business magazine that introduces new technologies across many sectors, including business and politics, and is a predictor of emerging new trends

[8] Compiled based on information from Japanese websites
Shukan Diamond
Founded in 1913, the traditional business magazine has a long history in Japan. The logo of the electronic version: DIAMOND online diamond.jp

PRESIDENT
The business magazine, founded as the Japanese edition of Fortune Magazine in 1963, is the first joint effort ever between a Japanese and a foreign publisher. The semi-monthly periodical is highly favored by many across Japan’s business elite. The logo of the electronic version: www.president.co.jp

Newsweek Japan
A weekly magazine that focuses on current world events, with exclusive news reports that are often referenced by media outlets around the globe. The logo of the electronic version: Newsweek www.newsweekjapan.jp

TOKYO KEZAI
This in-depth business weekly, founded in 1895, can take pride in its roots going back to the Meiji Era. The magazine selects and analyses the most important topics from the news. The logo of the electronic version: 東洋経済 ONLINE toyokeizai.net
Radio stations in Japan are run by either NHK or by one of the four groups of private radio stations.

Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) is Japan’s largest broadcasting organization. As a special legal entity independent of the government, NHK is a public but not a state-run broadcaster; nevertheless, the broadcaster in generally regarded by one and all as a state-run broadcaster and as a mouthpiece of the government. Established and began broadcasting in 1925, NHK started offering world services in many languages over shortwave as Radio Japan on June 1, 1935. NHK operates 54 radio stations throughout the country and has 34 headquarters and branches, available in more than 20 languages around the world.

According to the findings of a survey conducted by Dentsu regarding Japan’s broadcasting media: in terms of broadcast content, talk shows dominate the airwaves, followed by traffic information, weather reports and weather forecasts, as radio is the main channel that the bulk of the population gets the information they need for day-to-day living.
The 2011 survey shows that the weekly radio consumption average dropped to 66.3%, down 2.7% when compared with the previous year. Average daily listening time was 120 minutes, five minutes less than the past year. Nevertheless, the survey found, men born after 1980 as well as the middle aged and individuals aged over 50 were spending more time tuning in to radio. [9]

A notable fact of the role of radio in Japan, a country affected by natural disasters, is that radio has always been well recognized as an effective channel to communicating information when the unexpected takes place. Radio played an especially critical role in keeping the public informed after the major earthquake in March 2011. For the Japanese, radio is a tried and trusted medium of communication, providing a feeling of security for its people.

After moving into the new media era, Japan’s radio broadcasting industry suffered from a continuing decrease in radio listenership, as well as an aging audience base. For this reason, Japan has already set out future development targets:

[9] Compiled based on information from Japanese websites
While Japan’s TV networks have all already gone digital, digital radio broadcasts which had been aired for 8 years on an experimental basis have been suspended and replaced with Multiradio.

On the other hand, after retreating from the trial implementation of digital radio, the traditional radio community has regained audience listenership by actively developing online radio services and converging with new media technologies.

Having remained in a traditional mode for longer than it should have been, Japan’s radio industry now taking the initiative by merging with new media, in a move to drive the development and innovation across the sector.
Japan's TV industry is divided into two parts, one of which is public TV with NHK as the main player.

NHK established its first TV station in 1953, with one channel broadcasting a variety of programs and the other dedicated to educational programming. NHK has the largest TV network in the world, with 79 affiliate stations and partnerships with news agencies in 47 countries and territories. The general population pays a TV license fee that enables the network to operate independent of advertising. Based on annual operating revenues, NHK accounts for about a third of Japan's TV market, as well as retaining its high viewership numbers. The other part is privately-owned TV stations, all 133 which are divided to five major media groups; in addition, there are 10 private satellite TV broadcasters and several private cable TV networks.

Statistics from Dentsu show that as of the end of March 2011, that TV has a penetration rate of 99.6%, which is a total of 120 million TV sets in Japanese households.
According to the Nationwide Survey on Individual Audience Ratings conducted by the NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute in June 2012, statistics are unchanged when compared to the year previous, as an average Japanese viewer will spend 3 hours 45 minutes per day watching TV. This time is split between 58 minutes viewing NHK TV and 2 hours 47 minutes spent watching commercial TV. Furthermore, TV viewing time among individuals born in the 1980s and 1990s is decreasing year by year. Time spent watching TV among males born after 1980 dropped to 80% from five years ago, and up to 20% of respondents don't watch TV at all.
Overview of Major TV Stations in Japan

1950

**NHK GTV**
Official name of the TV Company: NHK General TV (Nippon Hoso Kyokai)

1957

**NHK ETV**
Official name of the TV Company: NHK Educational TV (Nippon Hoso Kyokai)

1959

**TV Asahi**
Official name of the TV Company: TV Asahi Corporation

1964

**TV Tokyo**
Official name of the TV Company: TV Tokyo Corporation

2012

**Go! Next 50**
TV station: Nippon TV
Official name of the TV Company: Nippon Television Network Corporation

2008

**Fuji TV**
TV station: Fuji TV
Official name of the TV Company: Fuji TV Corporation

2004

**TBS TV**
TV station: TBS TV
Official name of the TV Company: TBS TV Corporation
Faced with challenges from social media, Japan’s TV industry is exploring a new way to cooperate and learn from each other, through self-reflection, ingenuity and flexibility. In this way, both TV and social media complement their strengths and improve their weaknesses. According to the study by Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, titled the Developments of the IT and Communications Sector and Services, all major TV stations in Japan have launched programs leveraging social media. For example, in a new program launched by NHK, guests are invited to discuss hot topics found on Twitter. TBS has also created YouTube and Facebook pages as channels to connect with their fans.

**Japan has moved from analogue terrestrial television into the new digital broadcasting era, with plans to launch the first 4K TV broadcasting service in July 2014.**
Media in Chinese

The Chinese are frequent visitors to Japan with many residing for extended period of time, as a result, Chinese-language newspapers and periodicals have proliferated, and currently break down into the following categories:


- **Every 10 days**: Hua Qiao Bao, 21st Century News, Japan Xinhua China News

- **Semi-monthly**: International Student Press, Lie Dao Weekend, Zhi Yin, China Times, Japanese Chinese News

- **Monthly**: Ai Hua, Yokohama Chinese Newsletter, Huasheng Women Monthly, Kansai Chinese News, Chu-Ni Chi Shin Pou, Tokai International News, Japan Chinese Journal, Zhong He Information, Taiwan Times, Taiwan Shimbun

- **Quarterly**: Contemporary Economy of Japan; Annual: Dong Ying Qiu Suo

http://www.wokou.net.cn/lishi/2013/0510/ribenhuawenmeiti_jinru_zhanguoshidai__tu__133031.html
Japan Xinhua China News
(http://www.jnocnews.jp/)

Founded in 1999, Japan Xinhua China News is a highly influential general Chinese-language newspaper in Japan. Currently, it has developed into a streamlined model comprised of several mediums including newspaper, web version, mobile, as well as other digital versions. It not only has a large audience in Japan's Chinese community, but it is also expanding its influence; reprinted daily by other Chinese-language media, Japan Xinhua China News’ content features news about mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Southeast Asian countries, the U.S., Canada and Australia among others. Japan Xinhua China News has become the overseas Chinese media that is most frequently republished by Mainland China websites.

Unlike newspapers in Chinese, Chinese-language TV only started broadcasting in Japan in the 1990s, more than 20 years later than its entry into the U.S..

Japan's Chinese-language TV channels went through a period of high-speed development, and then shrank quite noticeably during the economic crisis. During its golden period, three companies ran five channels, including Shanghai Dragon TV (Sky Perfect TV! Ch. 781), CCTV Daifu (Ch. 783), TVB Daifu (Ch. 782) resulting from a partnership between Daifu and Hong Kong-based TVB, Lele Communications' Lele China (Ch.784) and Ch.785 rebroadcasting CCTV-9.
CCTV Daifu
(http://www.cctvdf.com/c/index.php)

CCTV Daifu is a Chinese-language TV channel in Japan that survived the 2009 economic crisis. Previously rebroadcast by Lele China, Phoenix TV has been taken over by CCTV Daifu since April 2009, occupying the Sky Perfect TV! spot in channel 781. In addition, other channels have emerged including Japanese-Chinese Network TV, MATV Movie Channel and Universal Network TV.

Currently, CCTV Daifu is the only platform in Japan broadcasting programs from China, as well as the only overseas channel of CCTV that is authorized to use the CCTV name. It is the most authoritative source for overseas Chinese residents in Japan as well as Japanese audiences who wish to gain a better understanding of China. [11]

Additionally, Japan is home to Chinese electronic media including Hua Sheng He Yu (weekly), Japan Chinese Journal – Electronic Version (weekly), Dong Bei Feng (fortnightly), China Forum (general website), Searchina (general website) and more.

Online Media

According to the World Data Book’s 2012 statistics, 79.1% of Japanese residents are internet users. In addition, a Dentsu Institute Human Studies survey shows that again in 2012, Yahoo! JAPAN is ranked number one in terms of users regardless of gender or age, with its highly comprehensive website, which offers content and services including news, music, video, and shopping, testifying to its popularity among users. Other top ranking websites include Google (search engine), Rakuten Market (online shopping), FC2 (blogs), and YouTube (videos).
In Japan, large portal websites such as Yahoo! Japan, Google and MSN, the search bars on the home pages of ISPs, amongst many others, all provide Internet search services. However, the three often used search engines by the Japanese are Yahoo! Japan, Google and MSN, account for more than 90% of all searches combined (Google includes google.co.jp and google.com). Moreover, when accounting for the fact that many search bars available on ISP home pages also use Google’s search engine, the total market share of the three search engines combined is around 95%.

Based on available statistics, the number of users and the market share of the three search engines over a recent set of five consecutive days (unit: 10k users):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No. 1: Yahoo</th>
<th>No. 2: Google</th>
<th>No. 3: msn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/04/02</td>
<td>6,421</td>
<td>5,066</td>
<td>890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49.57%</td>
<td>39.11%</td>
<td>6.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/04/01</td>
<td>6,397</td>
<td>5,042</td>
<td>932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49.45%</td>
<td>38.98%</td>
<td>7.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/03/31</td>
<td>6,438</td>
<td>5,221</td>
<td>928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48.98%</td>
<td>39.72%</td>
<td>7.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/02/28</td>
<td>6,240</td>
<td>5,819</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46.18%</td>
<td>43.07%</td>
<td>6.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/01/31</td>
<td>7,201</td>
<td>6,251</td>
<td>845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48.25%</td>
<td>41.89%</td>
<td>5.66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://find.accessup.org/kensaku/access_history.html#japan](http://find.accessup.org/kensaku/access_history.html#japan)
As smart mobile devices are increasingly being used to access the internet, Japan's search engine market is in a state of transition. Previously, many Japanese users often used the mobile search tools provided by the telcos. Now, fewer users use the telcos' search tools when accessing the internet on their smartphones, and over half of the users choose to use Google due to its more simple and user-friendly design. Furthermore, the survey indicates that more people prefer Yahoo! Japan when browsing the internet on a PC, as it is the search engine many are accustomed to using. For businesses it is important to optimize on both search engines.

### Influential portals in Japan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>LOGO</th>
<th>Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>yahoo.co.jp</td>
<td><img src="logo-yahoo.png" alt="Yahoo! Japan Logo" /></td>
<td>Yahoo! JAPAN is a portal run by Yahoo Japan Corporation. It ranks No.1 in Japan's search engine and portal markets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>goo.ne.jp</td>
<td><img src="logo-goo.png" alt="Goo Logo" /></td>
<td>goo is an internet search engine and portal owned by NTT, Japan's leading telco. The main services the carrier offers include email, search, maps, dictionary, transportation transfers, news, and shopping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>livedoor.com</td>
<td><img src="logo-livedoor.png" alt="Livedoor Logo" /></td>
<td>The portal of Livedoor, a leading ISP in Japan and one of the three major portals in the country, offers a wide array of services, including news, blogs, search, translation, weather, shopping, maps, and the ability to take selfies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>jp.msn.com</td>
<td><img src="logo-msn.png" alt="MSN Logo" /></td>
<td>MSN Japan is Microsoft’s Japanese portal, offering content and services, including video, shopping, games, job search, email, personal blogs and instant messaging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>infoseek.co.jp</td>
<td><img src="logo-infoseek.png" alt="Infoseek Logo" /></td>
<td>The portal of Japanese ISP Rakuten, offers a multitude of services, including search, email, shopping, maps, news, dictionary, and finance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data from the Intelligent Media White Paper, 2012 issue, published by Dentsu Institute Human Studies
According to statistics from Shukan Toyo Keizai, the popularity of major online media outlets in Japan are ranked based on the number of URLs linking to news articles cited on Twitter. The following table shows the ranking:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Domain Name</th>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Number of tweets</th>
<th>Monthly Pageviews</th>
<th>Monthly no. of users (UU, 10K)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Headlines.yahoo.co.jp</td>
<td>Yahoo! News</td>
<td>1,118,930</td>
<td>abt 8.4 Bn</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>sankei.jp.msn.com</td>
<td>MSN business news</td>
<td>394,260</td>
<td>430 mil</td>
<td>2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>asahi.com/</td>
<td>Ashahi Shinbum digital</td>
<td>367,500</td>
<td>520 mil</td>
<td>2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>news.nicovideo.jp</td>
<td>natalie</td>
<td>363,510</td>
<td>3950</td>
<td>997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>natalie.mu</td>
<td>niconico news</td>
<td>318,530</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>nikkei.com</td>
<td>Nihon Keizai Shimbun Electronic Version</td>
<td>247,700</td>
<td>327.84 mil</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>itmedia.co.jp/</td>
<td>ITmedia</td>
<td>223,920</td>
<td>110.80 mil</td>
<td>2461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>yomiuri.co.jp</td>
<td>YOMIURI ONLINE</td>
<td>219,880</td>
<td>406.29 mil</td>
<td>715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>nlab.itmedia.co.jp</td>
<td>nlab</td>
<td>162,090</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>nikkansports.com</td>
<td>Nikkan Sports</td>
<td>155,440</td>
<td>220 mil</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Monthly PVs, Monthly Number of UUs: See Shukan Toyo Keizai (November 16, 2013)
It can be seen from the above table that Yahoo! News still ranks No. 1 in terms of monthly page views (PV) and monthly unique users (UU), with its news articles being most cited on Twitter. MSN Sankei News (No. 2), Asahi Shimbun Digital (No. 3), Nihon Keizai Shimbun Electronic Version, Yomiuri Online, and other websites of large newspapers are also influential online media outlets in Japan.

**Influential online finance and securities media in Japan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Domain name</th>
<th>Site name</th>
<th>LOGO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>rakuten-sec.co.jp</td>
<td>Rakuten Securities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>nomura.co.jp/</td>
<td>Nomura Securities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>gaitame.com</td>
<td>Gaitame.com</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>daiwa.co.jp</td>
<td>Daiwa Securities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>sec.himawari-group.co.jp</td>
<td>Himawari Securities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data from Intelligent Media White Paper, 2012 issue, published by Dentsu Institute Human Studies
Prior to the emergence of blogs, Japan already had websites designed for sharing information and interacting with other users, such as 2ch and Slashdot in Japanese, in addition to the other forms of communication such as web diaries and personal news sites. Thus initially, many were skeptical of blogs flourishing in Japan. However, according to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, blogs took off around 2002 with the availability of Japanese blogging tools. Its popularity with users experienced another major growth spurt in 2005, with numbers reaching 25.39 million at the end of March 2006. Due to the high number of blog posts in Japan, Japanese blog posts accounted for some 37% of the world's total in the fourth quarter of 2006, surpassing English and Chinese to become the number one language of posts.

In an era when SNS and Twitter are prevailing, Japan is still a major player when it comes to blogs. In August 2011, the Internet research agency comScore, published a report on the usage of blogs in Japan. According to the report, more than 80% of internet users in Japan visited blogs in June 2011 alone, an increased 7% from the previous year. **In Japan, browsing blogs are widely popular and retains the longest average viewing time per user in the world.**
Most Influential Blogging Platforms in Japan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Domain name</th>
<th>Site name</th>
<th>LOGO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>blog.fc2.com</td>
<td>FC2 Blog</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="FC2 Logo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ameblo.jp</td>
<td>Ameba Blog</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Ameba Logo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ameba.jp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>blog.livedoor.com</td>
<td>Livedoor Blog</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Livedoor Logo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>blog.livedoor.jp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>seesaa.jp</td>
<td>Seesaa Blog</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Seesaa Logo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>seesaa.net</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>blog.yahoo.co.jp</td>
<td>Yahoo! Blog</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Yahoo! Logo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>blogs.yahoo.co.jp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data from comScore research data in Japanese
New Media

With the increasing prevalence of smartphones, the media landscape is ever changing in Japan. Compared to regular mobile phone users, smartphone users would use more internet services and spend more time online.
In 2012, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications conducted a study on the usage of social media which shows that the popularity of social media networks (SNS) rose from 37.9% in 2011 to 62.6%. Mixi users decreased, while Facebook and Twitter experienced a continued increase in the size of their user base.

Source:
The Study on IT and Communication Sector, Service Development, and International Comparison, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2012
A study on the reasons the Japanese use social media finds that 55% of respondents chose “communicating with friends” as the main reason, followed by those collecting information in which they are interested (48%). Of information viewed, 44.1% opted for "friends' life/opinions", 36.9% chose "latest happenings of friends and others", and 35.4% selected "information related to their interests". In addition, 21.3% of users search for information or comments on "interested products/stores". 41.7% mentioned that comments on SNS has an impact on their purchasing decision. While SNS is still mainly for personal use, social media’s role in corporate communication cannot be underestimated.

Real name registration is a basic feature of western social media, while in Japan, social media outlets prefer using aliases. Mixi is popular among students and young white collars, while Facebook is more favored by business users. Many Japanese companies including Uniqlo strengthen communication with their customers by leveraging Facebook, while many in Japan use the social media to maintain overseas business ties.

In January 2011, The New York Times reported that there are less than two million Facebook users in Japan, representing less than 2% of all internet users. Japanese users were less interested in Facebook since the site was not optimized for the Japanese language, and simultaneously Japanese users were less willing to use their real names or offer other information. The earthquake in March 2011 accelerated the adoption of Facebook, as the advantages of its real-name policy were fully demonstrated after the earthquake.
In September 2012, Facebook had approximately 15 million monthly active users (MAU) in Japan, surpassing Mixi, the country’s local social network giant. In August 2013, Facebook’s Managing Director in Japan, Atsushi Iwashita, disclosed in a Nikkei interview that Facebook had 21 million MAUs in Japan, which meant one sixth of the population were Facebook users. Of the total, 18 million were mobile users, representing 86% of total MAUs, compared with the world average of 71%. Furthermore, 72% of mobile Facebook users in Japan log on every day, which is much higher than the world average of 57%. [12]

At the same time, Japan’s domestic social media outlets are expanding their presence abroad. For example, in 2010 Mixi established a partnership with RenRen, the largest SNS website in China, and South Korea-based Cyworld. GREE partnered with China-based Tencent in January 2011 and with US-based Project Goth in April 2011. Find Japan and China-based Sina Weibo (weibo.com) have entered into a strategic cooperation to expand into the Japanese market. In July 2011, Sina designated Find Japan as its sole authorized agent to authenticate real names of accounts in Japan, making its formal foray into the Japanese market.

With the wide adoption of social media, traditional media, including newspapers, radio and TV, are making smart use of social media. For example, creating an account on Twitter or a public page on Facebook to not only post links to news articles or programs, but also setting up social media buttons on the company’s official website, linking to Twitter, Facebook, GREE and Mixi and hoping their audience can spread their news and content to even more users.

2 Multimedia

In recent years, the number of online video users has grown rapidly in Japan. Influential video media outlets include GyaO!, YouTube, niconico, USTREAM and BeeTV.

The two major free video websites in Japan, YouTube and niconico, are the most popular according to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, YouTube holds a market share of 89.2%, whereas niconico, though it takes the second spot, has a share of just 5.4%, demonstrating YouTube’s dominant position. Among live video websites, Ustream is most widely used in Japan, especially for press conferences, seminars, and academic meetings. Like niconico, Ustream offers free or paid videos of concerts, TV programs and movies. During the 2011 Japan Earthquake, both NHK and private broadcasters delivered visuals through niconico and Ustream.
3 Mobile Media

Japan has always been a major player when it comes to the number of iPhone users. In October 2013, NTT DoCoMo, the largest mobile operator in Japan, began to sell the iPhone 5s/c. According to the US-based market research firm Kantar World Panel, iPhones made up 76% of total smartphone sales in Japan in October 2013, of which a startling 61% have selected NTT DoCoMo as their carrier. Amongst them, a great majority of users use their smartphones to connect to the internet or utilize apps as tools.

Noticeably, with the increasing adoption of smartphones, the explosive growth of the mobile social application Line in Japan has drawn wide attention. Similar to WeChat in China, Line is a free instant messaging application for mobile phones.

Jiji Press reported on April 2, 2014 that global users of Line topped 400 million. Line was only launched on June 23, 2011, three months after the East Japan Earthquake. The number of Line users passed the 100 million mark in January 2013 and topped 200 million after six months in July 2013. In just four short months, Line had grown into a major communications platform with 300 million global users.
Line has 50 million users in Japan, and growth is expected to slow in the future. Now, the growth of Line users mainly comes from outside of Japan, including 17 million users in Taiwan, 20 million in Thailand, and 15 million in Spain. Line users outside of Japan now account for 80% of the total. In China, Wandoujia announced its partnership with Line on April 30, 2014, under which, Wandoujia will manage and promote Line in mainland China. An earlier exclusive cooperation between Line and 360 was terminated when the contract expired, and while they maintain a form of partnership, 360 will no longer run Line in mainland China.

Onavo, a start-up analyzing mobile data applications, released the market share of each social apps in different countries based on a survey of iPhone users conducted in June 2013. WhatsApp is dominant on a global scale, while WeChat in China and Line in Japan are dominant regionally. Based on Onavo’s statistics, the three mobile social applications split the Japanese market unevenly: with Line at 71%, WeChat at 6% and WhatsApp at 8%. Moreover, the most recently released statistics of monthly active users (MAUs) are as follows: 400 million for WhatsApp (December 2013), and 270 million for WeChat (September 2013). Although Line has not released its figures, the number of its MAUs is estimated at 200-250 million based on its 300 million registered users (November 2013).

Additionally, there are a growing range of offerings available on the app market. A survey of app users in Japan finds that game apps are most popular, followed by utility tools as well as practical apps, such as weather forecasts, news, and productivity apps. Many people also use e-book readers and video apps.

## The Most Influential Business News Apps in Japan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APP Logo</th>
<th>Profile</th>
<th>APP Logo</th>
<th>Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="NIKKEI" /></td>
<td>The NIKKEI&lt;br&gt;Mimicking the experience of reading the print edition, readers are allowed to clip news articles in which they are interested</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Business Radio" /></td>
<td>Business Radio&lt;br&gt;Web radio using an RSS reader for podcasts, through which users can listen to business and economic news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="QUICK" /></td>
<td>QUICK&lt;br&gt;Provides multiple investment-related columns by category and the ability to view real-time market information</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="All" /></td>
<td>All&lt;br&gt;Delivers latest equity investment information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="WSJ Japanse Version" /></td>
<td>THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (Japanese Version)&lt;br&gt;Provides a summary of international news from a U.S. viewpoint in Japanese</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Economy/Finance" /></td>
<td>Economy/Finance&lt;br&gt;Delivers latest equity investment information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="R25" /></td>
<td>R25&lt;br&gt;The electronic version of a free magazine aimed at a white collar male audience, aged 25 or above</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Business Magazine" /></td>
<td>Business Magazine&lt;br&gt;RSS Reader for business magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Bloomberg" /></td>
<td>Bloomberg&lt;br&gt;Offering global news and key market information on stocks, bonds and commodities</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="World Stock Price Index Information" /></td>
<td>World Stock Price Index Information&lt;br&gt;Identifying the latest information on stock price indices in Japan, the U.S., Europe and Asia as well as on markets, businesses and exchange rates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Japanese websites
Additional Resources

Asian Media Landscape Series
Hong Kong Taiwan Singapore Malaysia
http://en.prnasia.com/story/96040-0.shtml

» US Media Landscape Whitepaper (Chinese version)


The Big Press Release Sample Book

Case studies of overseas communication by Chinese organizations using PR Newswire (Chinese version) http://www.prnasia.com/resources/casestudy/

» To learn more about how PR Newswire helps businesses distribute news releases to global media, please visit: http://en.prnasia.com/services/distribute/
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Having pioneered the corporate news distribution industry in 1954, PR Newswire today provides end-to-end solutions to produce, optimize and target content and then distribute content and measure results across traditional, digital, mobile, and social channels. Combining the world’s largest multi-channel, multi-cultural content distribution, and optimization network with comprehensive workflow tools and platforms, PR Newswire enables the world’s enterprises to engage opportunity everywhere it exists. PR Newswire serves over 40,000 clients in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and the Asia-Pacific region, and is a UBM plc company.