

Singapore Media

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1. Introduction

The Singapore media industry today continues the liberalisation process that began in the 1990s. The theme of control is still present but that is now making way for more entrants and competition.

Although Singapore's multiethnic population officially consists of 75 percent Chinese, 14 percent Malays, 8.8 percent Indians and 2.2 percent others, the dominant working language is English (Singapore Department of Statistic, 2006a). Because of historic reasons, Chinese, Malay and Tamil are also recognized as official languages and so literature and publicity material aimed at the population are in those languages too. Dialects play a small role, particularly during the general elections. In practice, the English newspapers and television and radio stations are dominant in their influence. It is through a series of rules of these mainstream media that the Singapore government regulates the press.

2. Press

2.1 Development of the press and broadcasting

It had not always been the case that the government was dominant in the media. It was private entrepreneurs who started newspapers and the radio station. Only in the case of television was the government involved from the start. During the period of the Japanese Occupation from 1942 to 1945, all media were under the control of the Japanese. After that, the newspapers returned to the hands of the private owners.

2.2 Developments since 1945

The modern history of the Singapore press began in the 1950s. The Chinese press was particularly active in the '50s. Small publications described as "mosquito" or "yellow

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culture” newspapers came and went. They “dealt more in imaginative libelous stories than in factual reports” (Tan, 1971, p.182). Reader protests led to their eventual closure by the government. Tabloids, which printed lottery results as lead articles, replaced them. Stiff competition among them cut their life span to between three and six months (Tan, 1971). Towards the late 1950s, some Chinese papers started as a means to raise funds to support development in China (Tan and Soh, 1994).

The English press mounted more serious challenges among themselves. The Singapore Tiger Standard, established in 1949, lasted 10 years. Others in the fray were the now defunct Malayan Times (1961), Eastern Sun (July 17, 1966) and Singapore Herald (1970).

Religious, economic and political motives were behind the establishment of newspapers in Singapore. Christians and Muslims had religious motives in starting the early papers. Commercial and economic objectives pushed the establishment of English papers. Political motives of those engaged in politics in China often accounted for the establishment of the Chinese papers.

2.2.1 The printed press

The evolution of the Singapore press into a monopoly started in the 1970s, when the government closed down two English dailies—Eastern Sun and Singapore Herald—and merged the two leading Chinese dailies (Lent, 1982). Although the circulation of the Chinese newspapers was rising in the late ‘70s, the government sensed the readership of the Chinese dailies might eventually fall with an increasing number of students studying in English. The government, therefore, decided to allow the Chinese papers to enter the English daily market and also allow The Straits Times to operate a Chinese daily (Tan & Soh, 1994).

So in 1980, the two Chinese papers were merged to form the Singapore News and Publications Ltd. (SNPL) with a licence to publish an English daily. This paper, The Singapore Monitor, was to folded in 1985, when Singapore had its first recession since independence. The Straits Times had folded its afternoon paper, New Nation, so as not to compete with The Singapore Monitor. In turn, the government gave it a licence to publish the Chinese daily, Shin Min Daily News (SPH, 1993). But in 1984, in a surprise move, the government merged The Straits Times group with the SNPL to form Singapore Press

Holdings (SPH). The only newspaper outside the fold was the small Tamil daily, Tamil Murasu, which SPH later bought in the mid-'90s (Tan & Soh, 1994).

SPH started The New Paper, an English-language afternoon paper, in 1988. Targeted at a blue-collar mass market, it filled the void left by The Singapore Monitor. The 1991 Gulf War gave The New Paper a circulation boost, and it has been profitable since.

In 2000, Singapore's media market opened up like never before. The two media incumbents were allowed to enter each other markets. In that year alone, three new English-language newspapers were launched. Project Eyeball came first in August. Positioning itself as the first integrated print and online publication in Singapore, the paper targeted at the young, Internet-savvy professionals. But it turned out to be a failure and was suspended by its publisher SPH less than a year later in June 2001 after its readership fell steadily (Straits Times, 2001 June).

In September 2000 SPH launched Streets, Singapore's first free sheet. This English tabloid, targeted at commuters, was available on weekday mornings at key commuting points of the island.

Meanwhile, MediaCorp, the hitherto television monopoly was given a newspaper licence and it launched a free English tabloid in November 2000 called Today. It had the same target readers was available at the same distribution point as Streets; the two free papers competed fiercely from launch (Mitton, 2001).

Competition between the two media giants SPH and MediaCorp dented both companies profits. SPH's net profit fell 20.3 percent to \$163 million in the six months ended February 28, 2002; MediaCorp's net loss for the year ended March 2002 widened from \$19 million to \$119 million. To curb losses, the two media player announced a deal in September 2004. SPH agreed to give up its TV Channels to MediaCorp in turn for a 20 percent stake in a new TV joint venture. It also agreed to close its loss-making free tabloid Streets in exchange for a 40 percent stake in MediaCorp Press, the publisher of Today (Strait Times, December 2004).

The agreement effectively eliminated competition in the Singapore newspaper and television market. The media market in Singapore is, for all intents and purposes, monopolistic. So the Straits Times keeps the No. 1 spot as the most widely read newspaper in Singapore. In line with the falling circulation of newspapers around the world, its

circulation also declined, albeit just marginally from 391,612 in 1998, to 389,225 in 2002, then 381,934 in 2006 (Seah, 2006).

While the newspaper was hitting the circulation plateau, SPH began to develop online business ventures. In June 1995, it started Business Times Online, the online edition of the English-language newspaper Business Times, and became the first online newspaper in Asia. In 1995, SPH launched another online business AsiaOne.com, a leading news and information website in Singapore. Besides AsiaOne.com and Business Times Online, SPH also has other Internet business, such as Straits Times Interactive and Zaobao.com. In 2006, SPH set up the classified website, ST701 and STOMP (Straits Times Online Mobile Print), expanding its Internet business into online recruitment advertising and mobile phone-base Internet service. The development of these online businesses is part of SPH's strategies to go beyond print.

2.2.2 Broadcast media

Radio began in June 1936 under a private company called Broadcasting Corporation. The Singapore government, then the British colonial administrators, bought the business in 1940 and ran it under the "Broadcasting Station, Posts and Telegraph Department, Singapore and Federated Malay States" for almost a year. In April 1941, the Malaya Broadcasting Corp, a quasi-government enterprise controlled jointly by the governments of the Straits Settlement and the United Kingdom, took over the radio station (Wong & Lian, 1978, p.156). The radio station became Syonan Hosokyo under Japanese occupation (February 1942 to August 1945).

When the British returned in 1946, they renamed it "Radio Malaya, Singapore and Federation of Malaya" with Singapore as headquarters. The civil government ran a medium-wave and a short-wave service for the whole Malay Peninsula (Wong & Lian, 1978). When Malaya won independence in 1957, the radio service was split into Radio Malaya and Radio Singapore. The two services merged in August 1963 with the formation of Malaysia only to split again on Aug. 9, 1965 with Singapore's independence. The Department of Broadcasting, Ministry of Culture, took over the service and re-named it Radio-Television Singapore. The government called on the radio service to "interpret . . . the government's objectives and policies . . . to enhance the people's political awareness . . . enabling the

people to identify closely with the nation and to make the right choice at elections" (Ow, 1979, p. 140). This obligation discouraged the production of innovative programs (Chen, 1996).

Rediffusion, a private wired radio service relaying interference-free broadcasts, became the primary entertainment medium during the '50s to the early '80s. Rediffusion International London, a private operation that relayed broadcasts from BBC London to other parts of England, established Rediffusion (Singapore) Ltd. as a branch. Rediffusion offered programmes in Chinese dialects, English and Malay, peaking at 120,000 subscribers in the early '80s. (Singapore Department of Statistics, 1983). Then, a government campaign to de-emphasize the Chinese dialects, coupled with a more lively radio industry, led to the decline of Rediffusion (Chen, 1996). In 1975, Singapore became the location of the BBC relay station originally set up in Malaya in the 1940s (Wong & Lian, 1978).

Television arrived in 1963. Katz and Wedell (1978) suggest that the Singapore government introduced television to keep people off the streets following communal unrest (p. 82). Radio-Television Singapore (RTS) started Channel 5 to televise English and Malay programs, and Channel 8 to feature Mandarin and Tamil programs. Full-color transmission came in mid-1974 (Wong & Lian, 1978).

In 1980, RTS was renamed the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation (SBC). Four years later, SBC launched the third free-to-air TV channel, Channel 12, focusing on art and cultural programmes.

In 1994, SBC was divided into three individual companies: the Television Corporation of Singapore (TCS), the Radio Corporation of Singapore (RCS), and the TV12. The three companies were under the SIM Group of Companies. The next year, two two new free-to-air channels, Prime 12 and Premiere 12, were created. This means that free-to-air terrestrial television channels carry programming in all four official languages.

In 1996, TV12 became Singapore Television Twelve (STV12). In 1999, the SIM Group of Companies launched Channel NewsAsia, a free-to-air channel with ambitions to be a regional news player.

The Media Corporation of Singapore (MediaCorp) first came into use in 1999 as a result of reorganizing the SIM Group of Companies. In 2001, the word "MediaCorp"

became the prefix of the new corporation's all business units. For example, TCS became MediaCorp TV, STV12 MediaCorp TV12, and RCS Media Corp Radio.

MediaCorp's dominance in broadcasting market was challenged by SPH, the major newspaper publisher in Singapore. In 2001, SPH set up SPH MediaWorks, which included two new free-to-air terrestrial television channels, Channel U and TV Works. A ratings war broke out between SPH and MediaCorp.

The war between MediaCorp and SPH ended in 2004. MediaCorp Channels 5 and 8 and MediaWorks Channel U were merged into a new holding company, MediaCorp TV Holdings Private Limited. MediaCorp held 80 percent stake in the new company while SPH 20 percent. Parallel to the print media, the local broadcast market has returned a monopolistic status with MediaCorp being the top local broadcaster.

In 2006, MediaCorp introduced a new Internet-delivered service, MediaCorp Online Broadband TV. It is a subscription-based video-on-demand service, allowing subscribers access to MediaCorp programmes on their PCs and laptops.

On the digital broadcasting front, Singapore has adopted the European DVB-T (Digital Video Broadcasting-Terrestrial) standard, which is the standard adopted among many countries around the world. Digital transmission of free-to-air channels is simulcast on Channel 5, 8 and Channel NewsAsia (CNA) Straits Times (2001b April).

In addition, MediaCorp TV launched Singapore's first outdoor digital TV channel – TVMobile on 14 February 2001. It was also the first in the world to use Digital Video Broadcast (DVB) technology to deliver high quality mobile TV programmes to public commuters. TVMobile can be found on 1,500 air-conditioned buses and in food courts with a daily audience of 1.5 million commuters. Broadcasting hours for TVMobile channel are daily (Monday to Sunday) from 6 am to midnight (TVMobile, 2001).

To this end, simulcasts of Channels 5, 8, and Channel News Asia using Mdigital has been carried out in Channels 5, 8, and Channel News Asia. On May 2006, MediaCorp started a HDTV trial channel and all TV channels is supposed to being HDTV by 2007.

The development of digital Television is encouraged by the Media Development Authority (MDA). For example, a \$5 million Digital Broadcasting Development Fund was established on June 2000.

Besides traditional TV-like broadcasts, mobile phone TV broadcast was launched in Singapore by Nokia, MediaCorp Technologies, M1 and the MDA in 2004. This new live end-to-end mobile phone TV is based on DVB-H (Digital Video Broadcast – Handheld) technology, which is believed to enable Singapore to move into the next stage of digital TV.

In addition, Singapore launched the first commercial digital radio service, SMART Radio, operated by MediaCorp Radio on 19 November 1999, making Singapore the first country in Asia to provide commercial digital radio service (Ee, 2002). At the time of writing, SMART Radio carried 14 stations—six new DAB-only stations and eight existing FM stations in digital format (MediaCorp Radio, 2007).

3. Newspapers

3.1 Policy and legal framework

The Singapore press does not subscribe to the libertarian or the U.S. model of press system in which the press is given virtually unfettered freedom. The libertarian concept is deemed unworkable in Singapore because of racial, religious and cultural differences (Vanden Heuvel & Dennis, 1993; Chua, 1998).

The Singapore Constitution, which was modeled after the Indian Constitution, provides the right to freedom of speech and expression in Article 14. In both constitutions, it is a limited right. First, it guarantees freedom of speech and expression only to citizens of Singapore. Second, it gives the right only to convey expression, not the right to receive expression of any kind. Third, it does not expressly deal with the issue of prior restraint, implicitly allowing prior restraint. Fourth, the right is subject to Parliament's power to legislate in the interest of national security, public interest and public morality and for the maintenance of foreign relations.

The Newspapers and Printing Presses Act of 1974, traceable to the colonial government's Printing Presses Act of 1920, is the dominant law affecting the press. The Act licenses local printing presses, and local as well as foreign newspapers and magazines. The law requires annual licensing of daily newspapers, which only public companies, not

individuals, can own. Such companies should have at least 50 shareholders but no single shareholder can control more than 5 percent. All directors must be locals, and government approval is necessary to hold key positions. The company must create two kinds of shares: ordinary shares that make up 99 percent of the company, with one vote each; and management shares that make up just 1 percent of the company, with 200 votes each. The minister approves the ownership and transfer of the management shares. The 1986 amendment to the Act empowers the minister to restrict the circulation of publications that “engage in domestic politics.” Since then, Time, Asian Wall Street Journal, Far Eastern Economic Review, Asiaweek, and the Economist have had their circulation restricted under the law.

In 1988, the Far Eastern Economic Review, in response to the restriction, stopped its circulation in Singapore. The Singapore government amended the Act to allow reproduction of the publication in toto without infringing copyright and on a cost-recovery basis. No advertisements were printed so the copies appeared with white spaces where advertisements would otherwise have been. In 1990, the government amended the Act again to license newsweeklies produced without but sold within Singapore with a circulation exceeding 300. The amendment empowered the government to specify the maximum number of copies that may be sold, to require the appointment of an authorized person to accept service of legal notice and require the publisher to furnish a deposit of S\$200,000 (US\$125,000). One publication, Media, a weekly from Hong Kong covering advertising, reduced its circulation in Singapore from 1,500 to 299 (Tan & Soh, 1994).

The Undesirable Publications Act prohibits the sale, importation or circulation of publications published or printed outside or within Singapore deemed “contrary to the public interest.” More recently, the government has used this law against soft-porn and alternative life-style publications (Lim, 1996).

Besides such universal issues as copyright and defamation, other laws pertinent to the media are the Criminal Law (Temporary Provisions) Act, the Emergency (Essential Powers) Act and the 1963 Internal Security Act. The latter allows for detention without trial although the last time a journalist was jailed was in the 1970s. More recently, the Official Secrets Act was used against journalists from Business Times for publishing news about

economic growth before the data were released officially. This was the first time this law was used against journalists. The presumption had been that the law targeted espionage.

Technology has also forced a change. The Films Acts was amended in 1998 to ban party political film, including new technology-enabled video and the like. The party political film was further defined as any film or video made by or on behalf of any political party or any individual or any organization with the purpose of directing towards any political end in Singapore.

Other laws with provisions to regulate the press but that have not been used against the press are the Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act, the Parliament (Privileges, Immunities and Powers) Act and the 1964 Sedition Act.

3.2 Financial aspects: circulation, advertising and market strategy

3.2.1 Circulation

In 2005, total daily newspaper circulation was 1.36M, down from a record high of 1.77M at the height of the newspaper war (Singapore, Dept. of Statistics 2003, 2006). Table 1 shows the circulation share among the papers in the four official languages. The English and the Chinese press dominate the scene.

Table 1: Daily newspaper circulation

| Year | Total | English (%) | Chinese (%) | Malay (%) | Tamil (%) |
|------|---------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1982 | 657,340 | 44 | 49.7 | 5.2 | 1.1 |
| 1983 | 694,711 | 43.4 | 50.6 | 5.1 | 1.0 |
| 1984 | 709,383 | 43.3 | 50.4 | 5.3 | 1.0 |
| 1985 | 713,866 | 43.2 | 50.3 | 5.6 | 0.9 |
| 1986 | 684,298 | 41.2 | 51.9 | 6.1 | 0.8 |
| 1987 | 700,927 | 41.8 | 51.5 | 6.0 | 0.8 |
| 1988 | 743,334 | 45.8 | 47.7 | 5.7 | 0.8 |
| 1989 | 777,052 | 46.7 | 47.1 | 5.5 | 0.7 |
| 1990 | 813,484 | 47.4 | 46.5 | 5.5 | 0.6 |
| 1991 | 877,523 | 48.2 | 45.7 | 5.5 | 0.6 |
| 1992 | 916,102 | 48.9 | 44.8 | 5.8 | 0.5 |

| | | | | | |
|-------|-----------|------|------|-----|-----|
| 1993 | 977,846 | 49.2 | 44.4 | 5.9 | 0.5 |
| 1994 | 1,029,043 | 49.9 | 43.8 | 5.8 | 0.5 |
| 1995* | 1,050,000 | 49.6 | 43.9 | 5.9 | 0.6 |
| 1996* | 1,060,000 | 49.4 | 43.9 | 6.0 | 0.7 |
| 1997 | 1,092,898 | 48.0 | 45.8 | 5.4 | 0.8 |
| 1998 | 1,125,521 | 47.9 | 45.7 | 5.5 | 0.9 |
| 1999 | 1,148,137 | 47.5 | 46.0 | 5.6 | 0.9 |
| 2000 | 1,197,301 | 46.1 | 47.7 | 5.4 | 0.8 |
| 2001 | 1,637,383 | 63.1 | 32.3 | 3.9 | 0.6 |
| 2002 | 1,766,088 | 65.8 | 30.1 | 3.6 | 0.5 |
| 2003 | 1,708,665 | 64.1 | 31.7 | 3.6 | 0.5 |
| 2004 | 1,622,728 | 64.0 | 31.8 | 3.6 | 0.6 |
| 2005 | 1,359,807 | 57.2 | 37.9 | 4.2 | 0.7 |
| 2006 | 1,631,948 | 55.3 | 40.2 | 3.8 | 0.7 |

Sources: Singapore Department of Statistics, Yearbook (various years).

* Estimated

3.2.2 Advertising

Advertising expenditures in Singapore grew 4 per cent in 2006 over 2005, to top S\$1.9 billion (US\$1.3 billion). The growth rate trailed that of the economy, which grew 8 percent. In most countries television commands the lion's share of advertising. In Singapore, television advertising in 2006 caught up with newspaper advertising, with both neck-and-neck at 39 percent of the market each. Together, these two media command almost 80 percent of the advertising market. The rest of the advertising pie goes mostly to magazines and radio (A. C. Nielsen, 2006). With the development of digit media, advertising expenditure on traditional media was increasingly declined. It has been predicted that one quarter of print classified advertisements would move online in the next few years (Hoong & Huer, 2006).

3.3 Structure and organization

The print media in Singapore are dominated by the local newspaper monopoly, Singapore Press Holdings (SPH). Its nine local dailies command a combined circulation of more than 1 million copies. English language newspapers have the highest daily circulation, followed by Chinese, Malay and Tamil newspapers.

Singapore Press Holdings is a listed blue-chip stock and commands more than half of all advertising revenue in Singapore. It runs three English newspapers: The Straits Times (including The Sunday Times), Business Times and The New Paper. It also publishes three Chinese newspapers: Lianhe Zaobao (United Morning News), Lianhe Wanbao (United Evening News) and Shin Min Daily News. And it owns the Malay newspaper Berita Harian (Daily News), including its Sunday edition Berita Minggu (Weekly News), and the Tamil newspaper, the Tamil Murasu (Table 2).

Singapore Press Holdings also publishes several periodicals, many of which are widely circulated in Singapore. The company, therefore, continues to be highly profitable. In 2002, the publicly-listed SPH returned S\$300 million (US\$120 million) as a form of share buyback to its shareholders and still had a S\$900 million (US\$540 million) stockpile to invest (SPH annual report, 2002). The company has diversified into property and telecommunications. It has invested in the local cable television franchise, a cellular phone service and an internet service provider.

Table 2 Singapore's daily newspapers and their Sunday editions

| Newspaper | Year Started | Frequency | Language | Circulation In 2002 (Sunday) | Circulation In 2006 (Sunday) |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| The Straits Times | 1845 | Daily a.m. | English | 389,225 (391,233) | 388,500 (402,600) |
| Lianhe Zaobao | 1983 | Daily a.m. | Chinese | 189,912 (200,929) | 183,000 (191,300) |
| Lianhe Wanbao | 1983 | Daily p.m. | Chinese | 131,179 (130,193) | 123,900 (125,000) |
| Shin Min Daily | 1967 | Daily p.m. | Chinese | 117,222 (118,685) | 120,800 (122,600) |
| The New Paper | 1988 | Daily p.m. | English | 120,180 (148,577) | 111,400 (145,300) |

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------|------------|---------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Berita Minggu | 1960 | Sunday | Malay | 70,365 | 72,100 |
| Berita Harian | 1957 | Daily a.m. | Malay | 63,376 | 62,500 |
| Business Times | 1976 | Daily a.m. | English | 31,205 | 30,400 |
| Tamil Murasu | 1935 | Daily a.m. | Tamil | 8,608 (15,325) | 10,200 (17,600) |
| Streets | 2000 | Daily a.m. | English | 220,000 | |

Sources: SPH Annual Report 2002, 2006

About 5,500 foreign publications, journals and magazines also circulate in Singapore. Some 200 accredited correspondents representing 64 foreign news agencies, newspapers and broadcasting stations are based in Singapore (Singapore InfoMap, 2006).

3.4 Quality and popular press

Singapore Press Holdings positions its papers to minimize competition among themselves. The only exceptions are the two Chinese-language evening newspapers, Shin Min and Lianhe Wanbao, which do compete for news and readers and often appeal to sensationalism. The business news of The Straits Times sometimes competes with the Business Times but this is more by accident than by design.

The Straits Times, or ST as it is known in acronym-favoring Singapore, is the oldest and longest running newspaper. It started in 1845 as a weekly and became a daily in 1858. Publication was interrupted when Singapore fell to the Japanese in 1942 but resumed with the end of the war in 1945. The company turned public in 1950 with a daily circulation of 50,000 copies and a Sunday circulation of more than 67,000 copies. In the 1950s, The Straits Times was published both in Singapore and Malaya by the Straits Times Press. But Singapore's separation from Malaysia in 1965 led to the establishment of The New Straits Times in Malaysia. The two newspapers agreed not to compete with each other; since then, the two newspapers are not available on newsstands on the other side of the Johor Straits.

Today's Straits Times is a broadsheet daily with multiple sections for family reading. The news section is particularly strong on regional and international news. Besides sports, business and regional news, a features section called Life! carries light articles on films, books, television, family, food, music, arts, culture, travel, etc. It is as close to what can be considered a quality paper, as the term might be generally defined, in the Singapore setting. It is a local paper, a national paper and a regional and international paper—all in one—and billed as the national paper of record. In 2002, it won the newspaper of the year award from the Pacific Area Newspaper Publishers' Association, especially for connecting with the community. In his acceptance speech, then political editor Han Fook Kwang observed that it was competition from Today that compelled the paper to market itself and to embark on projects to connect with the community (SPH, 2002).

Until the economic crisis hit Singapore in 1998, ST was one of the few newspapers in the world that turned away advertising. (The other two publications that turn away advertising, as far as the writer knows, are The Economist and The South China Morning Post.) Informal content analysis by the author with students has shown that at its height, on some days, 80 percent of the news pages consisted of advertising.

Singapore's only English-language afternoon tabloid, The New Paper, caters to the impulse buyer and blue-collar and student reader. It is more sensational than the other papers with bold headlines on sex, soccer and such. But it barely approaches the level of sensation found in the Western press. It appeared first on July 26, 1988, three years after the afternoon daily The Singapore Monitor stopped publication. Its average daily circulation of more than 107,000 is way above its original target of 65,000.

The Lianhe Zaobao (Lian-he meaning United and Zao-bao meaning Morning News) and the Lianhe Wanbao (United Evening News) were the products of a merger between two competing newspapers, the Nanyang Siang Pau and Sin Chew Jit Poh, which had merged in 1982 to form the Singapore News and Publications Ltd. (SNPL). Zaobao, as it is known, is the leading Chinese newspaper in Singapore. This broadsheet daily focuses on issues of interest to the Chinese community, particularly the Chinese language and culture. Interestingly enough, its on-line edition is the most-read Chinese-language newspaper site in the world, with more than 30 million page-views a month. This ranks it as one of the top 1,000 most-visited sites in the world. Significantly, more than 90 percent of the visits come

from outside of Singapore, mostly from China and North America. The reason for its popularity is the readers' perception of it as a neutral voice on Chinese politics—beholden neither to China or Taiwan.

Wanbao, which started in mid-1983, has adopted a bolder and less conservative editorial style because it has a direct competitor in Shin Min Daily, established just two years after Singapore's independence in 1965. It is a popular-reading evening paper that provides news on a wide range of local and international topics with added emphasis on the local entertainment scene. In the mid-'80s, with the formation of the Singapore Press Holdings, it looked as if Shin Min might have to fold. Now it thrives in competition with Wanbao in the same SPH stable.

3.5 Distribution and technology

Despite its virtual-monopoly status, the company has only begun to take charge of its distribution. The distribution system is a legacy from the late-'60s. The newspaper companies did not employ vendors but instead hired independent newspaper vendors who were then registered with the newspaper companies and distributed a number of newspapers at one time. Vendors carried out distribution only within their own territories, which were usually marked out with the help of secret societies. Brawls often broke out when there was more than one vendor servicing the same territory. In as late as the mid-'80s, vendors would wait outside newly built flats to hand the owners their business cards (Lum & Khoo, 1998).

From 1988, the company started to control the vendors. First, it registered all 550 vendors. It then divided Singapore into four zones by postal district. Each zone has four area representatives, each typically handling between 30 and 40 vendors. The vendors then had to tender for the territories where they wished to distribute. Nevertheless, because of the carry-over of the old system, some 20 percent of the areas in Singapore have more than one vendor (Lum & Khoo, 1998).

As the distribution system has several layers of managers, most of whom are not employees of the company, several layers of commissions are also involved. In 1990, some vendors met with the SPH to discuss establishing a distribution enterprise. But neither the company nor the vendors could agree on the terms. Eventually, the company drew up a joint distribution center scheme to distribute the papers in the new housing estates. The more than

100 vendors under the scheme collect the newspapers directly from the printing plant, instead of through a middleman. The profit margin for these vendors is lower but the delivery volume is guaranteed (Lum & Khoo, 1998).

Today's vendors are still independent contractors, not employees. Vendors generally get about 30 percent of the cover price of the newspapers. At that rate, a vendor who distributes to 1,000 homes (they are reluctant to distribute more) can expect a take-home pay of S\$5,400 (US\$3,300). In 1990, the company started the system of direct outlet sales through outlets such as petrol kiosk chains, supermarkets, convenience stores and pharmacy chains-now exceeding 400 (Lum & Khoo, 1998).

4. Broadcast media

4.1 Policy and legal framework

The laws for the broadcast media are modeled after those related to the print media. Broadcasting, even over the Internet, is licensed. Unless waived by the MDA, no person can hold more than 3 percent of shares in a broadcasting company; the chief executive officer and at least half the board of directors must be Singapore citizens; and no foreign funding of more than 49 percent of the capital of the company is allowed.

4.2 Structure and organization

Radio programming was for many decades the ambit of a department in the government service. In 1980, the department, Radio-Television Singapore, was transformed into a statutory company, Singapore Broadcasting Corporation (SBC), to give it with greater autonomy and flexibility in personnel, financial and production matters. This marked the beginning of more locally produced programs. In 1984, SBC started Channel 12 to provide an extra dimension with documentaries, cultural performances and works, drama, art-house movies, educational programs and sports.

In 1994, in a major exercise to restructure the broadcasting industry to face a more competitive environment, SBC was incorporatized to become Singapore International Media (SIM). This company included the Television Corporation Singapore (TCS), Singapore Television 12 (STV12), and Radio Corporation Singapore (RCS). In 2001, TCS became

MediaCorp TV and operates Channel 5 (an all-English language channel) and Channel 8 (an all-Chinese language channel). The station had played the role of the national station until the monopoly was broken in 2001.

Then the Singapore Government changed the rules in May 2001: it allowed the newspaper giant SPH to enter into the broadcasting industry and established the second TV station in Singapore's history – MediaWorks, with the Chinese channel U and English channel i. MediaWorks paved the way for the SPH group to develop into a full-fledged media company (Straits Times, 2001a April).

However, in 2004, to stem their losses, SPH MediaWorks and MediaCorp “merged” with MediaCorp taking over much of the operations and SPH became a de facto passive investor.

4.3 Programme policies

The MDA exercises censorship directly through a code of practice while the Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts does so indirectly. Under a penalty framework, announced in November 1998 and May 1999 respectively, breaches of the codes may result in a fine from S\$1,000 (US\$600) to S\$50,000 (US\$30,000), depending on severity.

To involve the community and incorporate its views, the MDA has set up several advisory committees. These include the Program Advisory Committee, as well as three advisory committees with specific responsibilities for programs in the three ethnic languages-Chinese, Malay and Tamil.

The local TV industry has seen two major changes in recent years: the introduction of greater competition through cable television; and the restructuring of the SBC in 1994 through privatization and the creation of several competitive companies.

The government has not dropped the ban on satellite dishes for private households despite its intent to enter the regional and international arena. In June 2003, the MDA allowed hotels and selected educational institutions to install satellite dishes or subscribe to satellite TV operators (Straits Times 2003 June). Before that only foreign embassies and financial institutions were allowed to install dishes. When the Gulf War broke out in 1991, Singapore financial institutions learned of it 30 seconds later than other international markets-the time difference between the CNN news announcement and the wire service

stories. The delay caused losses; and the government has allowed the financial institutions to use satellite dishes from then on (Hukill, 1996).

Cable television was introduced not only to provide such services but also to stave off competition from satellite TV broadcasters. Singapore CableVision (SCV) was formed in April 1992 to start and manage the new subscription television service. Its shareholders are the Singapore Press Holdings (20 percent), government-linked Singapore Technologies Ventures (24 percent), Singapore International Media (31 percent) and Continental Cablevision-USA (25 percent). SCV kicked off Singapore's first pay TV service on the UHF band in April 1992. Because public housing flats, in which 80 percent of Singaporeans live, had difficulty receiving the UHF signals, and also because of its high price, the service failed to do well. However, in June 1995, SCV was also licensed to operate cable television delivering 50 channels. In 2006, this service was offering some 120 channels.

Cable television is part of a wider attempt by the Singapore government to wire the island for the Information Age. Broadband access is available through the cable television service provider. On 10 May 2007, StarHub, the sole cable television operator in Singapore, announced that Cable TV customer base grew 8% to 490,000, registering a household penetration of 43.6%. Meanwhile, the number of customer taking the digital Cable service climbed to 342,000 households compared 40.5% the year before, representing 70% of the total Cable TV customer base (StarHub, 2007).

The trend in the TV industry is toward local productions, which increased by 60 percent between 1994 and 1995. Channel8, the Mandarin channel, produces an average of 600 hours of sitcoms, drama series and variety shows per year, making it the TV station with the highest production record in the world. In recent years, Channel5, the English language channel, has also begun to produce successful English comedies modeled on U.S. sitcoms but with a strong local flavor.

In 1997, TV12 began funding a series of local productions under a scheme to encourage independent local production houses to produce for the broadcast industry. It funds each half-hour episode to the tune of about S\$20,000 (US\$14,000). Although the amount does not match the minimum corporate video rates of S\$40,000 for one-half hour, it is a start to get more local TV productions. The former SBC hardly used any independent local productions. The scheme is an attempt by the Singapore government

to encourage local content in the move to make Singapore a broadcasting and production hub.

The encouragement of local TV productions is a part of the strategic thrusts of the MDA. As stated on Media 21 Blueprint (2003), the MDA envisions Singapore as a Global Media City where not only nurtures homegrown media enterprises but also attracts direct foreign investments. In line with its vision, the MDA lays out six strategies, including establishing Singapore a media exchange, exporting made-by-Singapore content, deploying digital media, internationalizing Singapore media enterprises, augmenting media talent, and fostering a conducive business and regulatory environment (MDA, 2003).

As the MDA and the Economic Development Board are working to promote Singapore as a regional broadcasting hub, an influx of some 20 international cable and satellite programmers has occurred since 1993 (Straits Times, 2001 October). More competition continues to be injected into the cable TV industry. For instance, in 2006, two new pay-TV players, Reeltime Media Ltd and OBSTV Asia, were awarded licences by the MDA. Reeltime Media tends to offer a wide selection of movies from big studios such as Sony Pictures and Fox, while OBSTU Asia focuses on providing a diverse spectrum of TV channels from Korean and Japan. The entry of new service providers brings about greater choice of content and entertainment programmes to consumers in Singapore (MDA, 2006).

4.4 Ownership and financing

MediaCorp TV12 owns and manages Suria, which features Malay-and Indian-language programmes and Central, which features cultural, arts, sports and public service programmes, mostly in English. Both stations are subsidised by the government. However, the government, in line with its philosophy of minimal, if any, subsidies, has urged the company to consider producing programs that they could sell to neighboring countries.

MediaCorp Radio operates major radio stations to serve both local and international audiences. Singapore has 18 radio channels; MediaCorp Radio owns and manages 10 local and three international channels. Of the others, the umbrella union organization, National

Trades Union Congress, operates two channels; a military-related organization, SAFRA (Singapore Armed Forces Reservist Association) Radio, operates two. The BBC World Service is the only foreign radio station in Singapore. It runs one FM channel on a 24-hour basis (the only 24-hour BBC station in the world) and uses Singapore as a base for short-wave relays to the region.

SCV's subscription television service began in 1992 with three channels: a news channel (NewsVision), an English movie channel (MovieVision) and a Mandarin entertainment channel (VarietyVision). It began operating the current 50-channel capable cable TV service in June 1995. Video-on-demand trials by Singapore Telecom have been on since February 1996.

Unlike the newspaper industry, Singapore's broadcasting industry has embraced competition. In 1997, some 26 companies—including ABN, BBC Worldwide, Discovery Asia, ESPN Asia, HBO, MTV Asia and Walt Disney—were uplinking their programs from Singapore. Under the Singapore Broadcasting Authority Act, broadcasting licensees must have at least 51 percent local ownership; this rule is waived in the case of satellite broadcasters, whose main businesses are in regional markets.

5. New electronic media

5.1 Internet and on-line media

Singapore was the second country in Southeast Asia, after Malaysia, to offer public Internet access in July 1994. In typical Singapore style, once the decision was made to adopt, the Internet diffused very quickly. In March 1995, Singapore became the first country in the world to set up a national Internet Web site, Singapore InfoMap (<http://www.sg>). However, also in typical Singapore style, there was concern that Internet content could be destructive of the values that Singapore intended to uphold. In July 1996 regulation, the Singapore Broadcasting Authority, announced new rules and the Class Licensing Scheme to regulate the Internet content. The new Internet regulations stirred a major controversy and received wide publicity all over the world. It portrayed Singapore as a country attempting to regulate what many described as impossible to regulate. However, since then, no one has yet been

prosecuted under the SBA rules although two political discussion sites have closed (Tan, 2001).

Under the Class Licensing Scheme, all website owners are first deemed to have a licence to operate the site. Those who breach the regulations attached to the licence will then have the licence withdrawn. Webmasters of political parties, religious organizations and subscription electronic newspapers have an additional requirement that they must register with the authorities (SBA, 1998). The SBA set up the National Internet Advisory Committee (NIAC) in October 1996 to help with the task of looking into both regulating and promoting the Internet, addressing key issues of industry development, public education and legal matters (SBA Annual Report 1997/1998). In September 1997, the NIAC released its first report, which recommended revising the Code of Practice for clarity and proposed strategies on creating multi-lingual content and the development of Singapore as an Internet hub. In response, SBA revised the code and issued a set of industry guidelines that explained the main features of the Internet regulatory policies. A policy switch has occurred that has changed SBA's "tough" image to that of an "enlightened regulator." In its own words, "SBA sets in place a light-touch regulatory framework that is consultative, pro-business and transparent to the industry.... SBA encourages the industry to take the initiative to self-regulate and set [its] own standards" (SBA Annual Report 1997/1998).

As a part of the policy to encourage self-regulation, SBA required the three Internet service providers (ISPs) to offer a Family Access Network (FAN) in 1998. The filtering service offers the possibility of blocking more than 500,000 mostly pornographic sites. The network purchases the domain names of the sites from commercial companies in the United States. Subscription is voluntary and costs more than the uncensored network (Hoong, 1998).

Internet penetration has grown quickly in Singapore. According to the annual survey conducted by IDA, by November 2006 in Singapore, 78% of Singapore households had access to a home computer and almost 9 in 10 households with school-going children had home computers. Correspondingly, 71% of households had home Internet access, of which almost all (97%) used computers as the equipment to access Internet at home while 9% used Internet-enabled mobile phones (IDA, 2007b). By May 2007, the total Internet

subscriptions was 2,318,300, including broadband Internet subscriptions 846,800 and dial-up Internet subscriptions 1,471,500 (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2007). Broadband penetration among households reached 69.2% and Internet dial-up penetration was 32.8% (IDA, 2007c).

5.2 Telecommunications infrastructure

Singapore's fixed line household penetration in 2006 was 98.4% (IDA, 2007a), up from 39 per 100 people in 1990 (ITU, 1998). The total fixed line subscriptions reached 1,851,000 (IDA, 2007a). The market for mobile cellular and paging services was liberalized in April 1997, when one cellular phone company and three paging companies began service in competition with Singapore Telecom. In 2006, the total mobile phone subscriptions rose to 4,637,700 with mobile phone penetration 103.4%. Along with rapid spread of mobile phone, the total paging services users dropped fleetly with paging subscriptions from 222,100 in 2003 to 47,000 in 2006 and penetration from 5.3% in 2003 to 1.0% in 2006 (IDA, 2003, 2007a).

No barriers exist to import telecom equipment. The telecommunication industry has been liberalised, when the incumbent Singapore Telecom's monopoly on basic services ended and two more licences were granted for the provision of basic telecom services. Licensees have to satisfy the criterion of having at least 51 percent local shareholding.

6. Policy trends for press and broadcasting

Singapore's demographic features of ethnic and linguistic diversity have a significant bearing on the media system. Living in a densely populated urban area, Singaporeans are known to be ardent media consumers. For example, Singapore's cinema attendance in 2003 was 3,840.94 per 1,000 people, which ranked 6th in the world, just between Australia (5th) and Canada (7th) and among the highest per capita cinema attendance in the world (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2003). In 2005, a total of 1.5 million cinema attendance was recorded, indicating an average number of cinema attendance 3.5 per person (Singapore

Department of Statistics, 2006c). However, its small population base produces only a modest advertising revenue, which the various media categories have to share. The problem of a small population base is compounded by the division of audiences into various language streams, mainly between English and Chinese. The media face the challenge to continuously compete with one another and expand their respective audiences. As the size of the pie can only grow to a certain extent, competition becomes keen for each to claim a bigger share of the pie. Unfortunately, this is sometimes achieved at the expense of quality.

Singapore society's opening up to the international media, with the introduction of cable television and the growing number of Internet users, compounds the challenge. Many major international media players are moving into Singapore, responding to the attractive policy measures the Singapore government has offered to develop the country into a communication and telecommunications hub. Local media are responding to the challenge through diversification (e.g., SPH) and internationalization (e.g., MediaCorp).

Meanwhile, many Asian countries are also competing against Singapore by positioning themselves as hubs for media and information services. Of immediate concern to Singapore is Malaysia's Multimedia Super Corridor—a project to build a Silicon Valley of high-technology companies on a tract of land larger than the whole of Singapore. Malaysian authorities have also indicated that they will adopt a more open approach, for example, by not attempting centralized control of the Internet and by offering incentive packages to companies. Such developments bring interesting challenges to Singapore and the region.

Against this background of vibrant competition and rapid development is the political culture of Singapore, often characterized as Confucian, paternalistic and “neo-authoritarian.” Singapore government enforces a set of strict media-related laws and maintains one of most stringent censorship standards among the developed economies. (Circulation and possession of Playboy is illegal.) The leaders justify these laws and measures by stressing the uniqueness and vulnerability of Singapore society, as well as a set of characteristically Singaporean Asian values *vis-a-vis* Western or Western-influenced values.

One can summarize the rationale behind such a position thus: First, freedom is relative-not absolute, universal or “inherent.” No freedom exists without responsibility. Second, because elected government receives the people's mandate, it can define the responsibility of the press, as well as the limits of press freedom. Ultimately, it is the

government, not the media, that is accountable to the people. Hence, the government has both the legal and moral authority to act as the final arbiter when a disagreement arises between the government and the media. Moreover, this level of government control of the media is justifiable because Singapore, in particular, is vulnerable as a new nation with a multiracial and multireligious population. National survival and consensus building are accepted as top priorities at this stage of nation building.

A process of evolutionary development has brought about a symbiotic relationship between the media and the state. Singapore media have adopted the development journalism model thereby playing an important role in nation building. The media take a pro-government and pro-establishment stance, and they justify it by pointing that people have backed the good work of the government by re-electing continuously since Singapore's self-government in 1959. A noted journalist has observed that "being pro-establishment is not only the most practical stand to adopt but also an intellectually and morally defensible one" (George, 1993, p.132). It is as much out of conviction as out of necessity.

More recently, however, signs have emerged to show that the prevailing system has become increasingly untenable. First, the pressure on instituting a more open information system has come from a new generation of Singaporeans. They have lived through years of prosperity and development, are better educated and better informed, have traveled widely, and are more critical of government policies and more demanding of the role of the media. While the PAP government should rightly be credited for the success of making Singapore a showcase of prosperity and development, it has to face a more demanding electorate that is a consequence of its own success.

Indeed some structural contradictions, and hence tensions, exist in Singapore. The current state of censorship and control of communication media is maintained against an open and mobile backdrop of a society, where citizens come into frequent contact with tourists and visitors of all national and cultural backgrounds. International travel has increasingly become a part of Singapore's middle-class lifestyle. Moreover, no restrictions exist for Singaporeans who may choose to emigrate in search of greener pastures. Those who do tend to be well educated, fluent in English and professionally mobile—the very people Singapore wants to keep. They will continue to exert pressure toward liberalization and would want to make their votes count.

Another dimension of structural contradiction is manifested in the tension between the open free market economic system under which Singapore thrives and a media system that operates under external (government) and internal (self-imposed) constraints. The government has tried to manage the contradiction by separating different categories of information and treating them differently. It gives priority to financial news, which it considers essential for the economic system to remain globally competitive. The official attitude toward cultural and entertainment information, on the other hand, is ambivalent: Surveys consistently find that a majority support existent censorship. And officials view censorship of culture and entertainment as both justifiable and necessary. This compartmentalization is reflected in the current policy of granting permits to set up satellite antennae to hotels and financial institutions (in addition to diplomatic missions) on the basis that they need such information to make themselves competitive internationally.

Such ambiguity clashes head on with the government's goal of transforming Singapore into a global city, a center of international trade, finance and banking, and an international hub for information, culture and telecommunications. The government has encouraged foreign multi-media companies to set up operation in Singapore and use it as a regional production or distribution center. The cultivation of an open and friendly media culture and environment is essential for Singapore to become competitive in playing such a regional role.

Meanwhile, in response to the changing technological development, Singapore has launched five consecutive National IT Plan so far, namely, National Computerisation Plan (1980-1985), National IT Plan (1986-1991), IT2000 (1992-1999), e-Government Action Plan I & Infocomm 21 (2000-2003), e-Government Action Plan II & Connected Singapore (2003- To date). The far-sighted national information technology plans have successfully been converting Singapore into the Information Age with much emphasis on information technology. Building on the earlier e-Government plans, Singapore is now making efforts to achieve a new 5-year masterplan called iGov2010, which launched in May 2006 with the purpose of bringing about an integrated Government that delights customers and citizens through the use of infocomm technology (IDA, 2006).

Advances and availability of new communication technologies have threatened the near-monopoly of the traditional media in Singapore. The new Singapore CableVision

(SCV) is already bringing a choice of more than 40 channels to the living rooms of many households. All major international news channels, including CNN, BBC and CNBC, are available to cable TV subscribers. Even here, the hand of the government shows up: the MDA, the regulatory authority, has to approve all SCV channels. This mild form of control may not be viable for very long because technology in satellite communications is advancing at such rapid speed that it will soon be impossible to censure the installation of miniature antennae to receive direct satellite broadcasting.

Perhaps more significant than others, the rapid expansion of the Internet is quickly changing the scene of communication and information management in Singapore. More than any other form of modern information technology, the growth of Internet users makes it blatantly obvious that censorship and control of information flow is becoming untenable and may well prove self-defeating (Yeo & Mahizhnan, 1998).

The government leaders have recognized the changing scene well. Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, in a landmark speech at the Asian Media Conference in Los Angeles in October 1998, stressed the impact of the new media on politics. He pointed out: “Information technology, in particular the Internet, has made it impossible for inconvenient news to be suppressed for long.” Thus, governments “have to work with the technology, not suppress it. Governments that try to fight the new technology will lose Indeed, information technology is rapidly undermining whatever monopoly control of the media governments might have known. Thus, along with the official view, many other views are available and known.” Under the circumstances, he suggested, the best that governments can do is “to require the official view to be carried in the media, along with other views over which they have no control” (The Straits Times, Oct. 31 and Nov.2, 1998).

What was significant in Lee’s speech was not so much his insights on the impact of new information technology, but the fact he made it, suggesting a clear change in media policy and the direction Singapore media should go. The challenge ahead is the management of the process of liberalization, striking a balance between change and stability. This is as true of Singapore as of many other Asian countries.

7. Main issues

One issue Singapore and most other countries in the region face is the shortage of trained and experienced media personnel, as they are highly mobile, and often cross borders. In Singapore's case, training of media personnel has so far been targeted at entry-level and technical positions, while relying on foreign expertise to fill the managerial and creative positions. This dependency may continue for several years before local talent emerges to take the lead in the broadcasting industry, particularly in production and content creation. Measures to expedite the process through intra-regional training courses are necessary. Singapore is positioned to offer such training through the School of Communication and Information at Nanyang Technological University and the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre.

Another major issue that Singapore will need to resolve is the tension between the tight regulation of the media, on the one hand, and the desire to be the media hub of Southeast Asia, to be an intelligent island and to have a creative citizenry, on the other. According to the Freedom House's surveys, press freedom in Singapore ranks 144th in 2003, 147th in 2004, 140th in 2005, 146th in 2006, 154th as of May 2007. Freedom House (Freedom House, 2007) placed Singapore in the "not free" category of press restriction with a score of 69 out of 100—lower than Malaysia's 68 and Indonesia's 54. This score is based on three criteria:

- The legal environment: laws and regulations that influence media content as well as the government's inclination to use these laws to restrict the ability of media to operate (on which Singapore scored 24 out of 30);
- The political environment: political control over the content of news media (on which Singapore scored 24 out of 40);
- The economic environment: economic pressures on the media, including the structure of media ownership; the costs of establishing media as well as of production and distribution; the selective withholding of advertising or subsidies by the state or other actors, etc. (on which Singapore scored 21 out of 30).

As pointed out by Freedom House, "press freedom in Singapore media is constrained to such a degree that the vast majority of journalists practice self-censorship rather than risk

being charged with defamation or breaking the country’s criminal laws on permissible speech” (Freedom House, 2007). Being more interested in improving Singapore’s ranking in other aspects such as governance, economic development, worker productivity and so on, the Singapore government holds the opinion that the liberal agenda of the Western media are not suitable to Singapore national situation. However, as Yeo & Mahizhnan (1998) have argued, censorship and other similar forms of media regulation are ultimately incompatible with the kind of society that Singapore wants to develop: well-informed, cultured and sophisticated. It is hard to envisage an Intelligent Island emerging from such controls.

A related tension is that between media control and commitment to free market economics. As Gunaratne (2000) points out, the World Economic Forum ranked Singapore (first) and Hong Kong (second) at the top of global competitiveness both in 1997 and 1998 based on eight criteria: openness, government, finance, technology, infrastructure, management, labor and institutions. Although the media monopolies in Singapore are well run, an issue debated internationally is whether economic efficiency is sufficient for a country. That is, can Singapore continue to thrive in the Information Age with concentrated albeit efficient media companies?

Lee Kuan Yew’s 1998 landmark statement that censorship might be a futile exercise in the Information Age suggests another one of the regular reviews of the press law (Nair, 1989). Such a review could augur changes not just in the law but also in the structure of the Singapore media. The slow but sure liberalization of the media has begun and can only accelerate if Singapore is to be a world-beating city.

8. Statistics

Basic data on Singapore

(a) General

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Exchange rate (May 2007) | US\$1=S\$1.51851 |
| Total population (Mid-2006) ('000) | 4,483.9 |
| Singapore residents (Mid-2006) ('000) | 3,608.5 |
| Population density (2006) (Persons per sq km) | 6,369 |
| Annual growth (%) | 3.3 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| Urban population | 100% |
| Land area (2006) (Sq km) | 704 |
| Sex ratio (Males per 1,000 females) | 982 |

Source: Singapore Department of Statistics (2006b). Yearbook of Statistics Singapore 2006.

Available: <http://www.singstat.gov.sg/pdtsvc/pubn/yos.html> [May 8, 2007].

(b) Vital statistics

| Statistics as at 2006 | Male | Female | Total |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
| Life expectancy at birth | 78 | 82 | 80 |
| Infant mortality rate | 2.5 per 1,000 live births | | |
| Population growth rate | 1.8 % | | |
| Population density | 6,369 persons per sq. km | | |

Source: Singapore Department of Statistics (2006b). Yearbook of Statistics Singapore 2006.

Available: <http://www.singstat.gov.sg/pubn/reference/yos.html> [May 8, 2007].

(c) Language (2006)

| Languages (at home) | % |
|---------------------|------|
| English | 23.0 |
| Mandarin | 35.0 |
| Chinese Dialects | 23.8 |
| Malay | 14.1 |
| Tamil | 3.2 |
| Others | 0.9 |

Source: Singapore Census of Population, 2006. Available:

<http://www.singstat.gov.sg/papers/c2000/adr-literacy.pdf>

Social indicators

Education (2005)

| Educational level | No. of | Student |
|-------------------|--------|---------|
|-------------------|--------|---------|

| | Institutions | Population |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Primary | 178 | 290,261 |
| Secondary | 164 | 213,063 |
| Pre-University | 18 | 28,901 |
| Institute of Technical Education | 3 | 21,603 |
| Polytechnics | 5 | 64,422 |
| National Institute of Education | 1 | 3,676 |
| Universities | 3 | 59,441 |
| Total | 372 | 681,367 |

Source: Singapore Department of Statistics (2006b). Yearbook of Statistics Singapore 2006. Available: <http://www.singstat.gov.sg/pubn/reference/yos/statsT-education.pdf> [July 27, 2007].

Basic data on media

(1) Cinema attendance (Mar 2007)

| Cinema capacity and attendance | Number |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| Cinema halls | 139 |
| Cinema capacity ('000) | 38 |
| Cinema attendance ('000) | 1,520.4 |

Source: Monthly Digest of Statistic of Singapore (April 2007). Available: <http://www.singstat.gov.sg/pdtsvc/pubn/softcopy/mds.pdf> [May 14, 2007].

(3) Television /Cable TV (2006)

| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| TV licenses issued | 890,400 |
| Cable Vision subscribers | 448,000 |

Source: Singapore Department of Statistics (2006b). Yearbook of Statistics Singapore 2006. Available: <http://www.singstat.gov.sg/pdtsvc/pubn/yos.html> [May 8, 2007].

New electronic media

(1) Number of Internet (broadband) subscribers

| | Dial-up Internet | Broadband |
|----------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 2005 | 1,618,100 | 638,700 |
| 2006 | 1,522,400 | 768,300 |
| May 2007 | 1,514,500 | 846,800 |

Source: Monthly Digest of Statistic Singapore (July 2007). Available:
<http://www.singstat.gov.sg/pubn/reference/mds.pdf> [Aug 28, 2007].

(2) Telecommunications facts

| Telecommunications facts | |
|--|-----------|
| Telephone subscribers (as at Feb 2007) | 1,853,700 |
| Mobile phone subscribers (as at Feb 2007) | 4,729,700 |
| Pager Subscribers (as at Feb 2007) | nil |

Source: Monthly Digest of Statistic of Singapore (April 2007). Available:
<http://www.singstat.gov.sg/pdtsvc/pubn/softcopy/mds.pdf> [May 14, 2007].

9. Useful addresses

- Media Development Authority
140 Hill Street, #04-01 MICA Building, Singapore 179369
Tel: (65) 6837 9973
Fax: (65) 6336 8023
URL: <http://www.mda.gov.sg/>
- Singapore Press Holdings (Head Office)
Address: 1000 Toa Payoh North, News Centre, Singapore 318994

Telephone: (65) 6319 6319

Facsimile: (65) 6319 8282

Email: sphcorp@sph.com.sg

Website: www.sph.com.sg

- The Straits Times/Sunday Times

1000 Toa Payoh North, News Centre, Singapore 318994

Tel: (65) 6319-6319

Fax: (65) 6732-0131

E-mail: stlocal@sph.com.sg

URL: <http://straitstimes.asia1.com.sg/>

- The Business Times

1000 Toa Payoh North, News Centre, Singapore 318994

Tel: (65) 6319-6319

Fax: (65) 6319-8277

E-mail: btnews@sph.com.sg

URL: <http://business-times.asia1.com.sg/>

- The New Paper

1000 Toa Payoh North, News Centre, Singapore 318994

Tel: (65) 6319 6319

Hotline: 1800 733 4455

Fax: (65) 6319 8266

Email: tnp@sph.com.sg

URL: <http://newpaper.asia1.com.sg/>

- Berita Harian/Berita Minggu

1000 Toa Payoh North, News Centre, Singapore 318994

Tel: (65) 6319 6319

Fax: (65) 6319 8255

Email: aadeska@sph.com.sg

- Tamil Murasu

82 Genting Lane, Singapore 349567

Tel: (65) 6319 6319

Fax: (65) 6319 4001

- Lianhe Zaobao

82 Genting Lane, News Center Level 3, Singapore 349567.

Tel: (65) 6319 6319

Fax: (65) 6319 8122

Email: zblocal@sph.com.sg

- Lianhe Wanbao

82 Genting Lane, News Center Level 3, Singapore 349567.

Tel: (65) 6319 6319

Fax: (65) 6319 8133

Email: wanbao@sph.com.sg

- Shin Min Daily News

82 Genting Lane, News Center Level 2, Singapore 349567.

Tel: (65) 6319 6319

Fax: (65) 6319 8166/8165

Email: shinmin@sph.com.sg

- MediaCorp Pte Ltd

Caldecott Broadcast Centre, Andrew Road. Singapore 299939.

Tel: (65) 6333 3888

Fax: (65) 6251 5628

Website: www.mediacorp.sg

- MediaCorp TV Singapore Pte Ltd

Caldecott Broadcast Centre, Andrew Road. Singapore 299939.

Tel: (65) 6333 3888

Fax: (65) 6251 5628

Website: www.mediacorptv.com

- MediaCorp TV12 Singapore Pte Ltd

12 Prince Edward Road, #05-00 Bestway Building. Singapore 079212.

Tel: (65) 6225 8133

Fax: (65) 6220 3881

Website: www.mediacorptv12.sg

- MediaCorp News Pte Ltd

Caldecott Broadcast Centre, Andrew Road. Singapore 299939.

Tel: (65) 6333 3888

Fax: (65) 6251 5628

Website: www.mediacorpnews.sg

- MediaCorp Radio Singapore Pte Ltd

Caldecott Broadcast Centre, Andrew Road. Singapore 299939.

Tel: (65) 6333 3888

Fax: (65) 6251 5628

Website: www.mediacorpradio.sg

- MediaCorp Press Pte Ltd

24 Raffles Place, #28-01/06 Clifford Centre. Singapore 048621.

Tel: (65) 6236 4886

Fax: (65) 6534 2566

Website: www.mediacorppress.sg

- MediaCorp Publishing Pte Ltd

10 Ang Mo Kio St 65, #01-06/08 Techpoint, Conference Room

Website: www.mediacorppublishing.sg

- MediaCorp Studio Pte Ltd

Caldecott Broadcast Centre, Andrew Road. Singapore 299939.

Tel: (65) 6333 3888

Fax: (65) 6251 5628

Website: www.mediacorpstudios.sg

- MediaCorp Technologies Pte Ltd

Caldecott Broadcast Centre, Andrew Road. Singapore 299939.

Tel: (65) 6333 3888

Fax: (65) 6251 5628

Website: www.mediacorptechnologies.sg

- NTUC Voice

510 SLF Building, #B1-02, Thomson Road, Singapore 298135.

Tel: (65) 6353-6100

Fax: (65) 6353-6864

Rediffusion (S) Pte Ltd

6 Harper Road, #04-01/08, Leong Huat Building, Singapore 369674.

Tel: 6383-2633

Fax: (65) 6383-2622

E-mail: rediprogram@pacific.net.sg

URL: <http://www.rediffusion.com.sg/>

- SAFRA Radio

Mailing Address: Bukit Merah Central, PO Box 1315, Singapore 911599

Tel: (65) 6373 1924

Fax: (65) 6278 3039

URL: <http://power98.com.sg/>

- SingTel

Singapore Telecommunications Ltd.

20 Pickering St., #32-00 Picketing Operations Complex, Singapore 048658.

Main line: +65 6838 3388

Main fax: +65 6732 8428

E-mail: help@singnet.com.sg

URL: <http://www.singnet.com.sg/>

- Pacific Internet

89 Science Park Drive, #01-07 The Rutherford, Singapore Science Park, Singapore 118261

Tel: (65) 6226-8668

Fax: (65) 6872-6347

E-mail: help@pacific.net.sg

URL: <http://www.pacific.net.sg/>

- Starhub

51 Cuppage Road
StarHub Centre, #07-00
Singapore 229469
Tel: (65) 67735088
Fax: (65) 68708888
URL: <http://www.starhub.com/index.html>

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