



## EVOLUTION AND CLASSIFICATION OF GLOBAL MASS MEDIA SYSTEMS

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**Abstract.** *This article examines the evolution and systematic classification of global mass media systems, identifying six primary categories based on audience engagement, distribution methods, and technological traits: traditional, print, outdoor, transit, electronic, and digital media. By synthesising the perspectives of Marshall McLuhan and Manuel Castells, the research evaluates the functional strengths and limitations of each medium, from the cultural preservation inherent in traditional oral forms to the high interactivity of new media. The analysis demonstrates that while technological progress has compressed spatial and temporal boundaries, the enduring relevance of traditional and print formats remains vital for maintaining social solidarity and analytical depth in contemporary communication.*

**Key words:** *mass media, media systems, classification, audience engagement, technological progress, digital media, social solidarity.*

**Аннотация.** *В статье рассматриваются эволюция и систематическая классификация глобальных систем массовой информации. На основе критериев вовлечённости аудитории, способов распространения и технологических характеристик выделяются шесть основных категорий медиа: традиционные, печатные, наружные, транспортные, электронные и цифровые. Посредством синтеза теоретических взглядов Маршалла Маклюэна и Мануэля Кастельса проводится оценка функциональных преимуществ и ограничений каждого вида медиа — от сохранения культурного наследия в традиционных устных формах до высокой интерактивности новых медиа. Анализ показывает, что несмотря на сжатие пространственно-временных границ вследствие технологического прогресса, традиционные и печатные форматы сохраняют свою значимость для поддержания социальной солидарности и аналитической глубины в современной коммуникации.*

**Ключевые слова:** *средства массовой информации, медийные системы, классификация, вовлечённость аудитории, технологический прогресс, цифровые медиа, социальная солидарность.*



*Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada global ommaviy axborot vositalari tizimlarining evolyutsiyasi va ularning tizimli tasnifi tahlil qilinadi. Auditoriya bilan o'zaro aloqasi, tarqatish usullari hamda texnologik xususiyatlariga ko'ra ommaviy axborot vositalari oltita asosiy toifaga ajratiladi: an'anaviy, bosma, tashqi (outdoor), transport (transit), elektron va raqamli media. Marshall Maklyuen va Manuel Kastellsning nazariy qarashlari sintez qilinib, har bir media turining funksional ustunliklari va cheklovlari baholanadi: an'anaviy og'zaki shakllarga xos madaniy merosni saqlash imkoniyatlaridan tortib, yangi medianing yuqori darajadagi interaktivligigacha. Tadqiqot natijalari shuni ko'rsatadiki, texnologik taraqqiyot makon va zamon chegaralarini qisqartirgan bo'lsa-da, zamonaviy kommunikatsiyada ijtimoiy birdamlik va tahliliy chuqurlikni ta'minlashda an'anaviy va bosma formatlarning dolzarbligi hanuz saqlanib qolmoqda.*

**Kalit so'zlar:** *ommaviy axborot vositalari, media tizimlari, tasnif, auditoriya bilan o'zaro aloqa, texnologik taraqqiyot, raqamli media, ijtimoiy birdamlik.*

## INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era, mass media serves as a fundamental pillar for disseminating information, shaping public opinion, preserving cultural heritage, and facilitating complex social interactions. According to the sources, these systems are systematically categorised into six primary types based on their technological characteristics, distribution methods, and modes of audience engagement: traditional, print, outdoor (out-of-home), transit, electronic (broadcast), and digital (new) media. This classification is not merely a technical list but represents an integrative approach that reflects the historical evolution of communication technologies and their intersection with advertising practices.

The theoretical framework for understanding this evolution is largely rooted in the work of Marshall McLuhan, who posited that "the medium is the message," arguing that the form of a medium is as significant as the content it carries in influencing human thought. Historically, the transition from print media, which fostered linear and analytical thinking through stable written technology, to electronic media, such as radio and television, fundamentally altered social relations. The latter allowed for real-time delivery to vast, geographically dispersed audiences, giving rise to the concept of the "global village".

In the modern landscape, the emergence of digital media has further transformed the communicative space. Grounded in Manuel Castells' concept of the "network society," this stage of evolution is defined by information flows and



digital networks where the audience has transitioned from passive receivers into active participants. Despite the rapid ascent of interactive digital platforms, traditional forms like print continue to provide analytical depth and credibility, while traditional oral and performative media remain vital for social solidarity and cultural continuity within local communities. This article examines these six media categories to understand their functional roles, technological strengths, and the ongoing challenges of information overload and digital literacy in an increasingly networked world.

Main body. According to several researches, mass media can be categorised into six primary types based on how they engage audiences, their methods of distribution, and their technological characteristics:

1. Traditional Media
2. Print Media
3. Outdoor (Out-of-Home) Media
4. Transit Media
5. Electronic (Broadcast) Media
6. Digital or New Media

These forms are essential not only for disseminating information but also for shaping public opinion, preserving culture, and facilitating social interaction.

#### Theoretical Foundations and Evolution

This classification is not the product of a single theoretical model but represents an integrative approach reflecting technological progress and the interaction between communication and advertising practices. A key theoretical basis is Marshall McLuhan's idea that media technologies influence social relations and human thought; his concept "the medium is the message" asserts that the form of the media is as significant as the content itself.

**Print Media:** Based on written technology, it allowed for stable, linear information transfer, fostering individual and analytical thinking.

**Electronic/Broadcast Media:** Through radio and television, this shifted information to real-time delivery for wide audiences, shrinking boundaries of time and space and creating a "global village".

**Digital/New Media:** Representing the latest stage of evolution, this is explained through Manuel Castells' "network society" concept, where modern society is interpreted as a communicative space dominated by digital networks and information flows.



### Detailed Characteristics of Media Types

Media Type	Form of Delivery	Main Function	Audience Reach	Interactivity
Traditional	Oral / Performative	Cultural transmission	Local	Low
Print	Written	Information / Education	Regional / National	Low
Electronic	Audio-visual	Information / Entertainment	National / Global	Low
Outdoor	Visual advertising	Attracting attention	Public places	Very low
Transit	Visual	Brand awareness	Moving audience	Very low
Digital	Multimedia / Online	Information / Communication	Global	High

#### Specific Media Insights

**Print Media:** Includes newspapers, magazines, books, and journals. While newspapers offer speed and wide reach, they are often short-lived and may not reach illiterate populations. Magazines provide deep analytical content for niche audiences but face higher production costs. Despite the rise of digital tools, print remains vital due to its credibility and analytical depth.

**Electronic Media:** Television provides a powerful emotional impact through the harmony of sound, colour, and movement. Radio remains a critical tool in rural and developing societies due to its technical simplicity and cost-effectiveness, though its information is easily forgotten.

**Outdoor and Transit Media:** These rely on visual clarity and repetition to capture attention in public spaces or during travel. Their main limitation is the short duration of audience contact.

**Digital/New Media:** This medium has transformed the audience from passive receivers into active participants. It integrates various formats into a single environment (websites, social networks, podcasts), though it brings challenges such as information overload, security issues, and the need for digital literacy.

**Traditional Media:** Often consisting of oral folklore, folk songs, and ceremonies, it remains essential for social solidarity and cultural continuity, particularly within local communities.

**Conclusion.** The study of mass media systems reveals a complex, integrated ecosystem where historical forms and modern technologies coexist to



shape public discourse. As the sources indicate, the classification of media into six distinct types is not merely a technical exercise but a reflection of the interaction between technological progress and social practice. In conclusion, the six types of mass media provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how information is disseminated and how public opinion is formed. While electronic and digital tools have collapsed global boundaries, the specific roles of outdoor, transit, and traditional media ensure that communication remains embedded in the physical and cultural realities of daily life. Ultimately, the diversification of media channels enhances the capacity for global interaction while preserving the unique characteristics of local and analytical discourse.

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