****

9B17M125

Udaipur times: Strategy of a hyperlocal news website

Atul Arun Pathak and ShabbirHusain R.V. wrote this case solely to provide material for class discussion. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to protect confidentiality.

This publication may not be transmitted, photocopied, digitized, or otherwise reproduced in any form or by any means without the permission of the copyright holder. Reproduction of this material is not covered under authorization by any reproduction rights organization. To order copies or request permission to reproduce materials, contact Ivey Publishing, Ivey Business School, Western University, London, Ontario, Canada, N6G 0N1; (t) 519.661.3208; (e) cases@ivey.ca; www.iveycases.com.

Copyright © 2017, Richard Ivey School of Business Foundation Version: 2017-08-15

On August 30, 2016, Akhtar Bohra, the director of UdaipurTimes.com (UT), a hyperlocal news website based in Udaipur, India, reflected on his recent conversation with his friend Jeff Thomas, who was a partner at a leading management consulting firm. As Bohra excitedly described the early-stage journey of UT, Thomas had asked him some probing strategy-related questions that Bohra did not have answers to. The discussion made Bohra realize that UT did not have a clear strategy in place related to its marketing, personnel, and platform extension. He could foresee that the business was likely to stagnate soon unless strategic changes were initiated in each of these areas.

Thomas, however, was optimistic about UT’s prospects and mentioned that the hyperlocal news industry was doing quite well in many developed economies, with the likes of Patch,[[1]](#footnote-1) Media Wales,[[2]](#footnote-2) and Trinity Mirror[[3]](#footnote-3) successfully running popular hyperlocal websites across cities in the United States and the United Kingdom. Thomas felt that his media division partner would have a strong understanding of the hyperlocal new industry and could add a lot of value to UT. He offered to set up an initial meeting between Bohra and his media division partner in a week’s time. Thomas had mentioned earlier that his consulting firm occasionally provided *pro bono* (free) strategy consulting and mentorship to a few promising small businesses. Sensing the opportunity, Bohra immediately agreed. However, he realized that to benefit from the mentorship, he urgently needed to prepare, along with Zaheer Abbas, founder and editor-in-chief of UT, for this upcoming meeting with the consulting partner. In particular, they needed to focus on (a) whether or not to develop a mobile application for UT; (b) whether to increase the product portfolio on the UT website; and (c) how to increase the engagement of the current visitors who viewed the UT website.

Background

Udaipur

Udaipur was a city in the Indian state of Rajasthan with a population of around 450,000. As per the census 2011 data, the decadal population growth rate of Udaipur was around 16 per cent. It was known as the “city of lakes” and was a major tourist attraction. Hindi and Mewari were the major languages spoken in Udaipur. The literacy rate of Udaipur was approximately 90 per cent as per the 2011 census,[[4]](#footnote-4) compared to the national average of 75 per cent. Udaipur had a diversified economic base with major contributions coming from the tourism, agriculture, and mineral industries.[[5]](#footnote-5) Besides these, handicraft and cottage industry sectors also played a significant role in Udaipur’s economy. Tourism, however, was the main driver, with Udaipur being a major tourist destination for Indian nationals and foreigners alike. Udaipur annually received nearly 1.2 million tourists, and tourism was growing at a rate of 25 per cent per year.[[6]](#footnote-6) In fact, one of Udaipur’s premier hotels, The Oberoi Udaivilas, had been rated as the world’s top hotel in 2015.[[7]](#footnote-7) Udaipur had also been selected among the first list of 20 Smart Cities to be developed by the government of India under its Smart Cities Mission.[[8]](#footnote-8) A substantial number of people emigrated annually from Udaipur for higher education, jobs, or business opportunities. The exodus was both to other cities in India and out of India (primarily to the United States, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait). In general, the diaspora from Rajasthan, often referred to as either Rajasthanis or Marwaris, had spread to various parts of India and also emigrated globally to expand their business and trade networks.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Indian Diaspora

It was estimated that the total Indian diaspora that resided outside the country numbered about 25 million, with nearly 1.5 million living in the United Kingdom alone.[[10]](#footnote-10) Over the last six decades, a large number of Indians had also relocated to, migrated to, or settled in countries such as the United States, Malaysia, Canada, Mauritius, South Africa, Singapore, and various countries in the Middle East.[[11]](#footnote-11) The government of India was keen to ensure that non-resident Indians (NRIs) remained connected to their homeland and encouraged both cultural and economic exchanges between the diaspora and India. To encourage them to stay connected to India, the government issued Overseas Citizen of India cards to even those who had given up Indian citizenship. The Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (literally meaning Traveler Indian Day or Non-Resident Indian Day) was celebrated annually by the government of India at various locations in India and overseas. In recent years, various campaigns aimed at getting young NRIs to “know India” and to “recognize India” had been successfully conducted by the government of India. All these initiatives were likely to increase the curiosity, interest, and engagement of the affluent and highly knowledgeable Indian diaspora community toward India.[[12]](#footnote-12) Websites such as UT that provided up-to-date information about local happenings were likely to attract those Indians who originated from Udaipur City or the state of Rajasthan in general. The diaspora from Rajasthan were known to be well connected to their original roots and their traditions and culture. For instance, in 2011, the Rajasthan Association of North America, an association of people originally from the state of Rajasthan but currently residing in the United States, acquired at a cost of US$2.75 million a disused synagogue in Long Island, New York. It converted the synagogue into the Rajasthan Centre for Culture and Heritage, to be maintained as a place for the Rajasthani community’s social events, parties, festivals, and meetings.[[13]](#footnote-13)

Zaheer Abbas and Akhtar Bohra

Abbas was born and brought up in Udaipur. In 2000, he left Udaipur and worked for various organizations in New Delhi, Mumbai, and East Africa. Throughout this time, he missed his connection with Udaipur. Abbas had closely followed and actively participated in the evolution of social networks for over a decade. Before returning to India in 2010, Abbas worked as a social media columnist for *The Guardian* in Tanzania. Using this experience, he started UT to connect people who had links to Udaipur, but were living elsewhere, to their roots.

Bohra had obtained an MBA degree from Udaipur and had over 15 years of work experience in a variety of roles across operations, strategy, e-commerce, and risk management. He worked for almost a decade in the United Arab Emirates for a Swiss bank in the financial control division. He returned to Udaipur in 2008 and started his own outsourcing business. Bohra met Abbas in 2011 in an entrepreneurs’ meet-up, and they hit it off immediately. Abbas recalled:

Bohra had already come across UT and congratulated me for starting this venture. As we spoke, I was greatly impressed by his sharp business acumen. He was very curious about how I was running UT. He was also very willing to help and share his knowledge freely. We exchanged contacts and kept meeting off and on. Within a couple of months, we decided to become business partners in running UT. I believe that having Bohra on board made a great difference to where UT was headed.

International hyperlocal news industry

Hyperlocal journalism (also called micro-local journalism) related to the coverage of news and events pertaining to a town, postal code, or other small, geographically determined community. Hyperlocal news websites had seen varying degrees of success globally. In their early days, they were considered to be an innovative way of delivering community information. Many large global media giants had joined the hyperlocal wave, albeit with varying degrees of success. In 2009, MSNBC.com acquired a hyperlocal news website, EveryBlock.com, and AOL bought out two successful hyperlocal websites, Patch.com and Going.com.[[14]](#footnote-14) Hyperlocal websites, however, were not uniformly successful. While news websites like TheLocal.com, established by *The New York Times*, were doing well, AOL had sold off Patch.com in 2014 as Patch did not meet its internal expectations for web traffic and ad sales.[[15]](#footnote-15)

At the start-up stage, most hyperlocal websites operated on a shoestring budget. Their primary source of revenue was the sale of ads from local businesses that could not afford to pay substantial amounts for advertisements on mainstream news outlets. Research by Arizona State University Assistant Professor Monica Chadha[[16]](#footnote-16) showed that banner ads were the mainstays of hyperlocal sites, followed by grants. The study concluded that 40 per cent of hyperlocal sites had a multi-city presence and employed about 20 staff members. The research also noted that the staff members at most hyperlocal sites were young, well-educated, and tended to exhibit traditional journalistic behaviour.

Patch Media: Treating the United States Locally

The most well-known illustration of a hyperlocal enterprise was Patch Media. Patch had over 900 local and hyperlocal news websites spread across 23 U.S. states. It was primarily owned by Hale Global group and operated by Patch Media Corporation. Patch was founded in 2007 and acquired by AOL in 2009. It was later spun off by AOL in 2014, and a majority stake was sold off to Hale. With that sale, AOL’s stake dropped to marginally below 50 per cent.

Patch had over 23 million users in January 2016.[[17]](#footnote-17) The Patch network of community-specific sites consisted of everything from local news and weather updates to local school announcements. Patch operated with a very lean business model and only employed 125 full-time employees.

Warren St. John, Patch’s editor in chief, had once said that if hyperlocal was going to be a success then technology would have to be a major enabler. In line with its focus on the use of technology, e-mail notifications accounted for 20 per cent of inbound traffic at Patch every month. E-mail blasts would be sent out to users about local events. These e-mail updates would get users to click through to and visit the Patch website. Social media sites were other big enablers for Patch. Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter were a source of a large set of readers as well as the source of most of the content. Roughly 70 per cent of the traffic on Patch came from mobile devices. Social media, the penetration of mobile telephones, and the alerts platform had played a significant role in the growth of Patch.

On the revenue front, Patch limited the base price for advertisements and did not accept ads below that base price. About a third of Patch’s revenues came from direct sales of ads, another third came from the sale of display ads through advertising networks and other exchanges, and the rest came from Patch’s relationships with other partners, such as real estate companies.

U.K. Hyperlocal News Industry: A Well-Established Sector

The United Kingdom had its own set of hyperlocal websites that were catering to the local journalism space. A report[[18]](#footnote-18) commissioned by Cardiff University’s Centre for Community Journalism and the innovation charity Nesta gave some very interesting facts about the United Kingdom’s hyperlocal websites: (a) there were over 400 hyperlocal websites; (b) one in 10 people used local community websites at least once a week; (c) the most common topics covered were community activities; and (d) about 13 per cent of the hyperlocal websites generated over £500 per month. Recognizing the rising trend of local journalism, Trinity Mirror acquired Local World in 2015 with the objective of tapping into new local regions and audiences. Local World ran about 82 websites. Media Wales, a Trinity Mirror news subsidiary, operated about 20 community sites (as listed in the Local Web List map of community news sites). The websites were run by about 40 regular news contributors (across all sites). All of this signified that the hyperlocal news industry was rapidly maturing in the United Kingdom.

UdaipurTimes.com

UT was an online-only hyperlocal news website and blog that extensively covered the latest news and events of Udaipur. UT was a pioneer in digital journalism (or online media) in Udaipur. It focused on social, economic, political, and day-to-day happenings in the city. In the span of only three years since its inception in 2010, UT had begun to attract over 100,000 readers per month. By August 2016, UT had nearly 188,000 website views (see Exhibit 1). Besides regular news updates, UT also covered topics related to everyday life in Udaipur, including food, housing, shopping, movies, the environment, and wildlife. UT also had a good presence on social media. All the news published on UT was shared on its Facebook page[[19]](#footnote-19) and was tweeted via the Twitter handle @UdaipurTimes. UT had approximately 40,000 likes on its Facebook page.

UT was the go-to place for people who were originally from Udaipur but had moved out of the city for personal or professional reasons. Such readers did not have access to printed versions of Udaipur’s local newspapers and logged on to UT for local updates. Also, for the younger population from the city that was more gadget-savvy, network-connected, and reluctant to read printed newspapers, UT provided an ideal platform for getting their daily dose of local news. While most readers of UT were from within India, approximately 27 per cent of readers lived elsewhere. Within India, approximately 27 per cent of UT’s readers were from Rajasthan (see Exhibit 2).

Being sentimentally attached to the city of Udaipur, readers often reacted to UT’s news articles passionately. For instance, Mansoor Ali, a resident of Udaipur, had posted a response to UT’s article on the crumbling state of Udaipur’s famous heritage clock tower, stating, “A very commendable article. It literally took me back to my childhood and the lovely Udaipur of those days. I agree with the author that we cannot put the clock back or freeze the time but we can definitely contribute to keeping the city of lakes clean.”[[20]](#footnote-20)

Sensing the success of UT, a large number of me-too hyperlocal websites cropped up in Udaipur. These included UdaipurBlog.com (UB), UdaipurNews.in, and UdaipurPost.com. UB was the closest to UT in terms of user traction (Alexa India ranking of 27,400 compared to UT’s Alexa India ranking of 22,500). Unlike UT, UB did not focus on day-to-day news but shared information about local events and interesting activities around the city. The frequency of updates on UB was far lower than on UT. Also, the homepage of UB might have event updates that were from 15 days in the past, while the homepage of UT would have news updates that were from one or two days in the past. UdaipurNews.in and UdaipurPost.com followed a model that was a lot closer to UT in terms of updating daily news and happenings, but both lagged UT and UB in terms of user traction (UdaipurNews.in: Alexa India ranking of 188,000; UdaipurPost.com: Alexa India ranking of 132,500)[[21]](#footnote-21) (see Exhibit 3).

Current status

In August 2016, UT had annual revenues of about ₹1 million[[22]](#footnote-22) from the sale of banner ads on its website (see Exhibit 4). The banner ads were rented for periods ranging from one month to one year. A fixed space was allocated on the website to clients, and the rates varied based on the location on the page and the size of the banner. Clients had the option of changing the content of their ads any number of times during the contract. The banner ads were currently sourced primarily by Bohra and Abbas through their contacts or via word-of-mouth publicity. The banner ads were priced from ₹4,000 to ₹20,000 per month. These ads were a lot cheaper than banner ads in the print media, where costs ranged from ₹8,000 to ₹200,000 for being printed in any particular day’s newspaper, depending on the size and position of the ad. Billboards placed in highly-visible locations in the city, in comparison, could be rented at ₹20,000 per billboard per month.

In addition, UT had revenues of about ₹25,000 per month from Google AdSense. AdSense was a free product from Google. It allowed online players such as UT a mechanism to earn money by placing ads on their websites. UT was paid every time a user viewed an ad or clicked it. UT could choose where to place the Google ad on its website. The ad was generated dynamically through Google’s algorithm, which contextualized the user and the content.

UT also earned revenues from sponsored posts. These were posts that promoted various businesses such as hotels and online portals, but appeared as if they were news articles. However, these were often seasonal and unpredictable. In 2015, UT earned about ₹50,000 from sponsored posts. The sponsored posts were not actively sourced by UT. They were generated via inbound requests from clients. In addition, clients who rented banner ads could have their marketing content published for free, as sponsored posts.

UT’s main costs were incurred toward employee salaries, website hosting charges, and office rentals (see Exhibit 5). UT employed a sub-editor and four photo journalists. The four photo journalists were employed to cover different content themes, namely public administration, local government news, crime-related news, press releases, education, local events, and other happenings. Technology support was provided by a web programmer. UT’s web hosting had been recently upgraded and was now capable of handling up to 20,000 visitors to the site every day.

Strategic Review

As they initiated their strategic review, Bohra and Abbas explored various opportunities that could potentially propel the business forward. As part of his continuous engagement with the social networking community, Abbas had recognized the growing trend toward mobility as a channel of consuming content (see Exhibit 6). He stated:

I believe that in future, more and more people will consume our content on their mobile phones and tablets and not on laptops and PCs. Though our website is mobile compatible, accessing the website through a browser on a mobile is definitely not convenient for our readers. Having a mobile app may lead to a more loyal set of customers. Also, customers tend to spend a much longer time on apps than on mobile websites. Further, through the mobile app, we would be able to push our news notifications as soon as they are published. This push-based model would be more effective at increasing customer engagement. I therefore believe that we should immediately start work on development of the app.

Bohra, however, was apprehensive about the mobile app-based business model. He argued:

Wouldn’t the mobile app negatively impact the current traffic on our website? Will the app actually bring us new customers at all? UT, currently, is the leading website in terms of number of visitors. If we end up cannibalizing traffic of our website, we may actually see a reduction in the advertising revenues from the website.

Abbas responded:

We need to stop burying our head in the sand like an ostrich. Mobile apps are clearly the future. Major national news portals such as *The Times of India* and *The* *Economic Times* are leading the transition to mobile apps. We also need to take cognizance of our reader’s technological comfort in accessing UT [see Exhibit 6]. I do agree that we may see a reduction in our website traffic and hence an adverse impact on the advertising revenues. However, can we shy away from where the future is headed?

Bohra was still not entirely convinced. He stated:

There are a large number of questions that need to be answered before we take the plunge. We have worked extremely hard to popularize our website and I am worried that we may have to expend a similar effort all over again for the mobile app. Further, developing and updating the app will also add to our costs. One-time mobile app development charges for UT could range anywhere from ₹75,000 to ₹200,000. We would also have to incur total annual hosting charges of ₹20,000 per annum on the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store. Also, maintaining the mobile app and ensuring technological updates could cost us about 20 per cent of the initial development charges. Given that we are just about breaking even with our current set-up, I am not sure that we should be making this investment. Can we not instead think of generating additional revenues from our existing website? I believe that there are a few options that we may not have explored fully.

As you are aware, we have not seen a growth in the number of visitors on our website. In the last three months, while we are still ahead of competitors such as UdaipurBlog and UdaipurNews, our own visitor numbers seem to have stagnated [see Exhibit 7]. Resultantly, I have not been able to build any traction with businesses when I talk to them about increasing the banner-ad rentals. We need to be able to ensure that our regular readers continue and increase the frequency of their visits to our website. Also, we need to attract new visitors.

Abbas responded:

We are already competing closely with *The Times of India*, which is the leading English-language printed newspaper in Udaipur. Its print version has about 7,000 copies distributed in the city daily. Of course we have a much smaller readership as compared to the Hindi-language newspapers such as *Rajasthan Patrika* or *Dainik Bhaskar*. These have a combined subscription of about 100,000 copies. But they are not really our competitors.

What would happen if we increase our product portfolio on the website? Being a hyperlocal player is our competitive advantage. Would it not be possible to leverage this advantage by venturing into new offerings such as classified ads, local job postings, and matrimonial ads? If so, how can we operationalize this? What will it do to our cost structure?

Bohra realized that Abbas’s ideas on new product offerings were probably something worth exploring further. Considering that classified ads, job postings, and matrimonial ads in local printed newspapers were priced at ₹2,000 for being printed on any particular day’s newspaper, there was a possibility of earning good revenues from these streams for UT. However, Bohra was not clear as to whether customers would be willing to pay for displaying these ads on UT. Also, he contemplated whether there were any mechanisms by which UT could allow its users to post classified ads for free, while it monetized the service through other means. Maybe offering free classifieds, job posts, and matrimonial ads was a way to attract more (and probably new) visitors to the UT website. However, he was worried about whether UT would end up diluting itself by venturing into too many things. Further, the development of classified, job, and matrimonial segments would require additional development costs and maintenance costs. With quick back-of-the-envelope calculations, Bohra estimated the one-time development costs to be around ₹50,000 for all three segments and estimated that the operating cost could involve hiring one additional employee at ₹10,000 per month.

The prospect of focusing on the core area made Bohra explore the alternatives for increasing the leverage of the current site. Knowing that Abbas’s strengths lay in leveraging social media, Bohra said:

Do you think we can increase the engagement of our current readers beyond reading and sharing the news? Is there any merit in making them a partner in content generation? This could lead to attracting new visitors to our website. Also, we might get our readers to visit our website more frequently and spend more time on UT.

Abbas responded:

User-generated content could be a great avenue for connecting with our readers. I recall that one of the most read articles in UT’s history came from a user contribution wherein the reader had written an open letter to rape apologists. The article attracted over 10,500 views and had more than 100 user comments. In comparison, a typical well-read UT article attracts about 1,000–2,000 views and generates about one to five comments. There have been other cases as well where user-generated articles have fared much better than our regular editorial and news sections. Further, readers can also contribute by sharing news from their area or if they spot anything that could be interesting for other users.

Bohra questioned:

So how do we take this forward? How do we encourage users to write for UT? Do we have to pay them for articles that they might write? If yes, should we match the market rate of ₹500 for such content-writing exercises? If we do not pay, then why would readers write for us?

Like most of the questions during the day, this question was met with a long silence and spurred reflection by both Abbas and Bohra. Both understood that given their limited resources and capabilities, it was not possible for them to take forward all the options that they had thought of. Also, Bohra believed that strategy was as much about choosing “what not to do” as it was about pursuing options that appeared strategically attractive. But he was careful to admit to Abbas that he did not want their current decisions to foreclose their ability to pursue strategic options for growth and profitability in the future. He therefore wanted them to practice flexibility in their approach toward how to grow UT. Abbas and Bohra knew that with UT financials being stretched, their risk-taking abilities had been slightly restrained. They had to strike a careful balance of striving for growth but at the same time preserving the current revenue streams.

In addition, Abbas was concerned about their ability to implement any organizational changes that were needed based on the strategic options that they decided to pursue. Abbas worried that in a small organization like UT, any large changes were difficult because it did not have adequate resources to pursue them. Not only was UT financially constrained, but also it had limited managerial bandwidth and expertise in change management. Also, Abbas realized that if UT ended up choosing more than one option to pursue, then it needed to consider the sequence in which these options could be taken up. After all, some options would have more of a revenue impact, while others would improve profitability. In any case, Abbas believed that there was no way all the options could be pursued simultaneously. “Clearly, that would ruin us,” he thought to himself.

Conclusion

Bohra and Abbas had a lot of preparatory strategic analysis to complete over the next week. They realized that the opportunity offered by Thomas could catapult their business to the next level of growth. Advice and mentorship received from a top consulting firm could be invaluable toward the success of their venture. To make full use of the *pro bono* time made available by the consulting partner, they needed to be prepared with their version of a well-defined marketing strategy, human resources strategy, and platform expansion strategy for UT. They would then be in a position to discuss this with the consulting partner and finalize their overall strategy.

Atul Arun Pathak is an assistant professor in strategic management at XLRI Jamshedpur, India. ShabbirHusain R.V. is a student of the fellow program in management in marketing at XLRI Jamshedpur, India

Exhibit 1: Udaipur times’ Monthly website views

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Site views (000s)** |
| Aug-15 | 149 |
| Sep-15 | 192 |
| Oct-15 | 205 |
| Nov-15 | 170 |
| Dec-15 | 142 |
| Jan-16 | 167 |
| Feb-16 | 151 |
| Mar-16 | 125 |
| Apr-16 | 127 |
| May-16 | 127 |
| Jun-16 | 142 |
| Jul-16 | 163 |
| Aug-16 | 188 |

Source: Company sources.

Exhibit 2: udaipur times’ geographical distribution of viewers

Global distribution of viewers

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Country** | % |
| India | 72.95 |
| United States | 11.33 |
| United Arab Emirates/Kuwait | 4.52 |
| Others | 11.20 |

Distribution of viewers across India

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | % |
| Rajasthan | 27.5 |
| Delhi | 22.7 |
| Maharashtra | 17.1 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 6.0 |
| Karnataka | 4.8 |
| Gujarat | 4.0 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 3.9 |
| Others | 14.0 |

Source: Company sources.

Exhibit 3: competing HYPERLOCAL SITES IN Udaipur

UdaipurBlog.com

UdaipurBlog.com (UB) was conceptualized by Sanjit Chouhan, a 23-year-old student, around the same time as Udaipur Times (UT). Chouhan had started the blog as he felt that there was no good medium for connecting with the people of Udaipur. He hence started UB with the vision of promoting Udaipur City, brands, people, and start-ups from Udaipur online through various social media platforms. With a focus on social media, UB’s readership was far lower than UT’s, but UB had a very strong Facebook presence and almost four times the number of likes on Facebook that UT had. UB also engaged in conducting a lot of events as a means of building a connection with its readers.

UdaipurPost.com

UdaipurPost.com (UP) was started in August 2011 by Akhtar Khan. UdaipurPost focused on covering news, feature articles, opinions/editorial articles, interviews of renowned personalities, etc. UdaipurPost.com published all its articles in Hindi, which was the principal language of the region. Khan came with a decade and a half of journalism experience with leading print newspapers like *Dainik Bhaskar*, *The Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *Rashtradoot*. He was supported in his team by an editor and a technical administrator.

UdaipurNews.in

UdaipurNews.in (UN) was started in July 2011 by Sunil Gothwal and Dinesh Gothwal. It followed an approach that was very similar to UP’s, with all news and event articles being covered in Hindi. Like UP, the editorial team of UN came with close to two decades of experience in print journalism.

Source: Compiled by authors.

Exhibit 4: udaipur times’ monthly aDvertising revenues (₹)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Banner** | **Google ads** | **Sponsored posts** | **Total** |
| Aug-15 | 70,000 | 23,500 | 1,000 | 94,500 |
| Sep-15 | 85,000 | 30,500 | 2,000 | 117,500 |
| Oct-15 | 75,000 | 32,500 | 8,000 | 115,500 |
| Nov-15 | 70,000 | 27,000 | 8,000 | 105,000 |
| Dec-15 | 60,000 | 22,500 | 4,000 | 86,500 |
| Jan-16 | 80,000 | 26,300 | 5,000 | 111,300 |
| Feb-16 | 90,000 | 23,800 | 1,000 | 114,800 |
| Mar-16 | 120,000 | 19,800 | 5,000 | 144,800 |
| Apr-16 | 120,000 | 20,200 | 2,000 | 142,200 |
| May-16 | 90,000 | 20,100 | 4,000 | 114,100 |
| Jun-16 | 70,000 | 22,450 | 5,000 | 97,450 |
| Jul-16 | 70,000 | 25,900 | 5,000 | 100,900 |
| Aug-16 | 80,000 | 29,700 | 3,000 | 112,700 |

Source: Company sources.

Exhibit 5: udaipur times’ cost break-up

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cost head | Number of employees | Unit cost (₹) | Total cost  (₹) |
| Sub-editor | 1 | 12,000 | 12,000 |
| Photo journalists | 4 | 10,000 | 40,000 |
| Web programmer | 1 | 18,000 | 18,000 |
| Accountant | 1 | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| Web hosting and office rental | 1 | 20,000 | 20,000 |

Source: Company sources.

Exhibit 6: udaipur times’ PLATFORMS USED FOR BROWSING

Device used for viewing Udaipur Times

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Device** | % of readers |
| Mobile handset | 64 |
| Desktop/laptop | 34 |
| Tablet | 2 |

Browsers used for viewing Udaipur Times

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Browser** | **% of readers** |
| Chrome | 55.0 |
| UC Browser | 11.5 |
| Safari | 8.5 |
| Opera Mini | 6.0 |
| Android WebView | 6.0 |
| Others | 13.0 |

Source: Company sources.

Exhibit 7: Monthly Visits to **Udaipur Times’** site—comparison of last three months

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of customer visits to website** | | |
| **Website** | Current month | Previous month | Two months ago |
| UdaipurTimes.com | 65,104 | 57,500 | 76,100 |
| UdaipurBlog.com | 31,057 | 40,064 | 24,910 |
| UdaipurNews.in | 5,251 | 5,112 | 5,270 |
| UdaipurPost.com | <5,000 | <5,000 | <5,000 |

Source: “Competitive Intelligence Tool,” SimilarWeb.com, accessed March 18, 2017.

Note: Monthly visits as reported by SimilarWeb vary from visits reported by Udaipur Times. Udaipur Times figures come from a widget installed on its WordPress website. The algorithm for computation by pro.similarweb.com is not known. Hence, the figures should be treated more as a basis for rough comparison than as fully reliable numbers.

1. “What Is Patch?” Patch, accessed May 5, 2017, http://corp.patch.com/about. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “About Us,” WalesOnline, accessed April 23, 2017, www.walesonline.co.uk/about-us. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “Our People,” Trinity Mirror plc, accessed May 5, 2017, www.trinitymirror.com/our-people/people. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “Udaipur City Census 2011 Data,” census2011.co.in, accessed September 19, 2016, www.census2011.co.in/census/city/92-udaipur.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. “Economy of Udaipur,” udaipuronline, accessed March 19, 2017, www.udaipuronline.in/city-guide/economy-of-udaipur. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *Udaipur—The City of Lakes*, accessed March 19, 2017,

   http://aclprojectsindia.com/demo/tivonacity121/TIVONA%20CITY%20&%20UDAIPUR.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Melanie Lieberman, “World’s Top 50 Hotels 2015: No. 1 The Oberoi Udaivilas, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India,” *Travel + Leisure*, accessed March 19, 2017, www.travelandleisure.com/slideshows/worlds-best-hotels/51. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *India Smart City Profile,* accessed April 23, 2017, http://smartcities.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Rajasthan\_Udaipur.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. “The History of Marwaris,” accessed April 23, 2017, http://marwarihistory.blogspot.in. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. “Celebrating Indian Diaspora, in London,” *India Writes*, October 17, 2014, accessed April 23, 2017, www.indiawrites.org/celebrating-indian-diaspora-in-london. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. “The Indian Diaspora—At Home and Abroad,” TIGS, October 3, 2016, accessed April 23, 2017, www.tigs.in/the-indian-diaspora-at-home-and-abroad. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Manish Chand, “PBD 2015: Serenading NRIs, on Home Turf, Modi-Style,” *India Writes*, accessed April 23, 2017, https://www.indiawrites.org/pbd-2015-serenading-nris-on-home-turf-modi-style. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Prakash Bhandari, “Diaspora in US to Build ‘Rajasthan Bhawan,’” *Times of India*, November 7, 2011, accessed April 23, 2017, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/jaipur/Diaspora-in-US-to-build-Rajasthan-Bhawan/articleshow/10639735.cms. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Tony Rogers, “What Is Hyperlocal Journalism?” ThoughtCo, May 20, 2017, accessed September 21, 2016, http://journalism.about.com/od/citizenjournalism/a/hyperlocal.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Roger Yu, “AOL Sells Patch to Tech Investment Firm,” *USA Today*, January 15, 2014, accessed September 21, 2016, www.usatoday.com/story/money/business/2014/01/15/aol-sells-patch/4498195. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Monica Chadha, “The Neighborhood Hyperlocal,” *Digital Journalism* 4, no. 6 (2016), accessed September 21, 2016, www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21670811.2015.1096747. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Jack Marshall, “Patch Rebounds after Split from AOL,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 2, 2016, accessed March 12, 2017, https://www.wsj.com/articles/patch-rebounds-after-split-from-aol-1454445340. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Damian Radcliffe, *Where Are We Now?* (Centre for Community Journalism and Nesta, 2015), accessed March 18, 2017, https://www.communityjournalism.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/C4CJ-Report-for-Screen.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. “UdaipurTimes,” Facebook, accessed September 21, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/UdaipurTimes. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. “Udaipur-Kal, Aaj Aur Kal?” UdaipurTimes.com, May 25, 2012, accessed September 19, 2016, http://udaipurtimes.com/Udaipur-kal-aaj-aur-kal. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. “UdaipurNews.in Traffic Statistics,” Alexa, accessed March 13, 2017, www.alexa.com/siteinfo/udaipurnews.in. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. ₹ = INR = Indian rupee; all remaining currency amounts are in ₹ unless otherwise specified; US$1 = ₹66.95 on August 1, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)