

Foreword

Digital innovations are responses to analogue realities, gaps and inefficiencies in technologies. The technology space has itself morphed with incredible advances which were yesterday's dream. The situation now is so fluid that no one is sure what the next breakthrough would be.

Communication and media have been especially impacted, with the unveiling of inventions and their variants which are fundamentally redefining the landscape of governance and relationships. Deepfakes have opened vistas for unprecedented distortions in information, spawning a regime of disinformation previously unimagined and unimaginable. New scenarios of identity theft have through digitalisation produced products and surreal narratives rooted in fact-ion.

Deepfakes have been energised by the forces of rampaging fake news which has become a core concern in the social media governance architecture. Trends in political engineering have only supplied fodder for the counterforce which still fuels fake news, in the powerplay which continues to characterise political contestations and the desperation for the control of the resources of state. Attempts to frame discourses in this regard by the political class have yielded a mixed grill.

The media as promoters and victims in the interplay, even if inadvertent, have to contend with the dynamics of internal alignment with the issues, mechanics, grasp of the tools by practitioners, and externalities which are as global as they are local.

That is why understanding the levels of industry and organisational subscription to the logics and requirements of big data is an imperative. It is why understanding Artificial

Intelligence (AI), its workings, shaping of communication and media is critical. When a technological force like AI is interrogated within the transitions of personal and industry spaces which are still marked by the limitations of tradition; when professionalism is hobbled in the existential crisis of worsening micro and macroenvironmental pulls and push; when the tools of robotics which its most visible expression here are the drones now in common use in the coverage of events; and journalists are simultaneously grappling with digital and other safety considerations, an effort to address the ramifications of digital communication and national transformation can only be an interesting resource.

The mix of articles in this compilation offers perspectives and the variety which significantly dissects the issues in a language which communicates. It is part of the larger efforts to unravel a revolution that is transforming into a norm.

As the Association of Communication Scholars & Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN) saw about a decade ago and incorporated in its logo, “The Future is Here”. If those who are supposed to be here do not recognise and address the realities of that future, they are headed for irrelevance in a world which is increasingly impatient with laggards.

Enjoy the enlightenment - as you engage with that future which has become today, and await the certainties and uncertainties of tomorrow.

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