

# The future of printed media

Hotalot, a new media company from Slovenia, confronts the printed media crisis with innovative new business models

**LJUBLJANA - While all the publishers of printed media are nervously asking the same questions – how to stop the downfall of their printed distribution – a young company from Slovenia is in the second year of developing a new business model and they believe that it represents the future of the print media.**

The Slovenian company **Hotalot** published the [Blogorola](#), a newspaper fusion of a web blog aggregate with the attributes of printed media. The web aggregate tracks more than 3.500 blogs and unites more than 500 citizen journalists who allow the Blogorola to publish their content in the printed edition – the aggregate aggregates more than 1.000 blog entries daily. The printed Blogorola, with a distribution of 50.000 copies, offers to the readers a weekly editor's choice of the best content found in the blogosphere. Blogorola was first published on 29<sup>th</sup> November in 2007.

“We find it that there is simply too much interesting content out there – it is not only comparable to the content found in the traditional printed media today, but it is many times superior,” says Gregor Fras, director of the Hotalot company, and he adds: “The content from the blogosphere is different in style, sincerity, open, and – above all – it sets a new agenda to focus on the subjective problem of everyday people, which is much more interesting to the readers at this point.”

## **Print 2.0**

Similarly to the internet going into a new phase, the so called Web 2.0, Hotalot believes that the modern printed media have to go through a

similar metamorphosis, to remain interesting and hold their position in the media landscape.

“The printed media did not undergo any major conceptual evolution in the past half of the century – among some design changes every now and then the media is exactly as it was before 50 years,” Frascascia ascertains. »But the perception of the media has changed fundamentally.”

The evolution from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 was caused by a completely new attitude between content producers and consumers – the Web 2.0 stands for the so called “user generated content”, which means the consumers have also become the content producers. Surprisingly, the printed media somehow managed to completely ignore this fact.

Print 2.0 is the term for printed media which see their readers as a community, similarly to the relationship in the user communities such as Facebook or MySpace. It is important to realize that the community itself produces content and it wants to participate in producing the newspaper. “It is not only about giving the readers the opportunity to express themselves, it is about giving ourselves the chance to improve our own medium with their content,” Gregor Frascascia feels confident.

### **Hybrid media**

The business model of the Hotalot company is not fighting the classical printed media, it seeks collaboration. The new business model foresees the beginning of new hybrid media which will act like social communities, where user generated content aggregates (blog entries, photos, cartoons etc.), which are active in the internet, and the editor’s choice of best content is integrated into classical printed media in the format of special pages or newspaper supplements.

The printed media must, according to Hotalot, offer their readers a combination of both – journalistically prepared content (primary source),

but also the user generated content (secondary, reflexive source).

“The printed media will have to realize that media is no more just exclusive one-sided process of informing, it is about developing a dialogue with their readers,” Gregor Fras declares. “And the readers are, and they have been prepared for this dialogue for a long time – and they are waiting.”

### **How to stop circulation from dropping?**

In Hotalot, the general belief is that their business model can stop the printed media circulation numbers to drop, or even turn the trend around, to start gaining in the positive direction.

The printed media has until now “recruited” their readers through the so-called “secondary media socialization” – through the transfer of habits from the parents to their children. But because of the generation gap this model no longer works – as parents still use printed media, the youth no longer resorts to finding information in the daily newspapers.

By integrating user generated content into printed media content the publishers can come closer to the younger audience and, in this way, start building the printed media reading habit with the younger readers. “If the media wants to be read by the younger population, which seems to be the only way to raise the circulation numbers, they need to provide them with the appropriate content.

But today this is no longer the content FOR the youth, it is the content BY the youth,” Fras adds.

## **First – the EU**

After a successful launch in Slovenia (with the Blogorola) the Hotalot company plans to extend their model in other countries in the European Union as well. Their European project is called Yunion.eu – just like Blogorola it will represent the bloggers’ society/network of the European Union under the motto: “Let’s get Yonited!”

The Hotalot company will offer their collaboration capacity to the European publishers through their own business model, which would help the publishers to finally start addressing the dropping circulation numbers and also reach younger readers, now active in the blogosphere.

**Press Resources:** <http://www.hotalot.com/press.php>

### **Articles on this topic:**

- [New York Times: Publisher Rethinks the Daily: It’s Free and Printed and Has Blogs All OverHotalot](#)
- [Wired: New Media Venture Turns Bloggers Into Print Journalists](#)

### **More about the projects:**

- <http://www.hotalot.com>
- <http://www.blogorola.com>
- <http://www.yunion.eu>