
Media Economics and Management

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this issue of *Palabra Clave*, which coincides with the Ninth World Media Economics and Management Conference to be held in Bogota, Colombia on June 2-6, 2010. It will be hosted by La Sabana University and its School of Communication. Accordingly, this special issue of the journal is devoted to topics related to media management and economics. Undoubtedly, it will be a welcome addition to the field.

I would like to share a brief history of the WMEMC. The conference is held biannually. The first was in 1994, aboard a Viking Line cruise ship sailing from Stockholm to other parts of Sweden and back. Robert Picard (who at the time was based in Turku, Finland) organized the initial meeting, but it was not called "Media Economics in Europe." There were approximately 30 scholars in attendance, mostly from Europe. The group decided to meet again, and that meeting was followed by others in Zurich and in London in 1998, where the name World Media Economics Conference was formally adopted.

In its early years, the WMEMC was primarily a European conference. However, the organizing board eventually decided that a genuine "world" conference should move about the globe. Thus, in 2004, the WMEMC was held outside Europe for the first time, in Montreal, Canada. In 2006, the WMEMC was held in Beijing, China. In 2008, the WMEMC was held in Lisbon, Portugal. At the Lisbon meeting, the decision was made to hold the 2010 conference in Latin America for the first time, specifically in Bogota. In addition to this special occasion, there will be a joint meeting and papers presented by

the newly formed Latin American Media Management Association (LAMMA), which was organized in 2009.

Over the years, the number of participants and the quality of the research has grown, as has the presence of scholars from around the world. A typical WMEMC now attracts approximately 150 participants and features over 70 research presentations. Back in 1994, if my memory serves correctly, there were about 12 presentations. The growth of this conference is illustrative of the relevance of media management and economics as an area of study and interest for students, professors, and media practitioners.

Some readers may ask why a communication-based journal such as *Palabra Clave* is involved with management and economic topics. While management and economics have long been areas found in traditional business schools, the fact is that communication/media scholars have been examining management and economics in the media industries for nearly six decades. So, this is not a new phenomenon, even though it may be a new experience for many in Latin America. In the 21st century, media management and economics courses and programs can be found in a variety of university curriculums, ranging from the business schools to communication, journalism and media studies. Today, it is common to find media management and economics courses housed outside of a business environment.

Furthermore, with all the convergence taking place between the media and society, the location of these scholarly research endeavors is not

nearly as important as what is being researched and shared with others, which is the purpose of this issue. As a formal journal editor and current Board member of both the WMEC and LAMMA, I hope you will enjoy this special issue, but more importantly, I hope you are able

to participate in the Ninth World Media Economics Conference.

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