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## Kenyan Media Trends and Predictions

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Graduate School of Media and Communications



# Kenyan Media Trends and Predictions

2022



## About the authors

**Dr Alex Awiti** is the Vice Provost East Africa and the Interim Dean of The Graduate School of Media and Communications at The Aga Khan University. Awiti is an interdisciplinary scholar, whose research intersects agriculture, ecology, education, society, population health policy, media and the economy. He also sits on the Board of Governors of the IDRC (International Development Research Centre), a Crown corporation of the Canadian government that funds research in developing countries.

**Njoki Chege** is the Director, Innovation Centre, The Aga Khan University. She is responsible for the Innovation Centre, which is geared towards enhancing media viability in East Africa. The Centre is based in Nairobi, Kenya, and provides a co-working space, time and training for the next generation of media entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders. Her research interests focus on media economics, media innovation and business models.

**Hesbon Hansen Owilla** is the Research Associate at the Innovation Centre of The Aga Khan University Graduate School of Media and Communications. His areas of research interests include political communication, media viability and the role of the media in a democracy.

## Acknowledgements

The Innovation Centre of The Aga Khan University- Graduate School of Media and Communications is thankful to the 30 thought leaders who agreed to be part of this project. We thank them for responding to our invitation to offer their predictions and projections for the media in 2020 drawing from their experiences as seasoned journalists and media practitioners.

We are also grateful to DW Akademie and its partners, journalists in Kenya, media scholars and journalism students who participated in our December Fireside Chat in which this idea was conceived, nurtured and brought to life. Your contributions, questions and comments enabled us to tease out the questions we asked our respondents.

The views presented in this report are based on information and evidence gathered from interviews with key players in Kenya's media industry.

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## Executive summary

We asked some clever journalists and media practitioners to peer into their crystal balls and tell us what they think the future holds for the Kenyan media.

Our predictions are intended to highlight the views of thought leaders on the key challenges and opportunities in Kenya's media industry. This report builds upon a deep introspection of 2019 while combining decades of journalistic experience to produce distilled predictions for this year. We interviewed 34 industry leaders who provided us with some forward-looking contributions on their expectations and predictions for Kenya's media in 2020.

The media industry in Kenya has been struggling with the economic implications of the digital disruption occasioned by the mobile phone, internet and social media platforms. The advertising business model has been eroded, compelling Kenyan media managers to rethink, recalibrate and re-evaluate their strategies. The business model is not the only casualty of digital disruption. Journalism—and the truth—have also come under fire. We continue to ask ourselves if the journalism we produce is really up to the challenge of digital disruption in the age of disinformation and misinformation, but more importantly, what can we do to prepare journalists for the unforgiving technological changes.

The big stories such as corruption, climate change, the growing disconnect between the people in power and the citizenry, identity politics and its characteristic dialectics emerged as critical themes in 2019 media's coverage of the local political, socio-economic and environmental realities. In our, December Fireside Chat, we reviewed the 2019 media landscape and brought out three critical global issues that were given prominence in our local news diet. These issues were: the rise of the right wing in global politics, transitions of governments globally and the Donald Trump effect.



However, in the coverage of these stories, it emerged that prominence was given to incidences/singular event, and the stories were largely out of context. Moreover, it was evident from the views expressed in the December Fireside Chat that the big global stories were not situated within the context that appeals to the average Kenyan audience.

But all is not lost. The year 2019 also saw encouraging coverage of societal issues like homicides, femicides, depression, suicides, poverty and family feuds at a more personal level. These stories and the prominent coverage of these issues elicited public debate and remedial measures with most suggesting that could be a subtle but steady rise of constructive journalism in Kenya's media scene.

It was also not lost on us that the media might have missed the big stories. One speaker noted, "the biggest story in 2019 is how we missed the big stories: the collapse of the world order; the weakening of the UN; struggling Universities; the American position on geopolitical issues; Cooperative Saccos that cannot service loans and the historic collapse of the authority of religious leaders.

The year 2020 will still be characterised by technological disruptions as the demand for solid, investigative journalism takes root. Storytellers will continue to grapple with the conundrum of understanding an increasingly younger, digital savvy audience that is spoilt for choice on good journalism that is available for free on the Internet.

## A sneak preview of the 2020 media landscape


Technology will continue to accelerate media evolution and the legacy media will focus more on evidence-based journalism supported by data. Artificial Intelligence (AI), audience metrics and analytics will shift from monitoring the journalist to understanding the audience. With this evolution, “the content creators who recognise this vortex and authentically seek to segment, understand and measure their audiences will be in a position to shape conversations and set the agenda for their communities.”

Media houses will be a lot more proactive in addressing fake news and issues of misinformation and disinformation. As we approach the 2022 elections newsrooms will leap into the new age of fact-checking and verification. Explorations with automation as a way of scaling up fact-checking and verification likely to take centre stage.

Journalism and storytelling will concretize its importance amongst Kenyan audiences. Despite the miniaturization of the audience and the plurality of platforms, good, engaging, illustrative and impactful storytellers will serve journalists in their efforts to leverage on reader revenue. That said, the jury seems to be out – good journalistic content will sell media platforms and expensively produced media content may no longer be offered for free.

The consumption patterns have changed and the landscape will be characterized by an audience that is more aware of what they want to consume, where, when and for how long. The media will therefore have to be more innovative and creative in the way they package content and appeal to an increasingly youthful audience.

Journalists will shift towards more meaningful, high-shelf life content anchored on expert voices. We are likely to see more examples of long-form journalism. We predict that the academia will be a critical player in this new age of Kenyan journalism as a source of intellectual resource and general support. We will also see the rise of smaller



news producers and alternative media focusing on investigative journalism, mostly depending on non-profit journalism, specifically, foundation funded journalism.

The falling cost of internet bundles and the increasing uptake of smart phones will significantly increase mobile-first content, and media companies are likely to tailor most of their content to fit mobile formats.

Content producers will toy with new content formats and forge partnerships with like-minded organisations as they seek to diversify revenue streams. Film on the other hand, will curve a more digital approach in innovation, content generation, transmission and consumption and this is likely lead to the growth of the short formats.

Technology, especially 5G, presents exciting opportunities and immense challenges for journalism in the second decade of the 21st Century. It is faster and more reliable, and has the potential to make immersive journalism and other exciting forms of storytelling achievable .

The challenges mainstream media faced in 2019 will persist in 2020. Huge segments of the reading public, especially youth and women, are alienated by media content they judge as not speaking to their issues.

Robust, courageous and principled journalism - with a commitment to serving humanity - is essential to ensure we not only strive but that we thrive in these times of relentless change.



# Kenyan Media Trends and Predictions 2020

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In their own words



## Ochieng Rapuro

Editor in Chief - Standard Group PLC

"Media Technology will continue its ever accelerating evolution with data as the underlying driver and I expect the Kenyan media to get bolder in its application in the AI space as they move to sharpen content delivery channels. The Kenyan media will start walking back from 'the original sin' of offering expensively produced content to consumers for free. I expect the disruption of TV to start impacting the market as more Kenyans acquire the smart phone, cost of internet bundles continues to fall and consumption of content goes mobile with video in pole position."



## David Omwoyo

CEO - Media Council of Kenya

"Journalism is not failing. People have not stopped consuming media. What has changed is consumption patterns. Where, when and for how long people consume media content is what we need to learn. Then we will know where to take our content."

The piece of newsprint is irrelevant until content is inserted. It is content that converts newsprint into a newspaper. That is why several newspapers, same pagination, yet people buy one and leave the other. Content is King.

It is good journalistic content that sells a media platform. The whole idea of media houses selling space or pages to advertisers must be unlearned. Good content, packaged and availed in the right platforms will attract advertisers. Journalism prepares content which attracts audiences. Advertisers seek to squeeze in a message within the content in order to get noticed. There is no other way."



## Rachael Akidi Okwir

Head of East Africa - BBC World Service

"The last decade has seen a seismic shift in Africa's demographic, with nearly 60% now under the age of 25, and the median age estimated at 19. The simple, and yet increasingly complex question for journalists is: what is news to this generation? How do they consume it— and more importantly- engage with it? It is not an exaggeration to say that the future existence of traditional news organizations will depend on how well they understand and answer these questions."



## Neema Wamai

Media Director and Service Line Lead - Ipsos Sub Saharan Africa

"In many ways, Africa is a central part of the global digital revolution. As media access and usage continues to rapidly evolve, the content creators who recognize this vortex and authentically seek to segment, understand and measure their audiences will be in position to shape conversations and set the agenda for their communities."



## Irūngũ Houghton

**Executive Director - Amnesty International Kenya**

“Kenya’s Article 34 guarantees the right to information, free expression and editorial independence from state, political and commercial interference and control. However, democratic and open societies cannot survive on laws alone. 2020 is likely to be seen as a difficult year. A shrinking economy, reducing essential services, indebtedness and pre-mature campaigns for who will occupy State House in 2022 will restrain open and constructive public discussion. As foundation year for the Data Protection Act (2019), the next twelve months will be crucial in determining whether the law will catalyze data-driven development policies without violating citizen’s privacy rights.

To safeguard our democracy, citizens will have to actively and creatively protect Article 34. Journalists will have to nurture a curiosity and willingness to interrogate data or a tolerance for different opinions. Media owners and editors will have to find ways of rebuilding the public’s trust and encourage them to regularly watch and make news. This will be the simple line between a society that believes its own lies and a society that openly debates itself in the pursuit of a growing economy and democratic society.”



## Sarika Hemi Lakhani

**Producer - Nairobi Half Life  
Managing Partner - One Fine Day Films**

“We have to continue professionalizing our industry - especially the financing and distribution aspect of it. Unless we think of smart approaches to catch up with the fast growing and competitive international market, we won’t play the role we should have on a global level in the long run.”



## Lee Mwiti

**Chief Editor - Africa Check**

“I expect to see more newsrooms leap into the new age of fact-checking and verification. With fact-checking now exploring automation as a way of scaling up, 2020 presents a chance for media outlets everywhere not to fall behind the curve again.”



## Alex O. Awiti, PhD

Vice Provost and Interim Dean - Graduate School of Media and Communications, Aga Khan University

“The challenges mainstream media faced in 2019 will persist in 2020. Huge segments of the reading public, especially youth and women, are alienated by media content they judge as not speaking to their issues. Business as usual models will sink revenues deeper. The focus must be on understanding audiences, providing relevant content, and through the formats audiences prefer. Disruption of media business models will continue in earnest; staffing for mainstream will get leaner. However, the advent of 5G offers a real opportunity for immersive, engaged content, new business models and new revenue streams. We will be limited only by our capacity to innovate.”



## Carole J. Kimutai

Managing Editor, Digital - Standard Group Plc

“We have just ended an eventful 2019, and media houses in Kenya have greatly felt the impact of digital media. What does 2020 have in store? First, the media will no longer chase clicks and page views. Media houses have realised clicks and page views do not pay bills. We will see more platforms and especially legacy media focusing on niche content that will require users to subscribe to read content. Knowing the exact number of people consuming content will help monetise platforms better.

Data will be at the centre of editorial decision making. Gone are the days when Editors used gut feeling to pick lead stories. Decisions will be based on data. Data will inform journalistic products, measure productivity of journalists and product drive innovation. As they say, numbers don't lie.

We are also likely to see creativity in story telling – technology will make it easier to tell stories and package content. We will see new content creators coming in to play in the publishing space. Advertisers will force publishers to adopt to the new story telling techniques.

Lastly 2020 will see local publishers experiment with paywalls. Readers should prepare to encounter websites that will ask them to pay for premium content. This is going to be difficult to crack as the Kenyan online audience is not used to paying for content. The person who will crack this will have hit the jackpot.”



## Asha Mwilu

Special projects editor - Royal Media Services

“The essence of journalism will be put to test in this decade more than ever. In our storytelling and investigations, the media can no longer ignore subjects like the climate crisis, the growing frustration by disenfranchised youth, underrepresented minorities like LGBTQ, the ticking time bombs that is our economies and how AI and big data will affect Africans. I foresee an even wider growth in mobile phone use; and considering the upcoming elections in East Africa, media will be tasked with reporting coherently in this unpredictable sea of smartphones. Media execs should invest in studying audience behaviours and be flexible enough to adjust their tone and scope. Those who choose to ignore the trends will find it difficult to survive.”



## Maina Muiruri

Chairman - Media Council of Kenya

“The media landscape in Kenya (and the world) has increasingly been reflecting the effects of digital technology that has taken competition for business and audiences to the doorsteps of conventional media houses. An annual survey carried out by the Media Council of Kenya (MCK) and released in March, 2019, showed that significant numbers of newspaper readers and electronic media audiences, have shifted from relying on traditional media for news to digital platforms.

A trend already emerging in big media houses and that will be expected to grow in 2020, is the expansion of digital desks into full-fledged editorial sections that can compete with the most vibrant digital news sites. Some of the leading media houses have already equipped their digital sections with senior editors and online advertising managers to tap diminishing revenue from conventional advertising and marketing.

Digital desks of the mainstream newspapers have already shown preference for publishing sassy and sizzling news, especially on scandals and celebrity gossip, to cope against popular digital sites. This brand of journalism will be expected to go a notch higher in 2020 and so is the proliferation of fake news and loose journalism that flies in the face of the Code of Conduct for Practice of Journalism in Kenya.

To cope with the wave of fake news and journalism that goes against ethics, 2020 will see the MCK line up specialized training programmes aimed at sensitizing media practitioners on the need to adhere to the rules stipulated in self-regulation.

Other trainings will target media practitioners, with short courses on ethics, especially for the electronic media entertainment hosts, many who have not had any formal training in journalism schools. All this is aimed at enhancing professionalism and grounding on ethics which have become big challenges in the digital media era.”



## Joseph Odindo

**Journalist of 40 years experience in newsroom leadership**

“This will be the year of serious transition to digital in Kenya’s big media houses. There will be a scramble for newsroom reorganization and a quest for novel revenue sources. Debate about media integrity will also take a radically different line. As mainstream media credibility comes under question, a push for action on newsroom corruption will come, not from media critics and anti-graft campaigners, but from within the media itself.”



## Catherine Gicheru

**Co-Founder and Editor - PesaCheck  
Advisory board member - Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism**

“The legacy media will have to go back to the drawing board and newsrooms will be forced to recalibrate. We will start using more evidence than rhetoric to tell the story. Most newsrooms have been using metrics to monitor the journalists, but this will shift and newsrooms will start using metrics and analytics to understand the audience more intimately.”



## John Allan Namu

**Investigative Journalist/ CEO - Africa Uncensored**

“In 2020, I believe that on the whole we will see deeper reporting on the impact of Climate change, especially here in East Africa, as communities adjust to the different lifestyles thrust on them by a changing environment”



## Alex Chamwada, oGw

**Media Consultant/ CEO - Chams Media  
Presenter, Daring Abroad & The Chamwada Report**

“Politics will dominate headlines in 2020 as the politics of Build the Bridges Initiative and the anticipated referendum take centre stage. Talks shows will become more pronounced taking more and more space that could have been occupied by development or human interest content in the form of features and documentaries. Media will continue to experience dwindling revenues as parastatals continue to trim expenditures. The private sector will also continue to cut down expenditures because of the bad economy. However, BBI and the referendum are likely to inject some revenues in the media but that will be short lived.”



## **Rhonda Breit, LLB, PhD**

**Distinguished academic leader and researcher in the field of media law, ethics and journalism education**  
**Graduate School of Media and Communications, The Aga Khan University**

"The second decade of the 21st Century presents exciting opportunities and immense challenges for journalism, locally and globally. The global leadership deficit has seen populist politics normalized and institutionalized. This is occurring against a backdrop of rapid climate change, mass human and animal displacement, increasing economic inequality and radical transformation of jobs as machines replace humans in the workplace

Robust, courageous and principled journalism - with a commitment to serving humanity - is essential to ensure we not only strive but that we thrive in these times of relentless change. It is incumbent on all journalists and media businesses to tackle the hard stories, to invest in quality journalism and to embrace enabling technologies to ensure everyone can make informed choices and democratic decisions in an era marred by an outpouring of disinformation and unverified 'facts'. Journalism must remain relevant and the public needs to rally to support their media to ensure its survival!"



## **Mercy Oburu**

**Digital Content Manager - Royal Media Services**

"People are more aware of what they want to consume. The media will have to be more innovative and more creative in the way they reach out to the audience."



## **Bob Nyanja**

**Film Director and Producer**

"The transition and adaption from analogue to digital phase will be coming to an end. Hopefully no more mass layoffs and cutbacks. Innovation and content generation will now be a lot more focussed to digital platform transmission and consumption. Expect to see more growth of the short formats."



## Njoki Chege

Director, Innovation Centre - Graduate  
School of Media and Communications, Aga  
Khan University

“The conversation on media innovation will come of age in 2020 as news media organisations scramble to rethink their strategies to keep up with the digital disruption.

Technology will be at the epicenter of these strategies in the form of data, artificial intelligence, machine learning and tech-empowered storytelling.

Kenyan media will experiment with the subscriber-based business models that require audiences to sign up before they can access content. In 2020, expect to see more data driven decisions in advertising, storytelling, audience engagement and content distribution. We are likely to see a surge of groundbreaking investigative journalism presented in a variety of exciting formats.

This is the year the generation of Kenyan, digital-born new entrants producing quality journalism, will entrench themselves as key players in Kenya’s media industry.”



## Eric Mugendi

Managing editor - PesaCheck

“We are likely to see demand for accountability and public interest journalism, where the media takes its rightful place as an advocate on behalf of the people. However, shrinking revenues and an increasingly fragmented landscape means that the battle for eyeballs and the attention of audiences has led to the spread of false and unverified information, even from otherwise credible sources. What is clear is the role of standalone fact-checking and verification initiatives that exist outside of the traditional media ecosystem. As media consumption shifts away from mainstream outlets and towards smaller, digital-first and digital-only publications, fact checking initiatives are going to be crucial given the impact that false information on people’s lives and livelihoods, and this is only likely to get worse.”



## Dickens Olewe

BBC journalist and alumnus of JSK  
Journalism fellowship at Stanford University

“Why do we do what we do and what does the public think about what we do? I think these questions should guide media’s editorial strategy, the only way to achieve these is to optimize our strategy to listen and learn from the people who watch, listen, read and buy our products. At a time when the media needs allies we cannot afford to alienate the public; their support and more importantly, their trust is our best motivation and defense.”





## Patrick Gathara

**Communications consultant, writer, and award-winning political cartoonist**

“The year 2020 will see the rise of independent small, periphery and alternative media producers focusing on investigative journalism. These producers will move to serious content. We will also see important stories from these producers on online platforms. Moreover, we are likely to see the re-engagement the academia and the the rise of the expert voice and it is my hope that people who have studied issues are going to be consulted more and that journalists will see academia as a resource.”



## Levi Obonyo, PhD

**Dean, School of Communications - Daystar University**

“Journalism is the art of storytelling and the world is going to remain hungry for good storytellers. Good storytellers are going to tell their stories wherever they are. Besides looking for good storytellers, the other thing that is likely to continue and we will be looking for in 2020 is the miniaturisation of the audience that will then plug onto the good stories that are out there.”



## Susan Kiprono

**Head of Electronic News - Radio Africa Group**

“Never before has the media needed to re-invent itself as is the case now. With the ever changing digital landscape, traditional media outlets have to constantly find ways of serving the 4th estate role whilst competing with the digital world as it were. The key lies in ensuring their role is fulfilled in tandem with the changing times whilst using available digital resources to remain relevant, fast and factual.

Storytelling has to evolve to move the stories forward, provide insight as the audience will already have encountered the information on social media. Increased access to information will in fact aid the media to better deliver information to the intended audiences.”



## **Wambui Wamunyu, PhD**

**Senior Lecturer, Media and Film Studies -  
Daystar University**

“Thanks to digital platforms, small independent media content creators and entities will thrive. They will more deeply establish ad hoc workplace cultures and multiple revenue-generation approaches, moving away from the hierarchy and advertising dependency of traditional newsrooms. Fluffy content will sell, but investigative work and in-depth local story-telling will make for more appealing, durable content. Audiences will remain wonderfully unpredictable.”



## **Bitange Ndemo, PhD,**

**FKIM, CBS**  
**ICT Specialist, Global technology advocate  
and Management Consultant Associate  
Professor – University of Nairobi**

“We are in a transformative period and the fourth industrial revolution is going to affect everybody and not even the media will be spared. Broadband penetration in Kenya is almost 80% and we are a little ahead in Africa, which as a continent has an average of 35%. This means that we have the infrastructure that can propel us beyond where we are. Machine learning which is just one step away from Artificial Intelligence (AI) is already entrenched in Kenya and there are about 6000 Kenyans working using machine learning. Americans are making driverless cars; Kenyans are creating the ability for those vehicles to run. The discourse around the fourth industrial revolution means a lot to our people. The four key technologies driving the fourth industrial revolution: AI, block chain; Internet of things (IoT) and big data will be important going forward. The most important aspect of AI is processing of natural languages which will enable people to speak in their native languages and be understood by the non-speakers of the languages. Adaptive learning systems like mshule will be powered by AI and they will provide opportunities for transformation.

Big data is directly going to have a big impact in the media as the many sources of data will provide the basis for changing what is happening around us. Media narratives will be based on numbers and facts and both the media and the public will have IoT powered possibilities to source for more data that can then be used to corroborate facts and present full stories. This mass generated data that can easily be accessed will lead us to evidence based journalism and big data will essentially power investigative journalism and journalist will have no reason not to produce full stories.

Taking poverty as an issue, the available data can now help journalist understand poverty and how we can deal with it and tell stories that can change the world. The combination of big data, IoTs and AI will empower both journalists and the media consumers to dig deeper on causes of crises such as high crime rates, poverty, climate change, environmental degradation which can help produce narratives that will change the society. “



## Judy Kaberia

**Award winning journalist  
Foundation Board Chair, Kenya - Africa  
Check**

"The audience is increasingly bombarded with information and the competition from the social media will even be stiff come 2020. To survive, our stories have to be interesting and uniquely professional and the legacy media must think about how to remain on top, compete and win back the trust of the audience.

Moving forward we must be innovative in how we tell our stories and embrace new ways of storytelling that will be rooted in facts and data. We will have to go beyond the breaking news and give more in-depth stories which are contextualised for relevance.

Impact based journalism will increasingly become more important than the hits and money; journalist will have to concentrate on issues that affect the society and tell stories that change the society. Accuracy, facts and credibility will give legacy media the edge."



## Njeri Rugene

**Founder - Women's Newsroom Foundation  
Over 25 years experience as a print media  
journalist at NMG**

"The end of 2019 was characterised by what I felt was over concentration of political reporting. Indications are that the trend may continue in 2020, which means that going forward, the Media will have to guard against an overkill, listen to their audiences and innovate around audience centred content. Politics will be a turn off going forward and the media will need to listen to the audiences and innovate around audience centred content.

Secondly, the media, especially, print media will need to invest more in day two journalism to compete social media that will continue to lead in breaking the big stories. The need to innovate around content will take shape in 2020 and the media will invest in: depth of coverage, exclusive interviews, more research and contextualization of stories to compete with the digital platform. Fact checking will also take centre stage in newsrooms and there is likely to be a high level of alertness on fake news"



## Alphonse Shiundu

**Country Editor, Kenya - Africa Check**

"Media houses will continue to struggle to make money and will explore new content formats and partnerships as they seek to diversify revenue streams. I expect journalists and media houses to gravitate toward more in-depth content and long-form pieces."



## Verah Okeyo

**Global Health Reporter and Media Researcher**

“Politics has a sacred place in the media and while politics will still hog all the airtime in newsrooms, other beats are slowly gaining prominence. Washington Post’s former managing editor, Howard Simons, noted that the emergent beats include: Science, Medicine, Education and Religion. And the Kenyan media space is embracing these beats.

These four beats come with funding challenges and the relationship between foundations that fund them and media houses has increased. While this relationship has been contested by many journalism scholars, it has forced media houses to think about policies guiding their relationship with funders and we are likely to see these policies crystalize in 2020.

The year 2020 will also force media houses to change their definition of what is news and management of journalism in order to earn money from the digital space. The old order in the Kenyan newsrooms that is focused on instant results will be forced to invest in research and development; and contend with innovation and the three distinct capabilities of discovery, incubation, and acceleration (DIA).

Media leaders are going to learn from old “people” like the New York Times - whose subscription increased exponentially in 2019 - that they will require time, resources and openness to change revenue models, and test markets for new products.”



## Jael Lieta

**Station Manager - SKY FM,  
Secretary - DW Akademie Alumni Kenya Chapter**

“The audience today is hungry for substantive issues to discuss and debate; they want to move away from the ‘empty’ talk they have been served in the recent past. The youth want to know how to put money in their pockets, food on the table, understand and participate more on local and national agendas. This calls for the media to produce creative content, dressed in a way that appeals to the various audiences in the variety of ways they consume the media especially on the multi media platforms.

To this end, we are likely to see new trends and a renewed focus on more investigative pieces, issues of climate change, more substantive talk among others. All this will be packaged in a way that will bring and attract sponsorship of such programs to help stations struggling with the dwindling advertising revenue. Media houses will also look at alternative ways of staying afloat and resource sharing will be key as a cost minimization strategy that will help media houses to keep afloat.”



## Churchill Otieno

**President - Kenya Editors Guild  
Managing Editor (Online & New Content) -  
Nation Media Group**

“The 2020 will see newspaper-based media houses in Kenya aggressively experiment with paywalls. Many of these will fail, though, due to impatience. They will fail mostly because the temperament and values/culture that drives an advertising-based business model are different from those that drive a subscriptions-based one, yet there is not enough time at hand to drop the old habits and embrace new ones. This will push us into a season of innovation mostly led by boutique newsrooms. Ultimately, the journalists – not accountants and marketers - will have to find the answers. I think the answers will be found in the rebuilding of trust for public journalism. It will take content that speaks to the citizens’ spirit and values to do this.”



## Odanga Madung

**Data Journalist/Researcher - Odipo Dev**

“I’m hoping to see 2020 become the year where basic data skills will be just about as exciting as performing a Google search. Many newsrooms and universities are making the right investments in this area and audiences have an appetite for fact-based, data driven journalism. As a result, data journalists, hopefully, will lose their special status in newsrooms and we’ll reach a state where data journalism is so constant that we just refer to it as journalism, which is what it has always been.”



## George Gathigi, PhD

**Lecturer, School of Journalism and Mass  
Communication - University of Nairobi**

“In 2020, we expect to see more creative multimedia content that bridges the traditional journalism differentiation with rich stories that incorporates print, video, audio and digital media driven assets such as infographics and animation. Similarly, innovative media houses will utilize social media spaces such as Twitter and Instagram to do more than break news, an area they no longer hold monopoly and is tied to traditional models, but to tell rich and captivating stories. We expect progressive governments to embrace citizen journalism spaces and hold back the urge to regulate while activists and freedom of expression defenders will push back any attempts to regulate. Knowledge in counteracting government and corporate surveillance and restrictions will grow. Digital space will continue to disrupt traditional and legacy media economic models and affect their bottom line, meaning dwindling revenues. Digital space will continue to democratize ‘media ownership’ as some netizens earn from their online influence and reach.”

