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THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

Graduate School of Media and Communication

**NEWSPAPER'S QUEST FOR SURVIVAL IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL
DISRUPTION: THE CASE OF THE DAILY NATION**

By

**OPIYO DAVE OLUOCH
535162**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in
Digital Journalism

Nairobi, Kenya

30/01/2020
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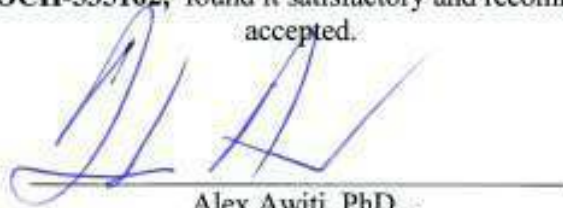
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APPROVAL PAGE

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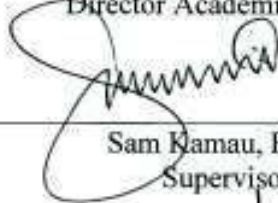
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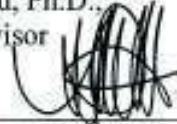
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DECLARATION

I, **OPIYO DAVE OLUOCH-535162**, declare that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university and that to the best of my knowledge it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. The editorial assistance provided to me has in no way added to the substance of my thesis, which is the product of my own research endeavours



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Date

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to find out the effect digital disruption has had on the Daily Nation Newspaper, while also looking at the strategies the publication has put in place to ensure its survival. The study was guided by the following: (a) The changes and challenges posed by digital disruption on the newspaper and how this has affected its operations, (b) The strategies employed by the newspaper to respond to disruption and (c) The effectiveness of these survival and growth strategies. The study was guided by two theories – Disruption Innovation Theory and Media Economics Theory. The researcher used a Qualitative Research Approach, with the research design being a case study. The researcher employed in-depth interviews as data collection methods. The respondents for this study were experienced journalists and editors, who shared their experiences, while in the newsroom on how the disruption manifested itself and how the newspaper adapted to it. The findings of the study were varied. Briefly, they include Daily Nation’s intent on changing how they report their stories – with the main idea being coming up with exclusives and in-depth stories that consumers can pay for, the publication’s focus on retraining key staff, including hiring individuals with key digital skills to navigate this new dispensation, encouraging skill development and hiring multi-skilled employees. From the findings, it is clear that the future of newspapers is going digital. The researcher recommends that Daily Nation, however, needs to further scale up the publication of more exclusive content. The publication should equally explore new ways of telling its stories as well as invest more in improving technology used to deliver its information. But this process should be gradual. From the study, it is clear that diversification of revenue sources is the way to go. Businesswise it sounds a great idea, but ethically, what should the media house do when one of the sponsoring organization is caught up in a scandal? This is an area future researchers should explore.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Ads:	Advertisements
CA:	Communications Authority
DN:	Daily Nation
KARF:	Kenya Audience Research Foundation
KNBS:	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
MCK:	Media Council of Kenya
NMG:	Nation Media Group
NYT:	New York Times
SIM Card:	Subscriber Identification Module Card
UK:	United Kingdom
US:	United States (of America)
WP:	Washington Post