At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

a. Define electronic media and explain their relationship to broadcasting, either in your own words or in the words of scholars who are grounded in the field.

b. Discuss the role and place of the Internet in expanding the frontiers of conventional broadcast media.

c. Give a brief history of broadcast media

Explain the implications of the new and emerging media for today’s broadcast management.

**Broadcasting and Electronic Media**

Electronic media are media that use electronics or electromechanical energy for the end-user (audience) to access the content. This is in contrast to static media (such as print media), which today are most often created electronically, but do not require electronics to be accessed by the end-user in the printed form. The primary electronic media sources familiar to the general public are better known as audiovisual (video and/or audio recordings), multimedia presentations, slide presentations, CD-ROM and online content. Most new media are in the form of digital media. However, electronic media may be in either analog or digital format.

All electronic media take advantage of electronic technology. They may include television, radio, Internet, fax, CD-ROMs, DVD, and other media that require electricity or digital encoding of information. You must thus note that the term, ‘electronic media’, is often used in contrast with print media. In other words, the term may include all equipment used in the electronic communication process (such as computers, game consoles and handheld devices).

The use of electronics makes human life easier. Today, without certain electronics, such as a mobile phone, life would become somewhat boring and lonely, because a lot of interaction and relationships depend on electronics.

Advantages of electronic radio and television in broadcasting include wide audience reach, diversified to fit many different audiences, carriage of several channels and networks which can allow viewers a choice, and the fact that they are efficient and quick in spreading information and provoking dialogues. Of course there are also disadvantages, such as the lack of constant electricity, and eye strain (for television audience). But overall, the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages.

Communication and electronic media go hand in hand. In today’s technology-oriented world the use of electronic communication is inevitable. The role and importance of electronic communication cannot be overlooked. Electronic information interchange is necessary for today’s everyday survival. Information has severally been said to be the backbone of the economy of a nation. And the electronic media, being the main channels of information dissemination, has improved communication in numerous ways.

### 3.2 Importance of Electronic Media

Man has a nature of curiosity. He always engages with doing something unique. In the past centuries, he explored in many field. There were times when a man could hardly think about the unbelievable development that is within reach now. In the 1800s, man could hardly think of electronic media the way they are today. Media are generally a mean of transmitting messages, thoughts, opinions and view points. In the beginning, man used horses and other animals to send the message to the receiver. It took time to deliver the message and the probability of
spoiling the message was high. Today, however, man has entered the age of science and technology. He has explored the farther space, achieving tremendous achievement in many field, as well as in electronic media. Thus we live in the era of electronic media today. None can avoid and escape from them and their profound effects on living, education, information, politics and other social activities.

The electronic media occupy an important place in any modern society. In addition to providing audiences with a variety of entertainment and information products, they influence culture and help define social reality (Albarran, 2002; 2004; McQuail, 1994). No doubt today, the electronic media have become an important component of the economic system. For instance, in the United States and other developed countries, most of the radio and television stations operate in the private sector, that is, as private broadcasting houses, and thus deliver their contents and services for profit (Albarran, 2002). Therefore, as in other profit-oriented businesses, managers in the electronic media stations must maintain efficient, profitable operations to meet the expectations of owners and stockholders.

Broadcasting is a global phenomenon. As an essential aspect of any nation’s social and cultural life, its significance cannot be overemphasized. Combining audio, vision and motion, the broadcast media’s effectiveness in communicating information with speed and accuracy to heterogeneous audiences has been proven over the years. Moreover, the broadcast media have helped the individual to share ideas not only within his immediate environment but also beyond his social milieu. So that by means of broadcasting the individual can partake of ideas and experiences that can enrich his life and help him live in a complex, dynamic and humane society. Now students have a great opportunity to enhance their knowledge through accessing the Internet. All the information in all topics is far beyond one touch of a button.

Moreover, the electronic media has entirely changed the mode of advertisement. Different types of tricks are employed to attract and attend the valuable customers. Sometimes an innocent client is really confused in making a decision. On the other hand, they give extensive options for selecting a desired product. In this mix of pros and cons, therefore, electronic media have revolutionized the information system.

So many radio and TV stations/channels and Internet websites have justified the importance and advantages of electronic media, giving everyone the freedom to exchange his view point freely. Even domestic and international politics are greatly influenced by the electronic media—so much that it is often said that ‘who wins the media war would definitely win in elections’. Some have thus argued that to be dominant in the world, we will have to accept the challenges of electronic media, otherwise we will be limping and looking at others.

In the same vein, electronic communications removes the power of communication gatekeepers to both positive and negative effects. Most organizations are used to controlling the messages that go out to its constituents through managers, spokespersons and others. But with the Internet, constituents have begun to talk among themselves, requiring new approaches and a new emphasis on listening and reacting, not just talking.

With the Internet, you have the ability to transmit and receive large amounts of information quickly to and from individuals and workgroups around the world. This changes the way activists, for example, can galvanize communities, inform legislators and change public opinions. It changes the sources and depth of a constituent’s knowledge level. It also lets a constituent reach you with new kinds of communications it may never have attempted before.

3.3 The Internet, Social Media and Electronic Media Management
The Internet is a part of electronic media; and it has immensely helped in communicating and management. There are a lot of new websites coming in each day, each hour. Emails are an efficient and economical mode for communication with no time restraints and geographical borders. More and more people use emails to communicate and spread information. These characteristics of electronic communication have a tempting effect on studio managers to carry on their businesses more efficiently. In fact, any station or its affiliate organizations not using the Internet facilities, such as the World Wide Web, as both internal and external communications tools to enhance team work (Deitel &and Deitel, 2011) would barely make it in today’s world of competition. With regard to programming and studio production, for
instance, many individuals at different locations can work on the same documents or programme, hold meetings and integrate ideas and research.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of the Internet to communication and the broadcasting industries is the introduction of social media. Today, radio and television stations interact with their various employees, audiences and clients differently, depending on the nature of the message, the goals to achieve and the strengths (and weaknesses) of the available media. Social media add powerful new channels that not only change how we use this mix of options, but help create entirely new ways to interact. They let you combine numerous media — text, graphics, sound, video, etc — into a single message. This results in far more meaningful communication tailored to the nature of a particular audience.

Electronic communication media are interactive, engaging audiences in active, two-way communications. One implication of the new media for conventional station management is that there is now the need for new ways of thinking about advertising copy and handling of public relations. The pay-offs include self-selected audiences, which engage and actively participate in the communication process.

Two-way communication is nothing new in the management of electronic media stations, such as the use of telephony on phone-in live programmes. But social media create a new form of many-to-many communications that lets geographically distributed groups communicate interactively and simultaneously through text, sound and video (Deitel and Deitel, 2011). You can hold inexpensive video conferences or press conferences from your desk, or conference with people at several desks located across the world.

Furthermore, one of the burgeoning phenomena of the Internet is businesses and organizations sponsoring, supporting and moderating discussion groups about issues, products, strategies — anything of interest to the organization and its constituents. Advertisements and sponsorships are also solicited for popular resources, such as indexes and other Internet search tools, and these provide a further communications and marketing opportunities for station management.

3.4 Electronic Media versus the ‘New’ Media
The twenty-first century is the era of information technology. Some have argued, therefore, that the ‘old’ and conventional method of providing information, such as through radio and television,

is gradually losing its importance in contrast to the computer. Indeed quite rapidly, it is giving way to computers and the Internet, which have also come to be included in the electronic media. Operation of the new media, for example, does not need a static station and all its huge running costs (Crook, 2009). Not only do the new advances spread news and information at the speed of lightening, they also store detailed information and millions of facts and theories. There are various kinds of computers for handling all this work and they are not just being used in offices by businessmen and industrialists. Children, housewives and educational institutions also use the media. With the turn of a key or by pressing a button, the sophisticated machines can give you detailed information on and about anything in the universe onscreen.

With the widespread acceptance and use of the web in Nigeria today, radio and television stations are beginning to ask certain questions. Like it happened to mainstream education and the medical sector, certain issues are being brought to the fore by the Knowledge Revolution, popularised by the Internet and wireless technology. Such issues include: how can we meet audiences’ and clients’ basic needs quickly and with interaction? Partly to answer this, stations run parallel ‘channels’ online, where audio (radio) and audiovisuals (television) can be streamed.

Social media or networks, such as Facebook and Twitter are being used to link different categories of television and radio audiences on areas of mutual interest with regard to information on life, work and entertainment.
Today's web (or Web 2.0) is a second-generation of web development and design that facilitates rapid communication and information-sharing, cooperation and collaboration on the Internet (CTA and IIED, 2009). The term deals mainly with web design and the interconnection of everyday objects with the Internet; it envisages the widespread use of portable web-ready devices, thus associating the platform with applications that facilitate interactive and systemic communication, interoperability, user-centred design, and developing the worldwide web that would bring the globe into a village setting where everyone hears his neighbour’s bedroom conversation (Buolos and Wheeler, 2007).

This means that today, social media have come to be a part of our everyday life. Note that all social media are part of electronic communication, but not all electronic communication tools are social media tools. Social media are electronic media that transform passive audiences into active participants in the communication process by allowing them to share content, revise content, respond to content, and/or contribute new contents. Social media are about conversations supported by online tools, such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, and Delicious. Also, there are voice-over internet protocols (VoIPs), which are free or low-cost online voice and video call services; they also enable you to make conference ‘phone calls’ from one computer to another. Skype, Google+ and Yahoo Messenger are examples of VoIPs.

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