Chapter 16

Mass Communication

Mass-communication businesses in Taipei City outnumber those in other areas of Taiwan, and lead by a large margin in terms of scale and service quality. In 2006, economic changes in Taiwan and around the world, as well as trends in cross-media management, digitization, and online publishing, contributed to fierce competition in the media market: four newspapers faced closure; the soaring number of subway commuters drove the new trend of distributing free print-media newspapers; the magazine market continued to shrink; and Taipei, the political and economic center of Taiwan, often found itself under the media spotlight internationally with major news stories. These phenomena helped shape the mass-communication story in Taipei in the year 2006.
Chapter 16 | Mass Communication

From both the micro- and macro-perspectives, we embark on a journey back into recent time to review the mass-communication industry in Taipei City in 2006, covering the print media, electronic media, international media, and city communications, and addressing Taipei’s chief news events as well as how the Taipei City Government has strived for effective integration of resources in the public and private sectors to present Taipei on the world stage through various communication channels.

Part 1 Print Media

1. Newspapers

   About 20 newspapers were issued daily in Taipei in 2006, among which The Liberty Times, Apple Daily, United Daily News, and China Times are widely regarded as the general newspapers with the greatest influence. According to a periodic industry survey by the marketing-consulting firm A.C. Nielsen, The Liberty Times and Apple Daily lead in terms of contact rates, followed by the United Daily News and China Times.

   In terms of circulation, the daily volume of all newspapers, exclusive of complimentary newspapers, was estimated at 2.5 million to 3.5 million copies, a result arrived at via interpolation based on Apple Daily’s circulation average of 505,000 copies per day and the above-mentioned contact rates survey by A.C Nelson. Apple Daily’s daily circulation average number is an audited figure published by The Audit Bureau of Circulation, R.O.C., the only auditing agency for publications in Taiwan, under the commission of Apple Daily.

   Regarding the management and content of newspapers in Taipei in 2006, in general four phenomena merit special attention:

   (1) Closure of 4 newspapers: In 2006, four newspapers in Taipei announced their closure: the Central Daily News, run by the KMT party for 79 consecutive years, was forced to cease publication in June due to continuing losses; Min Sheng Daily, a daily newspaper featuring articles on entertainment, everyday life, and sports, which once enjoyed a circulation of half a million, disappeared into history in December; the final curtain fell on the Great News and the Star Post in March and November, respectively.

   (2) Competition among complimentary newspapers became heated: The rise of free newspapers in Taipei has much to do with the maturity of the MRT (Mass Rapid Transit) transportation network that has boosted the number of commuters as well as the contact-rate competition among newspapers. Starting a few years ago, the United Daily News and China Times began selecting part of their daily content to be published in free newspapers as a tool for boosting their contact rate. Sharp Daily, launched by Apple Daily in October 2006, has proved the most visible free newspaper in recent years, securing the leading position soon after its launch thanks to its
A spectacular scene at the 2006 Christmas Party
innovative marketing approach. Meanwhile, the United Daily News successfully secured exclusive rights to distribute newspapers at MRT stations for 3 years with a bid of over NT$140 million.

(3) Digitized content turned into an asset: The rising popularity of the Net has gradually changed reading habits among the young generation, turning e-reading into a worldwide trend. Major general newspapers in Taipei have been focusing on digitizing their content, and udnadata.com, www.chinatimes.com, and 1-apple.com now all provide full-text searches for the daily content of their printed newspapers. The United Daily News and China Times have both accumulated a magnificent amount of news material over the decades of their long histories, and in recent years they have devoted themselves to digitizing the content of their back issues and making it accessible to the general reader as a paid service, thus creating another invaluable asset for the newspapers.

(4) Proliferation of improper advertisements: According to an A.C. Nielson survey, the advertising market in Taiwan shrank by 2.5% in 2006, while newspaper-ad revenues totaled NT$14.7 billion, or a 5% decrease from 2005. In order to generate advertising income, besides the embedded advertising that has been in use for years, newspapers have been eager to tap into new sources of advertisements—some to the extent of going beyond the legal limits. The most severe violations have been found with advertisements related to food products whose sellers boast of effectiveness in enhancing sexual vitality or weight loss in an exaggerated, distorted fashion by manipulating legal loopholes. The Department of Health, Executive Yuan, R.O.C.(Taiwan) was prompted to reinterpret the conditions for “continuing broadcasting or publication” in Article 32 of the Act Governing Food Sanitation to effectively curb the outbreak of improper advertisements.

According to statistics released by the Department of Information of the Taipei City Government, the media’s self-discipline, coupled with proactive enforcement of relevant laws and regulations by the department, has resulted in very few violations of the Child and Youth Sexual Transaction Prevention Act and related regulations. The total number of violations and related fines in 2006 were down by eight cases and NT$510,000, respectively, compared to 2005.

2. Magazines

The number of general-interest magazines in Taipei City in 2006 amounted to over 200, with the most popular publications found in the categories of living and recreation, fashion, and technology and living, followed by finance & economics and languages.

In 2006 the magazine market continued its downhill slide under the impact of booming electronic and Internet-based media: e-CommonWealth and Yaputo were closed down; Breakthrough

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 1: Violations by Print Media in Taipei City in 2006</th>
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<td>Pursuant to</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child and Youth Sexual Prevention Act</td>
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<td>Tobacco and Alcohol Administration Law</td>
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<td>Sexual Assault Prevention Act</td>
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<td>Child Welfare Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Act Governing Food Sanitation</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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was merged into Management Magazine; and some magazines even became involved in disputes with their subscribers due to failures in making proper post-closure arrangements. On the other hand, new magazines were also launched, and the exceptional success of Queen, with a circulation of nearly 200,000 for its first issue, shows that there is still plenty of uncharted territory worthy of being explored.

Ownership transfers were not uncommon in the magazine industry. Publication of the Chinese edition of “National Geographic” magazine was handed over to Hai Xia Publishing Co., Ltd. at the end of 2006, while publishing rights for the Chinese edition of the Harvard Business Review were handed to Commonwealth Publishing Company in September 2006.

Surveys show that both the contact rates and advertisement volumes of magazines were reduced in 2006 from 2005, leading to further concentration of advertising around major players.

“Taipei Pictorial” and “Discover Taipei” (an English-language bimonthly), both published by the Taipei City Government, have been stressing innovation and upgrading over the years. In line with the reorganization of the Department of Information as the Department of Information and Tourism, scheduled for 2007, Taipei Pictorial embarked on a major transformation in March 2006, shifting its focus to tourism and recreation, with monthly adjustments made according to reader feedback, so as to further strengthen the popularity of this magazine dedicated to reporting on Taipei.

In response to the emergence of the e-reading era, Discover Taipei launched its online full-text service with its May 2006 issue (vol. 53), and Taipei Pictorial will follow suit with its April 2007 issue (vol. 471).

3. Books

Based on International Standard Book Number (ISBN) records in the National Central Library, in 2006 ISBN applications were made for 42,281 books, an increase of 8,096 titles, or 23.86%, from 34,185 in 2005. The number of books published in 2006 in Taipei is estimated at over 24,000, since more than half (57.8%) of the country’s publishers are registered in Taipei.
Analyses of the 2006 book market by Kingstone Cultare Square, the Council for Cultural Affairs, Taiwan and the Government Information Office, Republic of China(Taiwan) indicate that the formula of “movie plus literature” has created numerous success stories, with examples like The Da Vinci Code (China Times Weekly), which triggered a global fever for puzzle-solving; Harry Potter (Crown), which continued to be a hit; and Brokeback Mountain, whose emergence as a topic of popular conversation boosted sales for the original novel and various related merchandise.

The year 2006 was the year of LOHAS and its call for a lifestyle of simplicity and environmental friendliness, and many books on food & beverages, sports, travel, and fitness were tagged with the LOHAS label. “Vagabond Esthetics,” which advocates the importance of doing nothing, sprouted as a key trend in the second half of the year. Trends guru Ohmae Kenichi sustained his popularity in 2006 with six of his books translated and published in Chinese, among which M-Society (Business Weekly) and Off (Commonwealth) have triggered the most discussion. Incessant political turbulence in Taiwan also led to the publication of a multitude of books on politics and issues related to character and integrity.

The year 2006 also witnessed a shift toward e-publishing: blog articles enjoying high popularity were compiled into books, and at the same time a selection of books in print also went digital. The publishing industry initiated more interactive operations by going digital: many magazines offered online-reading services, and books were rolled out in online trial versions or promoted using dedicated blogs or webpages.

The traditional focus on Taipei is the theme for annual publications by the Department of Information of the Taipei City Government, and in 2006 a variety of publications drew due recognition, including A Taste of Taipei, a publication that features the imagery association of the food bowl and the geographic basin in which the city sits to cover destinations worthy of taste-testing; a photography book, “Taipei Pixel,” which presents Taipei from a different perspective; Eight Years of Growth in Taipei: Shedding the Old Skin; and 2006 Traveling in Taipei. In response to a rising demand for recreational information, Refreshing in the Woods of Taipei is a book that provides detailed introductions to 20 well-developed hill trails in Taipei and serves as an excellent guide to recreational hiking.
Part 2 Electronic Media

1. New Era for Terrestrial TV

Currently, there are 5 terrestrial TV stations in Taiwan: Taiwan Television Enterprise, Ltd. China Television Company, Chinese Television System, Formosa Television Company, and Public Television Service, which were set up in October 1962, October 1969, October 1971, June 1997, and July 1998, respectively.

In order to promote digital TV and improve national competitiveness, the focus of the Executive Yuan’s National Information Infrastructure (NII) is placed on establishing a sound environment for digital TV and radio. The NII has cooperated with five terrestrial-TV companies to set up the Digital Common Transmission Platform so as to speed up the establishment of digital-service infrastructure.

As of December 2006, 14 free digital channels were in service, providing citizens with greater choice beyond cable-TV channels. The public can install an indoor antenna, a UHF antenna, or a set-top box on their analog-TV set to receive digital-TV signals.

In August 2006, in order to encourage the introduction of new reception technologies and services for handheld digital-TV devices, the National Communications Commission (NCC) promulgated a trial broadcasting project for wireless, handheld digital-TV sets to facilitate the migration of the handheld TV toward the digital and wireless version.

2. Cable Television

The most visible event in 2006 regarding the electronic media was none other than the establishment of the NCC, whose commencement of operations on February 22, 2006 turned a new page in the history of telecommunication regulatory development in Taiwan.

According to surveys and statistics compiled by the NCC, as of the end of 2006 Taipei had 77

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name of System</th>
<th>Name of Operator</th>
<th>Business Permit Validity Period</th>
<th>Number of Subscribers (Source:NCC 2006 Q4 reports)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beitou &amp; Shilin</td>
<td>Yangmingshan</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>1999/9/28-2008/9/27</td>
<td>115,055</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zhongshan, Songshan and Datong</td>
<td>King’s Channel</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>1999/12/1-2008/11/30</td>
<td>69,140</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Everlasting</td>
<td>China Network</td>
<td>2000/3/13-2009/3/12</td>
<td>68,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neihu, Xinyi and Nangang</td>
<td>New Taipei</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>1999/12/1-2008/11/30</td>
<td>85,940</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liguan</td>
<td>China Network</td>
<td>1999/12/2-2008/12/1</td>
<td>53,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daan &amp; Wenshan</td>
<td>Daanwenshan</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>2000/2/11-2009/2/10</td>
<td>71,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wonderful</td>
<td>China Network</td>
<td>1999/11/18-2008/11/17</td>
<td>59,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pau Fu</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>2000/7/5-2009/7/4</td>
<td>18,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Areas</td>
<td>Chungwha</td>
<td>State-owned</td>
<td>2004/2/4-2013/2/3</td>
<td>44,960</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2006 estimate as submitted)
registered satellite-TV program providers and 161 channels, and new subscriptions to cable TV (excluding Multimedia on Demand, MOD) for the year amounted to 591,541.

Regarding viewing fees, the monthly upper limit for basic cable service is NT$550 per subscription, compared to NT$160 for Chunghwa Telecom’s MOD.

In July 2006, cable-TV operators of Eastern Multimedia Group made a major change in channel allocation for Japanese-language programs (VideoLand Japan, JET, Gold Sun, and NHK), which triggered controversy with the public and concern from the city council. The changes shall be reviewed and approved by the central government, but in light of the subscribers’ interests, the Department of Information of the Taipei City Government issued a written appeal to the NCC to ensure that public opinion be considered in their deliberations and that active measures be devised to address changes in channel allocation and serve as reference for future deliberation.

Statistics from the Department of Information of the Taipei City Government show that, in 2006, 24 groups applied for use of the Taipei Public Channel, and the airtime of their programs totaled 14,117 minutes, effective demonstration of the materialization of the spirit of providing public access to media and serving the purpose of encouraging civic participation through this public channel.

3. Radio Broadcasting

Radio stations in Taipei operate in a diversified market. Government-run public-radio stations are focused on providing public services. For example, the Police Radio System specializes in traffic reports and social services; the National Education Radio focuses on education; Taipei Radio Station is dedicated to public services and has become the 911 radio station of the Taipei City Government. A unique feature has been found with the Oh Ocean Channel of the Taipei Radio AM Station, which effectively expands the city’s scope of services with a voice dedicated to indigenous people. Oh Ocean Channel was chosen by the Government Information Office as Event of the Year 2005 in its Radio Broadcasting Yearbook. One of its recommended programs is Urban Classroom for Indigenous People, aired 9-11 am Monday-Friday, which features the introduction of languages from the indigenous language nest. Another program, Tribal Map, also in the same time slot, is dedicated to discussions on indigenous issues with participation of indigenous people to let their voices be heard through radio broadcasting.

Taipei Radio Station’s care and concern for indigenous people also extends to education for indigenous children, and in 2006 it launched a program dedicated to indigenous children -- Taipei Story Theater—which introduces tribal cultures to indigenous children with indigenous myths that have a modern flavor on top of their traditional essence. The quality of this program was duly recognized when it won the 2006 Mini Golden Bell Award in the category of best host in a children’s program.

4. Audio and Video Programming

(1) Video-Program Recordings

Statistics from the Department of Information of the Taipei City Government show that, at the end of 2006, about 2,300 video-program producers and 300 video-rental stores were registered in Taipei City. Major chainstores include Blockbuster and Asia 1, with over 20 and 30 stores in Taipei, respectively.
In order to maintain proper social norms, the Department of Information of Taipei City Government and police stations frequently send representatives to night markets, hypermarkets, and video-rental shops to investigate the possible selling of unauthorized video products. According to statistics provided by the Department of Information of the Taipei City Government, there were 59 violations found during 268 inspections in 2006, with 25,137 video-program titles identified as being in violation and reported to the Government Information Office, Republic of China(Taiwan) for rulings on punishment in accordance with the Radio and Television Law.

The regulation Classification of Publications and Video Programs was enacted on December 1, 2004, and statistics from the Department of Information of Taipei City Government show that 577 related inspections were conducted on video-rental stores in 2006 with no serious violations identified.

(2) Music Recordings

According to information provided by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry Member’s Foundation in Taiwan (IFPI), in recent years sales of legal recordings have been shrinking steadily, by over 10% per year, totaling a mere NT$2.6 billion in 2006, or a drop of over 75% compared to the record high of NT$11.6 billion in 1997.

That said, in keeping with advances in networking technologies, recording companies have come to realize that selling CDs through physical channels need no longer be their sole source of income. In recent years, many have devoted resources to developing such other revenue streams as mobile-phone music downloading and digital music, and some have even stopped distributing CDs through any physical channels to exclusively offer paid online music downloading. The digital-music market in 2006 grew to nearly NT$1 billion, with new business models creating an impact yet to be fully recognized.

During the year the IFPI lodged copyright-infringement lawsuits against two music-download operators, ezPeer and Kuro. On June 29th, 2006 a settlement was reached with ezPeer, which agreed to pay compensation for all damages and losses suffered by concerned music-copyright owners and to seek to secure appropriate authorization. The settlement with Kuro was reached on September 14th, 2006, with Kuro agreeing to pay compensation, stop offering P2P software, and shut down its file-sharing functions.

Part 3 International Media

Deployment of a wireless network in Taipei City trumped other major cities around the world with its 90% penetration rate, and the city was named global leader with the Intelligent City Award by the Intelligent Community Forum (ICF). This recognition was widely covered by media around the world, and was one of the most visible international news stories about Taipei City in 2006.

In an effort to promote intercity exchanges and foreign investment, then Taipei Mayor Ma Ying-jeou embarked on a business-solicitation mission to Europe in February, the USA in March, Singapore and Australia in May, and Tokyo and Kyoto, Japan in July, as well as to France in November for the 2006 Global Summit. All these events, widely covered by the domestic and international media, significantly improved Taipei’s visibility and successfully promoted Taipei City in the international community.
Important News Events

1. MRT Tucheng Line Commences Service
   The Phase 2 section of the MRT Bangqiao Line, and the new Tucheng Line, were opened for service on 31 May, coinciding with the Dragon Boat Festival Day in Taiwan. These newly constructed sections cover a route of about 7.5 km that begins at Xinpu Station and goes through Bangqiao Station, Fuzhong Station, Far Eastern Hospital Station, Haishan Station, and Tucheng Station to end at Yongning Station. The trip from Yongning Station to Taipei Main Station takes only 25 minutes, or 30 minutes less than a bus ride. The daily transportation capacity of this line is expected to increase by about 100,000 riders. Daily operation hours are from 6 am to midnight, with trains leaving alternatively to cover Kunyang to Yongning stations and Kunyang to Far Eastern Hospital stations at an average interval of 3-7 minutes during peak hours, 5-10 minutes during off-peak hours, and 15 minutes after 11 pm.

2. Council of Agriculture Rejects Panda Import Applications
   The third Review Meeting on Applications for Panda Import, convened by the Council of Agriculture, Executive Yuan, rejected the import of pandas from China with a ruling that the two applicants, Taipei Zoo and Leefoo Village Theme Park, both failed to complete requisite lodging facilities and training programs for medical-care personnel and provide concrete educational proposals for showcasing and promoting wildlife conservation. It therefore denied the issuance of documents required by Chinese authorities for application for the panda export permit in accordance with Item 2, Article 26 of the Implementation Rules for the Wildlife Conservation Act. Taipei Zoo filed an appeal, which was rejected; however, this setback did not lead to a halt in ongoing preparations to receiving the pandas, including construction of a Panda Hall and personnel training.

3. Conditional Opening of Pinglin Traffic Control Lanes of the Taipei-Ilan Highway
   The Environmental Protection Administration, Executive Yuan, R.O.C. convened the review, “Environmental Impact Analysis on the Conditional Opening (for Up to 4,000 Nonresident Cars per Day) of Pinglin Traffic Control Lanes of the Taipei-Ilan Highway” and agreed to open these lanes to handle a traffic load of up to 4,000 nonresident cars per day. They shall be closed down immediately upon identifying deterioration of the water quality in Feitsui Reservoir according to the Joint Management Consultation Meeting mechanism, to be coordinated by the Water Resources Agency, Ministry of Economic Affairs. The Taipei City Government expressed regret at this decision, but did not rule out the option of filing an administrative appeal based on the Basic Environment Act and Environmental Impact Analysis Act. Also, with the opening of these lanes, the Environmental Protection Bureau, Taipei County Government and the Taipei Feitsui Reservoir Administration have strengthened their crackdown on violations by expanding the current restricted area for the Feicui Reservoir catchment to cover its entire water-source area.

4. Taipei Becomes the World’s Largest Wi-Fi Network City
   Taipei City was verified by the international accreditation agency JiWire as the World’s Largest Wi-Fi Network City, with a certificate to that effect presented by JiWire’s CEO Kevin McKenzie, who came to Taipei especially for this purpose.
5. Taipei Named Winner of the Intelligent Community Awards 2006

On June 10th, 2006, Taipei City was named the Intelligent Community of the Year 2006 by the Intelligent Community Forum (ICF) of the World Teleport Association (WTA), beating other cities like Cleveland in the USA, Gangnam District of Seoul in South Korea, Ichikawa in Japan, Manchester in the UK, Tianjin in China, and Waterloo in Canada. Deputy Mayor King Pu-tsung went to New York to receive the award.

6. 2006 Digital Cities Convention Taipei

The 2006 Digital Cities Convention Taipei, co-hosted by Taipei City and W2i (The Wireless Internet Institute), took place on June 29th and 30th, 2006 at the Taipei International Convention Center, covering the two themes Wireless Broadband Cities and Intelligent Government through case studies, panel discussions, and seminars. On June 30th, Mayor Ma Ying-jeou was joined by 13 counterparts from Taiwan and other countries, including Gordon Kennedy, senior executive officer of Glasgow, Scotland; Herb Epp, mayor of Waterloo, Canada; David Power, deputy mayor of Gold Coast, Australia; Bayani Fernando, chairman of the Metro Manila Development Authority, Manila, the Philippines; Dianah Leah Neff, CIO of Philadelphia, USA; Matthew Lampe, CIO of Portland, Oregon, USA; Chris Vein, senior technology advisor to the mayor of San Francisco, USA; Hsu Tain-tsair, mayor of Tainan City; Zhu Li-lun, magistrate of Taoyuan County; Zheng Yong-jin, magistrate of Xinchu County; Lu Guo-hua, magistrate of Ilan County; and Chen Wei-ren, vice magistrate of Taipei County, signed the Digital City Declaration as a joint commitment to sustainable development and citizens’ welfare empowered by a digital city.

7. Taipei Mayoral and Council Elections

The fourth mayoral and tenth council elections for Taipei City took place on December 9th. In the mayoral election, Hau Lung-bin, the KMT candidate, won with 692,085 votes, or 53.89% of the cast votes; Frank Hsieh from the DPP secured 522,869 votes; James Soong got 53,281 votes; Li Ao, 7,795 votes; Ke Si-hai, 3,687 votes; and Chou Yu-ko, 3,372 votes. The turnout rate for the mayoral election hit a record low of 64.52%, a drop of 6.09% from the previous election, and 16.37% down from the election eight years ago. The turnout rate for the council elections was 64.54%, the lowest among the seven most recent elections.

8. Inauguration of the Newly Elected Taipei Mayor

The inauguration of the newly elected Taipei mayor took place at the City Hall auditorium on December 25th. Outgoing Mayor Ma Ying-jeou declared at the ceremony that municipal administration was an extremely complex business and for the past 8 years he had fully devoted himself to the upgrading of Taipei City. He also expressed high hopes that under the new leadership of Mayor Hau Lung-bin, Taipei would enjoy a sharper competitive edge, ultimately bringing benefits to all Taipei citizens. Mayor Hau Lung-bin thanked citizens for their support and recognition, and stressed that he would strive to make Taipei City the pride of the public over the next 4 years.
Part 4 City Communications

1. Communicating Public Policies

(1) 2006 Taipei Dadaocheng Fireworks and Music Festival

Offering the public quality recreational programs in the summer, the Department of Information of the Taipei City Government staged a fireworks show at Dadaocheng Wharf on Saturday, August 26th, 2006, with nearly 300,000 spectators gathering along both banks of the Danshui River to enjoy the wonderful event, which was complemented by a concurrent evening party in Sanchong City in keeping with a new mode of cooperation between Taipei city and county. Blue Highway river-cruise operators reported traffic volume of over 1,100 visits on that day, double the normal daily volume. Visitors also flooded into restaurants, hotels, and the Ningxia Night Market in the nearby area. The fireworks display brought visitors to Dadaocheng Wharf to experience the riverside-cycling lanes and Blue Highway services that have been developed by the city government, generating significant business opportunities on the ground as the splendid fireworks created a beautifully enchanted night sky.

Splendid night view at the 2006 Dadaocheng Fireworks and Music Festival

Creative decorations for Christmas trees
Media coverage included 20 entries in the print media and an SNG live-TV broadcast, bringing the fireworks and exposure to city development projects to people around Taiwan in what was a successful marketing event featuring impressive images of Taipei.

(2) Reconciliation, Cherishment, and Silent Night—2006 Christmas in Taipei

This series of events, featuring warmth and care, aimed to showcase Taipei as a city of cultural diversity through the broad participation of citizens, new immigrants, and elderly people. By spreading the quintessential Christmas spirit of love and sharing to all corners of society, the events helped make Christmas Eve in Taipei a night filled with peace and warmth.

These Christmas events included: Light Up Taipei—Lighting the Christmas Tree; Chains of Love-Joint Caroling at City Hospitals; Golden Age—Memorable Old Songs Concert in Neihu District; and Love without Borders—A Love Feast for New Immigrants and Christmas Party. The Taipei Christmas Party started at 6:30 pm on Christmas Eve at Civic Plaza, wrapping people in a warm, silent night. Christmas caroling was organized in Xinyi Business District, featuring the participation of Mayor Ma, who brought good tidings and best wishes to all. About 100,000 people flooded into this district for various events on that night.

(3) 2007 New Year’s Eve Program—Fireworks, Parade, and Carnival

Designed to amplify the joy of New Year and share the happy momentum of the New Year countdown with all citizens, the 2006 year-end program brought together a carnival, a parade in the business district, and a fireworks display at Taipei 101 to top off the New Year’s Eve party and New Year countdown in creating a traditional festival-like atmosphere for the annual New Year celebration across the city. On New Year’s Eve, besides the final countdown and a 3-minute (extended from last year’s 2-plus minutes) fireworks display at Taipei 101, starting at 2:30 pm major roads around City Hall were sealed to stage a grand-scale parade, with the participation of sixteen teams, that marked the opening of the series of events.

A grand-scale music concert, designed as the core of the New Year’s Eve party, saw a record-high audience of about 520,000 people and was broadcast live by TVBS-G, which enjoyed an average viewing rate of 1.67% that soared to 5.14% for the final countdown and fireworks display. This event proved to be another marketing success with the international media, securing significant coverage from such major news agencies as CNN, The Associated Press, and Reuters.

- People gathered for the final countdown at the New Year’s Eve Party
- Attendance was a record-breaking 520,000 people at the New Year’s Eve Party
(4) Discovery Center of Taipei

The Discovery Center of Taipei is the first city museum in Taiwan, serving as a platform that provides citizens access to information on the progress of municipal administration and the natural and humanistic features of Taipei.

Exhibitions at this center feature a wide variety of themes in a compact yet exquisite style. The year 2006 was marked by the following major programs: Showcase of 2005 Digital Archives Project; Hands-On Digital Experience—Digital Archiving Anytime, Anywhere; Ships with a Story to Tell; Making Homes While Excavating Irrigation Channels and Ponds—the Hydrological Development of Taipei in the Qing Dynasty; and A Taste of the North Gate—A Model of Taipei North Gate in Bricks of Pineapple Cake, as well as special exhibitions complete with thematic speeches and classes for public education, such as: Precious Rice—Rice Cuisine Culture in Taipei; and Ideal Fashion—My Apparel Memories of Taipei. In addition, the Keep Walking—Public Transportation in Taipei exhibition staged in 2005 was nominated for an Innovation Award for creative exhibition design in the Taipei City Government Quality Awards competition.

In reference to volunteer efforts in 2006, Lei Chao-zhi and Chen Zhu-jing were recognized for their Outstanding Volunteer Families. The date December 15th, 2006 marked the 4th anniversary of the Discovery Center of Taipei, and a folded flyer entitled “Taipei Memories,” which records the brief history and major achievements of this center over its four years, was published as part of the anniversary celebration.
2. Participation from the Private Sector

(1) 2006 ING Taipei International Marathon

The biggest-ever marathon in Taiwan history—the ING Taipei International Marathon—was kicked off at Civic Plaza on 17 Dec. 2006, with the highest numbers in the event’s three years: 23,000 competition runners and over 100,000 non-competition runners. To encourage participation by children, the organizer increased the number of places for children runners to 400, enriching and adding diversity to this event as people of all ages and nationalities mingled with one another to enjoy the sweating fun of road-jogging. Special features of the 2006 edition included the “More Joggers, More Public Benefit Fund” and “Prize Money for Record-breaking Mayor” challenge, in which ING gave away NT$100,000 designated for the public interest for each minute knocked off Mayor Ma’s running time. The previous record for a 10-km road run by Mayor Ma was 63 mins, 22 secs in 2005. In 2006, Mayor Ma finished 9 km with a time of 54 mins, 54 secs, thus garnering an NT$100,000 ING donation for the public interest.

(2) Computex Taipei

Computex Taipei 2006, the second-largest computer show in the world, took place June 6th to 10th, 2006 in Taipei. The slogan “We Link IT ALL!” underlined the theme of better integration of IT products into human life and was echoed by major vendors like Acer, VIA, Foxconn, ASUS, MiTAC, Intel, AMD, Microsoft, TI, and National Semiconductor. Statistics compiled by the organizer showed a record attendance of 30,275 overseas buyers over the five days, a significant increase of 7.15% from the previous year, as well as two other records—130,452 local business visitors and 526 foreign journalists. In regard to vendors at the show, this edition saw 1,312 domestic and overseas vendors taking up 2,907 booths, as well a 2% increase in net exhibition area from the previous year. In terms of number of show vendors, COMPUTEX TAIPEI is now a world-class IT trade event second only to the CeBIT show in Hanover, Germany. The multitude of vendors and products present at this event give a strong boost to Taiwan’s visibility and competitiveness, driving demand for Taiwan’s IT products in the domestic and overseas markets and contributing to the development of domestic IT industries.
(3) Taipei IT Month

Taipei IT Month 2006, the annual event for Taiwan’s IT industries, was staged on a grand scale at Exhibition Halls 1 and 3 of Taipei World Trade Center December 2nd to 10th, 2006. With the theme of “Embracing Digital Life,” this nine-day fair attracted about 750,000 visitors and over 350 vendors.

Besides its theme and content, which was as always rich and diverse, one major feature of IT Month 2006 was the “e-Government, e-Services Exhibition.” The Government Hall was hosted by 14 governmental agencies, such as the Taipei City Government, Ministry of Education, and Research, Development and Evaluation Commission, Executive Yuan. Exhibitions included Intelligent City—Taipei Vision, e-Government Exhibition, Taxation Administration Portal, National Cultural Database, and New e-Learning Experience, all showcasing the fruitful outcomes of e-Government services as well as policy guidelines for future technological development. Taipei IT Month, as an annual year-end program, has become one of the biggest promotional events for IT products in Asia as well as a platform for the government to improve information literacy.

In spite of the stringent competition in the mass-communication market in Taipei, media practitioners have risen to the challenge posed by economic hardship by demonstrating more creativity, resilience, and competitiveness. The Taipei City Government has worked diligently with the private sector on a wide variety of exciting programs to promote the political and economic strengths of this city and present its rich and diverse culture. These efforts have successfully attracted attention from the international media: The New York Times, Business Traveller, The New Zealand Herald, and Toronto Star all carried feature reports on various aspects of Taipei and recommended Taipei as a tourism destination. Major international news agencies like CNN, The Associated Press, and Reuters also presented Taipei on the global stage by giving significant coverage to the city’s New Year’s Eve program.