



In 2016 LINE UP boek en media will be celebrating its thirtieth anniversary, and the associate publishing firm kleine Uil had its fifteenth anniversary this year. Both companies have maintained connections with Compact for many years. The vital link between these two companies is Peter ten Hoer. We have asked him to look ahead at the next 30 years of Compact.

## Compact: A Magazine in Transition

### Will the Channel Beat the Content?

**Peter ten Hoer**

*You are the publisher of this magazine, among other things. Will publications such as Compact still be around on paper in 10 years' time?*

I believe so, but the function will probably be different. The online version will play a more and more important part. You can tell from the development of Compact what course we will steer. Until 2005 all we had was the paper version. Then we put an online archive in place, and all issues as of 1999 are now online. iPad and iPhone versions were next and in the future the website – accessible from all devices – will become more and more important.

*What's the advantage of digital publications?*

It's evident that they enable you to come even closer to timeliness. Now you work from deadline to deadline, but as the website acquires more of a blog function, there will be a deadline every day, so to speak. This makes different demands on editors and authors, obviously. A website – almost by definition – offers the opportunity to react. You'll have to moderate those reactions if you want to maintain the quality of the site. At the same time it enables you to make sure your readers become even more interested in the magazine.

Also, technology increasingly enables us to produce personalized issues: if you state certain areas of interest in advance, you only get articles on that particular area. So what you get is more customized information and that's what you pay for, if necessary. There's a danger, certainly, that wide knowledge may be lost – like when you read just one

particular section of a paper and skip the rest. On the other hand: who still reads a paper from beginning to end? When I use Blendle<sup>†</sup> I only select the articles that have a lot of appeal for me.

One of the major changes in digital publishing is in the changing role of the author, for we expect more and more of him. As a publishing firm we have our own network, but obviously authors too need to actively use their own network. This means that you can't simply ignore the social media. The days that authors could submit an article and sit back are over. We can't get round the impression that when you give your all, your efforts will be rewarded. That's an author 3.0 for you.

*What's the paper version of Compact going to look like?*

You might conceive of a situation where the paper magazine is used as a collection of the best pieces on the site, or to reflect on the updated

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they will take up content creating themselves, and then a publication like Compact will just stop to be relevant.

## *And what could the content look like?*

People who have certain knowledge and know how to get it across will always be important. KPMG has every reason to offer them a platform in a magazine or on a site and hold on to them. It's the responsibility of the publisher and the editors to tap the right networks and find the people in those networks who are ready to share their expertise. So the content of Compact will increasingly need to be derived from those networks. The online community of Compact will become more important. People are currently obtaining information, but in the future they will also provide it. You demonstrate your relevance in that community by publishing something, and its value and the amount of recognition are determined by the rest of the community.

The general editor and the editors of Compact will remain responsible for quality control, but that applies in equal measure to the readers who share their expertise. With the data that you contribute to the greater whole, the growth of knowledge will accelerate. 'Better, Faster, Stronger' is the motto.

## *When you look at the next 30 years of Compact, which predictions will come true?*

I don't think you need to look all that far ahead to predict that com-

puters will be able to write articles. If we're going to have self-driving cars in the near future, I'm sure it will be possible to have computers generate knowledge from other articles in your sphere of interest. The next step will be that computers will be able to write relevant articles themselves based on the data they have available.

In 10 years' time, investments in SMT (Statistical Machine Translation)<sup>2</sup> will pay off to the full, and multilingual versions of the articles for Compact on the fly will be available. Then Compact will develop into an international platform where KPMG will display its thought leadership.

In 20 years' time, the visualization as it increasingly presents itself in online versions of popular magazines, will also be carried out in the professional articles we find in Compact. Short tweets and intros serve to introduce a short video where the subject is fully outlined.

In 30 years' time, Compact will still be around of course, and myPhone will interview the you-Phone of a former general editor<sup>3</sup> about his view on how we use the time we have available to our full satisfaction, now that Machine Intelligence has made its final breakthrough and our former activities have been efficiently and scrupulously taken over by intelligent computers.

**Peter ten Hoor** is the director of LINE UP boek en media bv and of the kleine Uil publishing firm. Since 2015 he has been chairman of Holland's one and only cooperative bakery, which has existed for over 100 years. He graduated from the Library Academy in Groningen. [www.lineup.nl](http://www.lineup.nl) [www.kleineuil.nl](http://www.kleineuil.nl)

articles of the site from a broader perspective. In addition, there will always be a demand for special issues on specific themes. Some people like to have all those articles together in one issue. For that – admittedly, small – group an excellent magazine will remain available through printing on demand technology.

## *Is content king or will the channel be king?*

The role of the present publishers will be taken over by the owners of the channels: Bol.com, Google, Amazon and Alibaba. Technological companies with large customer databases, which in addition have the technical means available, will offer the customer personalized information in a very adequate way. If we, as Compact, fail to establish some sort of affiliation with those parties,

<sup>1</sup> <https://blendle.com>

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statistical\\_machine\\_translation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statistical_machine_translation)

<sup>3</sup> Hans Donkers, see <http://www.compact.nl/auteurs/C-Donkers-aut.htm>