

Digital Chinese-language media in Australia: Impact, influence and insights

Speakers: Professor Wanning Sun, Professor of Media and Communication Studies, UTS; Advisory Board member, UTS:ACRI

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Mr Bang Xiao, Supervising Producer, Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Chinese

Moderator: Professor Fran Martin, Professor and Reader in Cultural Studies, University of Melbourne

March 29 2023

Online

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Dr Corey Lee Bell:

Good evening members of the audience and special guests. Before I begin proceedings, on behalf of all of those present, I would like to acknowledge that this webinar is hosted on the lands of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation. I'd also like to pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging, acknowledging them as a traditional custodians of knowledge for this land. This session will now be recorded. We'll record audio, screen-share and our presenters. We will not be recording any video or audio input from our audience.

Welcome to all UTS students, staff, and all friends of ACRI and UTS. I'm Dr Corey Lee Bell. I'm a Research Officer at the Australia-China Relations Institute at the University of Technology Sydney, or UTS:ACRI. UTS:ACRI is an independent, non-partisan research institute established in 2014 by the University of Technology Sydney. Chinese studies centers exist in other Australian universities. UTS:ACRI, however, is Australia's first and only research institute devoted to studying the relationship between these two countries. UTS:ACRI seeks to inform Australia's engagement with China through research, analysis and dialogue grounded in scholarly rigour. If you would like to know more about UTS:ACRI and the Australia-China relationship, details are available on our website: australiachinarelations.org.

Today, we're happy to host the webinar 'Digital Chinese-language media in Australia: Impact, influence and insights'. This explores the nature and ramifications of the presence and role of Chinese-language user media, including information disseminated via the Chinese social media platform, WeChat, in Australia's Chinese community. The webinar features several parts. There'll be a brief introduction by the moderator, Fran Martin, a Professor in Cultural Studies at the University of Melbourne and the author of the very important work, *Dreams of Flight: The Lives of Chinese Women Students in the West*, which was published last year.

Her introduction will be followed by a presentation of the recently released book, *Digital Transnationalism: Chinese-Language Media in Australia*, which will be delivered by its authors, Professor Wanning Sun, who teaches Media and Communication Studies at UTS and who is the Acting Chair of the UTS:ACRI Advisory Board, and Professor Haiqing Yu, an Australian Research Council Future Fellow winner based at the Media and Communications Department at RMIT. There'll then be a panel discussion. This will feature Mr Leo Lian, the founder and director of Lion Media Group and Bang Xiao, an award-winning journalist for ABC Chinese. This will be followed by a short Q&A session. Please feel free to submit questions prior to the discussion. I'll now hand you over to our moderator, Dr Fran Martin.

Professor Fran Martin:

Thank you, Corey.

It's such a pleasure to be here with you and with everyone and with our distinguished panellists, and I'm very much looking forward to the discussion today where we have not only the two authors of the book that you mentioned, Professor Wanning Sun and Professor Haiqing Yu, but also the two practicing journalists who can collectively give us some insight into the workings of digital Chinese-language media in Australia from a whole range of perspectives including industry, business models, media profession, policy regulation, media content and narratives. And no doubt more as well.

So without further ado, I'd now like to introduce first of all Professor Wanning Sun, who is going to take about 10 minutes to speak about the book. Thank you, Wanning.

Professor Wanning Sun:

Thank you very much Fran, for agreeing to play the role of the moderator for this event. I can't think of a better person and more qualified person to do this than you. And yes, also thank you to the ACRI team for working very hard behind the scenes to make this webinar happen. I would also like to thank the co-panelists, Leo and Bang for agreeing to share their experiences from the media industry's point of view. And it's really great to see some colleagues from my own school and who also bring their students along.

I'd like to start by now acknowledging the country. I'm speaking here on the land of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation and as a first-generation migrant to Australia, I want to pay my respect to the Indigenous Elders leaders and leaders past, present and emerging.

Now, let me take a few minutes to introduce our book, why Haiqing and I decided to do this project and what questions we wanted to pursue, and how we went about doing this and what our key findings are. Of course, to summarise a long book with 10 chapters in 10 minutes, it sounds like a tall order, but I'm willing to give it the go.

So first of all, who do we study? Our study focuses on the first generation Mandarin-speaking PRC migrants in Australia. Mostly, but not exclusively those who are already Australia permanent residents or those who have become Australian citizens. The reason for this decision is simple. That is despite China's rise and despite the fact that migrants from the PRC are now the largest non-Anglo migrant group in this country, we know very little about their identity politics, their media habits and how they live out the reality of being in between the two countries that is China and Australia.

And then second, the question is what is our research focus? Well, our empirical focus is this kind of transnational space or media theories to tell us that for a migrant or for people in the diaspora, the country

of origin becomes a source of identity. The country of current residence become a source of rights, and an emerging transnational space is the space that's combining the two countries. So we are focusing on this transnational space. In other words, on one hand we studied people in this group as new migrants with particular sets of identity needs arising from the fact of their lived experiences from China. And they bring certain kind of connections, the memories with them and the continuous connection with the motherland. But on the other hand, we approach them also as new citizens in this country who faces a range of issues, challenges in their effort to become the new citizen, exercise their rights in their current country of residence.

So you might ask, why do you focus on digital and social media? Good question. In the early part of 2010s – WeChat subscription accounts, which I hope we have more time to discuss later – WeChat subscription accounts really transformed the way in which digital and Chinese-language media was delivered and distributed. It was just really a revolution in a sense. So since 2016, in addition to WeChat, the content delivered by WeChat, digital content has also been delivered by different kind of apps that are developed by the media outlets themselves. So as a result of that, most Chinese-language digital media in Australia now adopt a kind of dual platform delivery model, if you like. They use WeChat to push the content out and a lot of them also have their own sort of app.

So as a consequence of this widespread use of the apps, digital Chinese-language media have all but obscured traditional Chinese-language media. By traditional Chinese media, we call in media studies the legacy medias like newspapers and print media and radio or even television. That is in terms of the reach, in terms of the impact, and in terms of the audience size. So, digital technologies are really beginning to break down the boundaries between Australia's Chinese-language ethnic media, we used to call them ethnic media, and then Australia's English-language media and the Chinese-state media. So once upon a time, it's quite easy to delineate these differences between the three sectors, China, Australia, and the ethnic media in between. But with the arrival of the digital sort of platforms, we really see these previously separate media sectors to flow into each other's space, which makes things a lot more complicated. So the increasing use of mobile device is also collapsing the distinction between the content that is produced by media organisations and the content that's actually created by the users of social media platform.

So as a result of this development, issues such as foreign influence, propaganda, censorship, political control, all sorts of important issues that political communication scholars concern themselves with become very complex, a lot more complex than before. And so we think we need to sort of move beyond this kind of exclusive focus on the intention of the state actors like government. We also need to go beyond and focus on establishing a connection between certain media organisations and the state agents. So these questions need to be considered in the context of a much more complex set of questions such as what is the business model of the media? What is the audience size? What are the internet policies and regulations governing this Chinese-language media? And what are the technological affordances? And what modes of content deliveries that are different from the past? And what are the direction of content flow across the transnational borders?

A whole range of issues have been thrown up as a result of this digital media. So, our key questions, I guess for this project, is to ask, for instance, what are the differences and the connections between Chinese media in the PRC, Chinese-language media in Australia and Australia's English-language media? What is the difference and what is connection? And also, how is digital Chinese-language news and information in Australia produced, consumed and delivered and distributed? And also, we want to find out what role does digital technologies such as different kind of apps, including WeChat, what roles do they play in the dissemination of the information? And also, what are the implications of this new digital development on our understanding of control, censorship and influence?

So, what kind of methods do we actually use to achieve these research objectives? Well, first of all, we conducted two large quantitative surveys asking respondents about their media habits. And this happened in a relatively early stage of our project. And then, we also conducted a series of in-depth interviews with media

industry people about their business operations, their models and their editorial policies. And then, Haiqing and I participated in group discussions on social media particularly, including up to us putting together about 40 WeChat groups, each of them up to 500 people. So for the last three years, we've been pretty much immersed in that space. Sometimes I think we lived it, for spent too much time in that space. We also did this longitudinal sort of research by following the stories of several individuals, in order to understand their media practices as consumers, as entrepreneurs, as community leaders and as well as voters.

So, what are our findings? Well, I'll say that some of our findings are more relevant to media scholars who are interested in the whole range of issues such as digital media, citizenship studies, diaspora, politics and international communication, so on and so forth. And it is impossible to canvas all of them. I know that. And so, I might just having to jump in here and use the rest of the five minutes to summarise some of the headline findings. It's not a task I relish in doing. I hate doing these kind of things and I do worry about committing the cardinal sin of being simplistic and cherry picking as an academic. But given I have only five minutes, I'm just going to do my best. And also, I will highlight some of the issues that I suspect a lot of the peoples in this audience would like to know that is political influence.

So here are some of the key findings, not all of them, I'll highlight some of them.

First of all, our research kind of challenges the assumption that the Chinese-language media functions primarily as instruments of the Chinese government or primarily as part of the Chinese soft-power agenda. There's a lot of understanding this is the case. Because our survey data and our detailed analysis of news and the discussions on several Australian-based WeChat account finds that many outlets do indeed display pro-China nationalism. That's for sure. But we are convinced the reasons for this are very diverse and complex, and not always political, and although sometimes maybe ideological. So we find that for instance, in most cases it does not really make business sense for this media outlet to function as first and foremost mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party or to push this agenda, nor is it profitable for this sector to simply reproduce or repost the content of the mainstream English-language media, because it doesn't necessarily represent their point of view.

So, in fact, most Chinese-language digital and social media in diaspora, they recognise the migrant's sense of in-betweeners, the ambivalence towards both China and Australia. And so, their business model is somehow designed to take advantage of these in-betweeners, if you like. In other words, we have found that most media outlets in this space to be [what] we call content brokers. I know Leo probably will talk more about how he functioned as a content broker later on.

Second, our research also challenges a very widely-held view that since the Chinese-language media platform used by the Chinese migrants are subject to the surveillance of the China's internet regulators, so that the widespread use can only – they assume that since it's subject to regulation and to control – this widespread use can only have a detrimental effect on our democracy. That's kind of one assumption. This concern is really understandable, but it's a bit simplistic.

Our book has showed that like other social media platforms, Chinese-language media are used for both democratising and anti-democratising purposes. For example, okay, WeChat can be used to spread misinformation, disinformation, you read a lot about that in Australian media, but it's also capable of sort of fact-checking and actually sort of repudiate this fake news. And so, it can be used to promote extreme views for sure, but it can also mobilise civic action, encourage political discussion and participation in Australian politics. The current debate, for instance, on WeChat about the pros and the cons of the Voice referendum is a really good case in point that wasn't in our book because our book was finished quite a while ago.

So finally, I'll just say that there is also this dominant view in Australia's public commentary and media discourses that Australia's Chinese-language media are subject to the censorship regime and that they engage in self-censorship in order to circumvent top-down censorship. That is true. Our research confirms that. We have no argument with this view, but what we do diverge from these commentators is that we do not find evidence that suggests that just because self-censorship through the fear of being banned and being shut down, we don't think it's the same thing as engaging in propaganda on behalf of the Chinese government. And we argue that we need to make a defined distinction between a self-censorship and top-down censorship. I know it's a subtle distinction and I know it is too subtle for some people to get. But this is important to make this distinction because first, our study [is] of quite a number of media entrepreneurs, and I'll say Leo is one of them who operate in this space. And through the study of them, I have identified some really creative ways of resisting, criticising censorship, evading censorships and bypassing censorship and other form of political sort of oppression.

And also, they find ways of using this space to creatively engage in entrepreneurial activities as well as cultural expression. So indeed the content that is circulated on WeChat is subject to scrutiny by Tencent and censorship by the Chinese authorities. That is plain for all to see. Or you only have to have some of your messages taken out or have your account shut down to know that is the reality, that is the space that they're operating in. That's plain for all to see.

But however, in terms of control, WeChat is not in that sense very dissimilar from say Facebook or Twitter. It is a social media platform that carries wide-ranging and diversely sourced content and its ideological landscape is fragmented and contested, although it does display an overriding sort of patriotism for their motherland. And this contestation or fragmentation of the spaces despite the Chinese government very heavy-handed attempt at control and the censorship.

So I think I'll just stop here so that I think Haiqing will dive in and discuss some case studies. So hopefully, that will help clarify or elaborate some of the points I've outlined, Fran. So over to you.

Professor Fran Martin:

Thank you, Wanning, for that fantastic overview. I mean, I feel like you've given us two things. Number one is a really strong sense of what a watershed moment the last few years have been for Chinese media globally and in Australia in particular, in terms of the technological affordances of the platforms and the way they work and the way they displace older forms of ethnic media and problematised nation state boundaries and all kinds of things. Secondly, those robust challenges you've outlined to conventional ways of thinking that your very careful and obviously very sound research has also thrown up the idea that this is all much too complex to have a simple kind of message such as we often get.

So yes, you're right, right now I would love to invite Professor Haiqing Yu to give us, to flesh this out a little bit more with some case studies if you would, for about 10 minutes. Thank you, Haiqing.

Professor Haiqing Yu:

Thank you, Fran. It's good to be here to share some details. But I'd like to throw out some points before I delve into the case scenarios.

I have to clarify that our research was conducted between 2018 and 2020, mostly in the pre-COVID era. We wrote the book during the COVID-19 lockdowns, the global pandemic, and ensuring geopolitics involving China-US tension, and Australians role in it, such as Five Eyes and AUKUS, have had huge impact on the Chinese-language media sector in Australia. We have touched upon some of the issues and the changes in

the book, but not extensively. Wanning and others have done more work in the field, but what I'm sharing is based on our previous research for the book. It's a little bit outdated, but still relevant.

The second point I want to make is that Chinese media market in Australia has seen significant growth in recent years, largely driven by the growing Chinese population. While focusing on Chinese social and digital media, we acknowledge the continuing importance of newspapers, magazines, TV channels and radio stations that cater to the needs of Chinese communities and the businesses. We also note the growing importance of Chinese versions of Australian mainstream media outlets such as ABC Chinese, SBS Chinese, *The Australian* – the Chinese version, et cetera.

Thirdly, I want to point it out that Chinese digital media market is characterised by diversity and a fierce competition. Even though we focus on WeChat, it is only just one of many other social media platforms that Chinese-Australians use, such as Weibo, XiaoHongShu, YouTube, Instagram, DouYin (TikTok), Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, et cetera. They're all used by Chinese community members. So in this fierce, competitive marketing environment, how to produce quality content that caters to the needs of the market and the platform recommendation algorithms has been on the mind of every self-media operators. I'm sure Bang and Leo will discuss more on that. So we acknowledge the important role of alternative Chinese-language media outlets that are operated by people of non-PRC background and of Chinese media outlets that use non-Chinese social media platforms for community engagement. They all play important role and they're all important tools for communication and information sharing among the Chinese communities in Australia.

And next point I'd like to make is censorship. I know everybody has that in mind and Wanning has discussed that. But what I want to point it out to reinforce Wanning's point is that censorship is not all about WeChat or Chinese social media platforms. It should not overshadow many diversified ways of engaging with the platforms for purpose other than criticising all supporting the Chinese government or the CCP [Chinese Communist Party], such as social commerce. People engage with social commerce. Business, content businesses, marketing, political communication during federal and state election campaigns in Australia. All these are the important other purposes in the usages of Chinese-language social media platforms other than the dichotomy of criticising or supporting the PRC.

Lastly, I'd like to say a bit about the WeChat subscription account. Well, we know WeChat is the preferred social media platform for personal use for most Mandarin-speaking Chinese-Australians and students. There are three spaces for people to deliver and circulate and consume content on WeChat. One is the chat group, the other is the Moments so it's a bit like friends feed, and then the third is the WeChat subscription account. It is one of the three types of official accounts on WeChat. The other two are services accounts and enterprise accounts. In our research we focus on WeChat subscription accounts as it's open to businesses and individuals but they're only available for registration by Weixin account holders.

Here we have to point out the difference between WeChat and Weixin because the WeChat/Weixin operate as one app, two systems. So one platform, two apps, basically. WeChat is subject to the WeChat terms of conditions but Weixin is only available to PRC mobile holders and subject to the Chat PRC terms and conditions and therefore censorship. Because WeChat subscription accounts have to be registered by account holders who are Weixin account holders, WeChat subscription accounts are therefore subject to Weixin censorship. Australia-focused WeChat subscription accounts ran by Chinese-Australians are all registered under Chinese proxies or intermediaries. So this needs to be made clear.

All right, in the book we have examined the political economy of platform operation, technological infrastructure and these affordances. Regulatory framework, business procedures and operations, I'll leave it to Leo and Bang. But in my case, in the case scenario of discussion, I will focus on how individual or individuals generate, circulate and distribute content and narratives on these platforms. And secondly, how is

this the production, the circulation and consumption of this content in Australia are advanced and [a form of] economic activity, cultural form and also a social practice.

I'll focus on two scenarios. One is the role of self-media - *zi méitǐ* (自媒体) - in community mobilisation, citizenship education and the fight against misinformation. Then secondly, I'll look at a particular kind of social commerce, well, Chinese social media platforms that go parallel to trading.

Alright. When we look at [the] self-media industry, it is very diverse. It has a lot of commercialisation, impetus and overseas outreach, international influence. But we have focused on user generated non-institutionalised, now for individual-ran self-media accounts on social media platforms such as WeChat, Weibo and YouTube. These self-media accounts are created and ran by individual Chinese-Australians who are based in Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra and Perth. WeChat based self-media accounts are all not-for-profit with low members or followers. They use chat groups for this to disseminate content. They often start from sharing personal experiences and thoughts as new migrants in Australia. As one person that we interviewed told us, I quote, 'I'm just [a] nobody who likes to share my views. If you like my articles, be happy or you can reward me. But if you don't like my articles, just ignore me. Move on.'

So some ran the WeChat subscription accounts or chat groups as a public forum for all information hub for like-minded people to share and exchange information and opinions. Such accounts and chat groups often play the role of peer-to-peer mutual help, education and, more importantly, community mobilisation. They mobilise members to compile and translate information from various Australian government websites in the mainstream media, such as information about Australian education systems, public policies concerning multicultural issues and democratic procedures, particularly during the federal elections. They also mobilised members and the followers who participate in local community events, mainstream affairs and the charity initiatives such as donating masks to hospitals and the community organisations during the COVID-19 outbreak. They're all well-known figures among Chinese community members. They have a good reputation as trustworthy community and opinion leaders.

So the second role of the Chinese-language media that have played among the Chinese community in Australia is citizenship education. We have used the 2019 federal election as a case study to explore civic education and citizen-making in the digital space. It has become very clear to us that participants in live politically oriented WeChat sessions among the Mandarin-speaking communities, more political engaged individuals. Members in those groups can be divided into several types. So we have the silent majority who would mostly just watch and learn. And then we have the vocal minority whose views may or may not have wide resonance. We have the opinion leaders who exercise influence on critical issues. We also have the lobbyists who advocate on behalf of one particular party. We also have the group managers who are responsible for the behaviour, managing the behaviours of the members in their group and have the power to kick out anyone who does not abide by the group protocols. From both Labor and the Liberal camps, new opinion leaders have emerged to play an active role in debating and interpreting the policy statements of politicians and their parties, taking it upon themselves to repost new stories, and the tweets from English-language media outlets.

So I would just use one example, Han. He's probably in the audience at the moment. He manages the chat group of nearly 5,000 people comprising mostly of first-generation Chinese migrants. He aims to enhance Chinese-Australian legal and the political awareness, irrespective of one's education, profession, experiences or political lines. He's highly regarded for his leadership by group members. Occasionally he would set an agenda or propose a topic for members to have a meaningful and focused discussion, rather than just allowing the discussion to meander in multiple directions. During the election campaign, he strictly forbade personal attacks. Instead, he encouraged the meaningful discussions of major party policies. He also led in misinformation debunking during and after the election campaigns. It's really a breath of new fresh air in the jungle of in-group fighting, fake news and defamatory attacks that characterise numerous other chat groups. Individuals like Han take it upon themselves to select and post news stories and the political information in

English and the Chinese from a wide range of social media, newspapers, television, search engines, and often they provide their own summaries, interpretations and Chinese translations. Group members would always look up to those individuals for advice, for their opinion and knowing that they are exposed to a diverse array of news and perspectives.

So it is through this actions of these opinion leaders, through their mentoring, modeling and the teaching, that we have witnessed a new kind of active citizenship emerging. So they adopt new civic information style and we call them the actualising leaders. They are voluntary, individualised, self-expressive and anti-authoritarian individuals. They're not affiliated with any institution but organised via the online networks and through connective action. Their leadership, though informal, is established through their individual capacity to produce, share, interpret, and assess information.

The third important role about the self-media content suppliers...

Professor Fran Martin:

Haiqing, I'm sorry. This is very embarrassing. I hate to interrupt you. I'm getting little messages that maybe we should. Haiqing, is it possible to keep the next points you are going to make for the ensuing discussion because we're running a little bit behind time and I'm particularly keen to allow Leo and Bang to come in to the discussion. And I do hate to interrupt. Is that alright?

Professor Haiqing Yu:

Yeah, sure. I can talk more or less. Just depend on what you want.

Professor Fran Martin:

Okay.

Professor Haiqing Yu:

That's alright. Easy. So just very briefly about the fight about misinformation, I already mentioned that, but I would also like to mention another individuals called Bing. She one of those active community members who mobilise among themselves to combat misinformation in chat groups. So she and her volunteers established a Chinese-Australian fact check and that played an important role during, particularly in the year 2020 and 2021 during the COVID outbreak. So I won't say more about that. And also 'Han's 'afé' is another WeChat group that's also exemplary in mobilising members to fight, identify and fight disinformation and fake news around politics and social affairs.

All right, now very lastly, I'll just mention a bit about the informal business of daigou and how it has enabled many Chinese living in Australia to make a living and even transform themselves into micro entrepreneurs through social media marketing, mainly WeChat in the Weibo. They make a profit by charging commissions but they are important part of the informal economy and the transporter economist between Australia and China. Many people have written on that. Fran, you have written on that as well. But we wanted to use that example to demonstrate how Chinese social media platforms are not just about politics and not just about political communication. There are so many other ways that you can use and engage with those platforms, just as any other platforms, whether they are made in China or not. Here we are.

Professor Fran Martin:

Yeah, absolutely. It's such a great example for showing the completely apolitical, depolitical, uses of Chinese digital media, isn't it? The parallel trading phenomenon. Thank you, Haiqing. And I'm sorry again for having interrupted. But thank you for that really detailed and illuminating overview of the complexity of functions of these media in Australian society.

So now I would like very much to turn to some people who are working in this space on the ground as media practitioners in different roles. First of all, we have Leo Lian, who is the director and founder of the Lion Media Group, which is really one of the major players in this space in Australia. So Leo, if I can ask you now to perhaps give us, fill in a bit of the detail here about your own experiences of running a Chinese-language media company in Australia. You might want to think about, as Haiqing was mentioning, what is the business model? Who's the intended audience? What kind of content do you like to provide and why is that? What shapes the content? Have you faced any challenges operating this platform here in Australia? Thanks Leo.

Mr Leo Lian:

Yeah, thank you Fran. And thank you for having me.

My name is Leo. I'm founder and managing director of Lion Media Group. For those of you don't know about my company, the company was founded back in 2012 which is at the time that rising social media, like Weibo, was very popular among the Chinese community back in China and here in Australia. Along the journey we have slowly or gradually developed our social media channels in terms of the followers and the content distributions. Now we have run a few different WeChat channels that are delivering news, also content including interviews, cultural events, food, fashion, travel, anything about knowledge sharing just to break the gap between the Chinese-speaking community and the main society and helping them to integrate into the Australian life easily and comfortably.

As I mentioned, the business model we have is our major source of revenue was through advertising. And over the years we have built the capabilities of – We more stand from the business perspective and our channels are more focused on delivering local related news and everything about people living in Melbourne, rather than on the national level. Over the years we have building the capabilities, helping the businesses that includes local Chinese-owned businesses, which obviously their main customers are Chinese speaking communities, as well as Australian businesses that wants to tap into these local Chinese market. So we're helping them and work with them to connect to these Chinese market. Our key partners also includes the mainstream media agencies as well as the Chinese digital agencies that help in those companies to tap into this market. We, as a social media channels, which is in the downstream of this value chain. We are taking care of their marketing strategies, planning, content creation, and just to create the content that we think the community will create and to connect those brands into this community.

The experience of running Chinese digital medias could be unique, challenging, but also rewarding. Over the years, the challenges we might face includes the economy. Obviously if there's an economy recession or downturn, we might, like any other media companies, we might face our clients cut their cost or just –as well as the, I think in terms of the – this is a Chinese digital media market, it's a fairly small market comparing to Australia media and entertainment. I recently read a report from PwC that's said Australia, the whole market, media and entertainment market, worth at \$17 billion, around \$17 billion. But when we look at the media agencies, there are only a handful of Chinese digital agencies on the market comparing to the mass market. So the market is fairly small, but it's very competitive. This is due to initially the new entrance. The barriers to enter into this market was pretty low at the beginning. But over time we can see that's a lot of players are on these digital media landscapes. There's over a dozen influential WeChat subscription accounts on the market.

Another challenge could be the talents, retentions. Initially we have to engage with internships to – after they graduate they could become our full-time professionals. But over time we see these people, they could have other options to either moving back to China to work to start their life again or to start, they could move up to other mainstream medias or agencies. But it's also rewarding that we can see that we do really helping these international students, new migrants, young families, with delivering this content and helping them to integrate this, our main society. For example, in the 2016 census, I believe there was no Chinese version of the census survey. And for many of our followers it was their first time to fill the survey. So we translated, our editors team, we translated the census survey into Chinese, word-by-word, line-by-line, and that article was shared over a hundred thousand views. So we can see that we are really helping people to integrate to the society. Right. Yeah, that's my comment.

Professor Fran Martin:

Thank you so much, Leo. What a fantastic example, translating the census. And isn't it astonishing that it had to be a private media group that did that and not by the Australian government.

Mr Leo Lian:

Yes.

Professor Fran Martin:

When you look at the content of what they found in that census, they ought to have known that they would need to do that. Anyway. That's really fascinating. Thank you so much.

Mr Leo Lian:

Thank you.

Professor Fran Martin:

I'd now like to invite our next speaker who is Xiao Bang and he's a supervising producer at ABC Chinese, a very different kind of media organisation, obviously, from Leo's example.

Bang, I would love to ask you actually a few questions and you can pick and choose from these. But I'm wondering first of all, what role you feel ABC Chinese plays and how that is different from other Chinese-language media in Australia that are not part of the national broadcaster. So you can compare and contrast ABC Chinese to either WeChat public accounts of various kinds or Leo's group. In terms of intended audiences, opportunities and challenges you may be facing.

And then if we have time, just because, Bang, you've written so movingly in recent times about your personal experiences of working as a Chinese-born journalist in Australia and for the ABC. You've discussed double pressures of disapproval from Chinese government authorities on the one hand and Australian racists on the other. It just sounds like a very difficult place to be. And if you're comfortable or we have time, it would be wonderful too if you were able to share any further reflections on your own positioning, that interesting positioning that you occupy. Thanks. So pick and choose please and I hasten to add too for listeners, both of our industry representatives tonight are speaking from their own experiences, and we must understand they're presenting their own personal views in answering these questions rather than necessarily representing the organisations they work for. Thank you.

Mr Bang Xiao:

Thank you so much, Fran.

Thanks for having me tonight. It's really fantastic to be connected with everybody on this panel today given that I've known everyone for years, and I admire your work in the past couple of years as well.

My name is Bang Xiao. I'm a bilingual journalist from ABC's Asia Pacific Newsroom. I'm also the supervising producer for the ABC's Chinese-language news contents, ABC Chinese. We have a YouTube channel, a digital website, and also our newsletter and a couple of social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook. And the difference between ABC Chinese and other Chinese-language media is that it's part of the national broadcaster, which is independent. It is not involved with any interest from any political party, any governing bodies, or any commercial network. And that means that all of the journalism that the team has been doing is purely on the purpose to serve Chinese-Australians and also Chinese readers from the world, around the world.

The content we produce here, I'll take myself as an example, we actually serve both English-speaking audiences as well as Chinese-speaking audiences in Australia. That is a very unique role that the team and myself are playing in this country. As China as a rising country in our region, Australians are showing unprecedented interests in knowing about China and its role playing in these particular times. At the same time, we have a growing community from Chinese-Australians as well as other Asian Australian communities that we call multicultural community in this country. But the media representation of these communities is underserved and underrepresented. So for our English-language coverage as part of the ABC News, we indeed have a large amount of resource has been invested into that area to fill the gap and to really bring nuance and bring diversity in terms of perspectives, voices, and content into the broader coverage.

But at the same time, in terms of the Chinese-language contents myself and my team produce, this is a independent platform that is not subject to censorship or other political reasons that could be having an impact on the editorial decision for the stories we work on. Our purpose is to serve Chinese-Australians, to connect them as a bridge for them to be able to understand the politics, the current affairs that is happening around the country.

For example, this morning we published an article explaining why the Labor had a big win in the New South Wales election recently, and what is the rationale behind that, and how did the Parliament as well as Chinese voters think about the result. But at the same time, we are also filling the gap about the China coverage, what's been going on in China, what is the most trending and significant topic that is also concerned by the Chinese communities in Australia, and how we see China as a rising power from our perspective. And talking about racism across the country during COVID. And the team had a huge resource and efforts to actually tackle the issue and to be connected with the community and authorities across the country. So that is the work we've been doing, and we've been trying to make a huge effort into stands on behalf of first generation Chinese-Australians and to serve them as our audiences as the first priority.

But another part of the question, from my personal perspective as a journalist working in Australia, apparently it's a really special experience and a very unique position that we see how we are portrayed in this media landscape as well. Having said that, I'm personally banned on WeChat, so that means I wouldn't be able to enjoy the beautiful contents or the discussion that is happening across the country in those WeChat groups that Haiqing just mentioned. For example, 'Han's 'afé' or Bing's fact check groups. During COVID, I was engaged with those groups so closely because that has become part of the sources of my journalism inspiration. But at the same time, I'm subject to racism in this country as well. When we are covering racism, people could be quite offensive when they gave you the feedback.

But I think the reality is that when we think about the audience, people come to the ABC. They want to read and want to find out the facts that is not available somewhere else. As Wanning also mentioned, there are a number of different media, form of media that is existing in Australia. There is Chinese state media, there is English-language media, so-called mainstream media, but also the WeChat self-media that is serving Chinese communities in Australia. But my team or myself trying to play a role in this landscape is that we want to serve the audience with the fact that it's not available for them. For example, the Russia's invasion in Ukraine and those contents. Sometimes, it's not because of censorship or self-censorship across the board, but some it could be just basically because people are not interested in coverage.

But on behalf of that, I think Chinese-Australians are also entitled to be given the information that is equally given to the general public in Australia. And also, we explain a lot of things that is so nuanced in Australian politics. For example, the Voice, what is the Voice and why it is so controversial? That is the topic that is so controversial and being ignored by our consumers, and my team and myself has been trying so hard to find a way to cover it in a way that we could make the story about the Voice relatable for Chinese Australian readers so that they feel that they're part of the discussion instead of actually looking at the topic as strangers.

Professor Fran Martin:

Thank you so much, Bang. That's just really fascinating insights that you've offered to us, so thank you.

We now have, I think somewhere between, say, 10 and 15 minutes for a discussion among the panel. And I've got a few questions here which I'll pose to panel members. Also, to remind people, after that, we'll have a Q&A where we'll be fielding questions from the listeners. I can see we have more than a hundred people online here with us, so please send your questions through the Q&A button at the bottom of your Zoom and we'll choose from those later when we get into the Q&A.

But for now, what I'd like to do is actually come back to the first of our speakers, to Wanning, because I know in your book, Wanning and Haiqing, one of your big case studies is *Sydney Today*. This is a flagship account for the Today Group, the first of the *Today* accounts that was opened. It's one of the most widely read Chinese-language news and lifestyle content producers in Australia, and it runs similar accounts in Melbourne and I think Adelaide, Brisbane, other cities. Would you like to tell us more about your findings on this specific company and its operations and where something like the *Today* accounts fit in in relation to the other kinds of digital Chinese-language media that we're speaking about tonight?

Wanning, is that... are you okay to answer that one? Thank you.

Professor Wanning Sun:

Thank you, Fran. And thanks for the question because it does give me a chance to talk about something that's not covered by this panel.

But nevertheless, the important part of this space that is news business is specialised in providing everyday useful information that is useful to the Australian Chinese in Australia. But *Sydney Today* is an example of Chinese-language media's attempt to produce news and current affairs. So in the sense, it's technically news media. But nevertheless, it operates in a way that's very, very different from what you and I understand the news media and from what Xiao Bang describes they do at ABC, right? And it's really a really very unique preacher in its own right.

And so we spend quite a bit of space in the book, a chapter and a half, looking at *Sydney Today* as a case studies, not just because it's the biggest outlet and it reaches as many more people than others, but also because we were very interested in its modus operandi, how it produces its news and information and what sort of editorial policies that govern the editor's decision about what is important and what is resonant, what's relevant for them. And so in order to find out these questions, we did a few things.

First of all, we did a content analysis, which is a particular random month in 2019, I think, 2010, I can't remember, which is a month where we looked at all the news articles that's being produced. And there are 103 of them in that month, in month of July. And then we quantitatively break down them to find out what categories of stories they are. And we found actually not surprisingly that the biggest kind of story narrative is stories that concerns the Chinese communities in Australia. So in other words, if it is just concerning the mainstream, such as the Voice as Bang mentioned, you wouldn't register very high. But if it's something that happens in China but it has nothing to do with this particular group, this doesn't rank very high. So they're very, very particular in choosing the kind of thing, narratives that speak to this particular community. So that's the highest ranking category.

The next category next to that, lower, is stories about crime in Australia, about what happens on the street and then theft and the violence and the crimes and whatever, and racism, and particularly anti-Chinese racism. Or I often see stories about a student in Melbourne, a Chinese student is being attacked. And that's the kind of things that really make people take notice. And then there is other stories to do with the government's immigration policy, change about various schemes and what has the new information that's just come out that concerns this community, or what are government's policies relating to the international students for instance. So all the things, all the news and current affairs that concern them.

And then we also asked the question as what are the most popular kind of narratives in the stories? We actually look at some of the stories that had the very, very high rating, highly trafficked stories. We choose these stories. And it turned out that the findings reinforce the quantitative thing that is the stories that actually get really a lot of trafficking, a lot of clicking if you like, is the stories that's happening to the Chinese communities in Australia. So we did a narrative analysis as well as the content analysis. And in addition to that, we interviewed a couple of senior editors whose job it is to decide on day-to-day basis what kind of stories to choose and what kind of stories to feature prominently.

And so again, we asked edit – editors: 'What are stories that really rank really high?' They will say, 'Anything that happens in the Chinese community in Sydney will be the highest. Then anything that happens to Chinese communities in Australia but not necessarily in Sydney is high but is below the first, Sydney one. And then anything that happens to Chinese community in LA for instance, also is of interest to us because we are all part of the Chinese diaspora.' And then they have their own news values too, so to speak, their own hierarchy of relevance and importance, which we think that's quite interesting.

And the other thing that's really, really interesting about *Sydney Today*, and it is the fact that it actually embodies a new kind of news genre we call the new news genre, in the sense that very, very small percentage of the news content that's produced them was original. They were actually, great majority is what we called the combined, the compilation of the content, synthesising the content from various sources such as *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Today*, or *Daily Mail* in Australia, and then Chinese-language, Chinese media from China, and diasporic Chinese-language media from LA, and synthesise them wherever necessary and putting an editorial slant of its own so that it's a way of making this kind of stories relevant and digestible and comprehensive to this particular audience.

So the notion of *xǎo biān* (小编) or the editor is very, very key because that person is really cultural intermediary, if you like. Figuring out and deciding for you what kind of content should be interest to you and

explaining to you what's happening, and then just encourage people to think about this vis-a-vis their own lifetime experience. That is itself is quite innovative. We find that quite interesting.

We also ask questions about censorship and what kind of content. We say, 'You don't publish. You don't seem to publish content as highly critical of China or Chinese government.' And the answer is very, very clear: 'Well, because if we do, then we won't be able to deliver the content because we will deliver the content by platform and the platform, we won't get through.' So there is a certain level of watching our own content to filter out some of the content [that] might offend the regulators, and that's certainly, that's there and there's no doubt about that. But it's done because it's part of their business decision to drive as many, as much traffic as possible.

And also they figure out that the great majority of the intended readers are the first-generation migrant, Mandarin-speaking migrants from China. And a lot of them have a deep attachment to China culturally. And so they would like to give what these people want. They would not like to put them off by publishing content that put them off. So, in a way, they're more concerned about putting the readers off than putting the Chinese government off because Chinese government doesn't give them a cent and they realise there's no business, there's no profit to be made out of being the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party or the Chinese government. But there's a lot of profit to be made out of catering to the need of this – identity need of this group. I hope that's just to give you a bit of an idea.

Professor Fran Martin:

Yeah, that's great. Thank you so much, Wanning. That's a really rich answer.

It's also great to see the questions coming in for Q&A. I'm looking forward to that. I think the other panellists can see them as well, and maybe we could all be just quietly looking at those to prepare.

But Haiqing, meanwhile I have a question for you. It is a question I'm personally interested in. I guess the main focus of your ethnographic work in the book, as you've said, is on first-generation PRC migrants in Australia. And you identify a tension in, and I'm quoting here from the book, 'The space in which these individuals seek to meet, on the one hand, both their identity needs and to overcome migrant citizenship challenges.' Or to be more precise here, we're concerned with the transnational space in which they negotiate the relationship between those two, between identity needs and citizenship challenges.

I'm wondering in approaching that, what role do factors from Australian society such as increasing xenophobia in recent years, anti-Chinese racism which has got a whole new boost through certain bilateral tensions between the two countries. What role do these negative aspects from Australian society when I guess thinking about China, thinking about Chinese migrants, what role do these play in the social and media engagements of your research participants? I'm wondering if that turns people off, English-language, so-called mainstream media, or if it pushes them in particular directions with their media engagements. Thanks, Haiqing.

Professor Haiqing Yu:

Well, Fran, that's a very big question, and I would rather spend more time addressing the questions in the Q&A.

But the question that you have raised is quite controversial, and the tension between identity needs and the citizenship needs in the transnational space has played out on Chinese-language. Digital and the social media has always been the key features. One of the key features that we have observed, particularly as you said in the concept of post-COVID and during COVID, anti-Chinese racism, anti-Asian racism, the geopolitics and the

tension between China, Australia, and the Chinese-Australians feeling of being stuck in between a rock and a hard place. That's I don't think – to make the long answer short, one, anti-Chinese racism has always been since COVID, one of the key topics that been discussed and expressed, debated among various chat groups on WeChat, XiaoHongShu, as well as on YouTube, the YouTubers that I follow. And as to how much racism that Chinese-Australians have suffered, it's up to debate. Some people say it's frequent every day, some other people say it's less. So that's one point I want to make.

And secondly, the fact, the feeling of being stuck in between. So the Chinese term is *liwài búshì rén* 里外不是人, not a person inside or outside. You were censored being treated as a Chinese influence in Australia, but also as Australian influence in China. So Chinese people in China distrust us because of our Australian identity. But in Australia, we are distrusted because of our Chinese-ness. So the sayings Bang Xiao has written about – I totally since sympathise with this as it applies to not just to journalists, but also academics from the Chinese, particularly PRC background.

And just thirdly, how has that impacted on the Chinese-Australians consumption of media and their preference platforms, I don't think that has had much impact. For middle-aged and older people, they still continue to use WeChat. Younger people continue to use Instagram, TikTok and XiaoHongShu. They continue to do that. Some people, particularly younger people that I have talked to post-writing this book, have told me they don't care, they continue to live a good life, among the younger people. The older people actually are more concerned, particularly for professionals and people who have to get out to do business and engage with communities, whether it's business communities or just communities in general.

And lastly I want to mention, again, the role of community leaders and the opinion leaders on Chinese social media platforms. And those people have increasingly played an important role in guiding the discussions on those platforms. And I think for community integration, media leaders, education, community leaders and opinion leaders on these Chinese social media platforms should be taken account of.

Professor Fran Martin:

Thank you, Haiqing.

I'm hoping it will be okay to go to Q&A now because I do have more questions here, but I feel I want to give more people a chance to speak and to pick up on the questions that are here. I'm going to start with one.

The first one that came in here in question form is from Murray Davis, and this is a question for anyone who would like to answer it, either the book authors or the two journalism practitioners that we have on the panel. Murray writes: 'Experience in Taiwan has been at the influence of Chinese information operations has been very intense, representing a major challenge to civil society. Both speakers today...' – I don't know which speakers Murray means there, anyway – '...The speakers today indicated this has not been the experience in Australia. So is there any evidence of Chinese influence operations in Australia at this time?'

I'll just start with a nice uncontroversial one there. Does anyone want to respond to that question? Wanning, please.

Professor Wanning Sun:

And Fran, you called that an uncontroversial?

Professor Fran Martin:

I was joking.

Professor Wanning Sun:

I do think it's a good question. It is a valid question, but it is also a question that unfortunately begets a very complex answer because the notion influence itself is extremely loaded and I don't think we've established the terms on which we use the word. But I have given this concept and this notion a lot of thought and I have actually written that in the past as part of this project because I think in Australia so far, the work, the research produced by commentators and think tanks in relation to Chinese-language media pretty much has been set on establishing the connections. Connections between the media outlets and the connection between certain agents in China, or actors in China, or some organisations in China by saying, they went to the same dinner together, or they attended a conference organised by someone, or WeChat is registered with a Chinese name and these are all used as evidence of Chinese influence.

That could be one way of talking about influence, but from my point of view I think it's a lot more complex than that. This person is asking about evidence of conflict. For me to establish evidence of conflict it requires really more than just the first step, which is what public commenters have taken. But there are few more steps that I think you need to sort of pursue. That is, for instance, if you establish connections like registering China or connections or whatever, are these the sort of connections that could lead to the media outlets content being dictated by the CCP? We need to ask this question and also we need to ask what evidence is there to demonstrate that these connections are actually dictating the content of the outlet? As well as the question as if the content is dictated, is it having a significant or tangible impact on the intended audience? We all forget about the audience, but we committee studies people know that audience is very important thing. And finally we need to ask if there is a significant impact on audience, does this translate into actions or practices or behaviours which may harm or likely to harm Australian's national interests?

Only if you actually answer all these questions, which it goes in this order, then you can firmly establish so-called Chinese influence. Otherwise, my observations that so far our public commentators have just stop pursuing any further beyond the first point, which is establish connection. Sometimes more tangible than others, sometimes quite tenuous. So I don't know whether that's answered the question, but that would be my take on this.

Professor Haiqing Yu:

Wanning, can I just add a couple more points?

One is about Chinese influence. I think we better be careful about the words we use, China or Chinese. Chinese influence is more appropriate. For example, I am Chinese, I have influence, I am Chinese influencing Australia. Is Chinese influence a good thing or bad thing? I think I'm a good person, I'm a loyal person, so by being Chinese that means I'm bad or not. So I think we need to be careful about that.

And secondly, I want to make it clear that when you and I in our book have never claimed there's no Chinese influence in Chinese media, we didn't say there is none. Although that's not the focus of the book. Thanks.

Professor Fran Martin:

Thanks, Haiqing.

Mr Bang Xiao:

I also want to add my two cents onto this topic.

I feel like if there is no evidence, it doesn't mean there is, but it also doesn't mean there isn't, right? So it's an open question, but I guess in the landscape of Chinese-language media in Australia we've got lots of outlets that is heavily tied with commercials and also advertisements and that could be an influence given that the fear of losing income and revenue is generated from commercials could be the source of influence. But is that influence political, commercial, is that on purpose or it's not intentionally existing? I think that's another question that is open for investigation. So that is my idea about this.

Professor Fran Martin:

Absolutely. That's such an important point, Bang, in all of our obsession in the Australian public sphere, we are thinking about political influences in a fairly kind of basic way. We sometimes forget about commercial influence and the massive impacts that certainly does have on news production for example, in some cases.

I want to move on to another question now. This is actually probably kind of one for Bang, but you don't have to answer it if you don't want to.

Mr Bang Xiao:

Answer that one.

Professor Fran Martin:

I've chosen it because it's almost the opposite kind of question, right?

Mr Bang Xiao:

Yes.

Professor Fran Martin:

So this is from Erin Chu and Erin says one of the challenges for news outlets like the ABC or group discussions on Chinese social media outlets like WeChat et cetera, is to strike a balance in reporting. In the court of public opinion in Australia it is now normalised to be anti-China or anti-CCP and anyone else is deemed to be a pro-China, even if we fall in the middle. For outlets like the ABC, is there a fear to report news that is more positive on China and is there pressure from the top to make news related to the rising influence of China to provoke sentiment as that provides clicks or audience engagement?

Mr Bang Xiao:

Yes, I've been asked lots of times with this question I could give a clear answer that there is no indication that positive stories about China is banned from the ABC's editorial discussion. And in fact we have a number of stories that is very balanced and nuanced about the CCP and China because when it comes to journalism, we have to think about what the role that journalist are playing in this country, if there are any positive stories that

we are covering about the Australian government or if there is any positive story we are covering about the United States.

So it is actually making the journalists being critical of any significant issues that is newsworthy as well as needs the journalists to play a role for verification and balance reporting and bring that diverse perspective into the public discussion. At the beginning of COVID pandemic in 2020, I personally had a start with my colleague talking about how China has got a successful model to tackle the spreads of COVID because there is a top down society, which means the system could be more effective than our democracy. But also, it also gives a bit of nuance about why in China people are more intended to obey the public health orders because people are cautious of having a repeat of such. At the same time, I could remember the first time I interviewed Haiqing was about a story about the trends on Chinese social media where people splash cash on the floor. We talk about the Chinese culture and the young people and it's not necessarily about the CCP or the Chinese government, but the points I'm making here is that for journalists your editorial decision is based on the news value but not really about being positive or being good or being bad for anybody.

And I don't think any colleagues I actually engaged with in ABC had the intention to portray bad China in our story and the facts. The ABC also published Wanning's story, which is the opinion piece about China [and what] makes a good China story. So there are a lot of self-criticism as well as reflection on that and I do believe that is the role that the ABC is playing to make sure the coverage about a certain issue is balanced, is nuanced and also representing the diverse perspective from all different audiences as part of our coverage.

Professor Fran Martin:

Yeah, thank you, Bang, that's – that's a really interesting answer to that question. Thanks. It's interesting you've been asked that many times before. How depressing in a way.

Let's move on to the next question. I think this is an interesting one. I'm sorry I'm not intentionally picking the tricky ones or the slightly edgy ones, but I just think these are worth addressing. This is a question from Joyce Nip and it's addressed to Wanning and Haiqing but anyone could answer it from the panel if you would like to. Joyce writes, 'Your study has found diverse uses of Chinese-language, digital media by Australia based Chinese individuals and media. I wonder if your research has uncovered any efforts made –' and I suppose Joyce means through the digital media that you've examined – 'any efforts made by the China authorities or their representatives in Australia to mobilise PRC citizens –' migrants I guess – 'living in Australia to vote for particular candidates in local or federal elections here in Australia, as has been found and uncovered in Hong Kong and Taiwan fairly clearly.' Did you find anything like that?

Professor Wanning Sun:

Haiqing might have her own answer. I remember at the earlier stage of our research, there's an anonymous sort of statement written in Chinese about voting, urging people to, in Bennelong, vote for Labor. And that statement has been used by our mainstream media as an example of China's CCP pushing to get certain party representative elected. I see that as evidence of our mainstream media using that as example of to demonstrate Chinese influence. But other than that, as Haiqing said, there is a lot of argument and lobbying on behalf of individuals wanting their people to vote the same way they do. Labor is better than Liberal or Liberal is better than Liberal. There's a lot of persuasion going on, but I haven't see evidence that they're actually working on behalf of Chinese government in trying to get certain party. Our research could be partial or could be limited, but I can only speak based on our own experience. How about you, Haiqing?

Professor Haiqing Yu:

To answer this question, Joyce – it's good one, thanks – I think as academics we don't draw a conclusion based on anecdotes. So our research is based on solid empirical data. My, for example, as an individual person has suspected some PRC activities through some individuals in WeChat groups during the federal election. I suspected that person was working for some kind of lobbying group or a political force. I have no evidence and therefore we cannot draw any conclusion. We are academics, we are not intelligence agency. Don't think we have enough evidence to demonstrate and to illustrate and to write about it. Hope you understand. Thanks.

Professor Fran Martin:

Thanks, Haiqing, what a great set of points to make in response to that question. One does sometimes feel that some of the media narratives in Australian English-language media are indeed not based on robust research in this regard and are based on little examples that are not provable. So thank you for reminding us about the importance of rigor in your research.

I'm keen to get a question here for Leo because he's been overlooked in some of the questions so far. I've got one from Fan Yang who is, I think I know who this is, a one-time collaborator with me in academic works and a PhD student. I think it's the right person. Anyway, she has a question for you, Leo: 'Since many of your WeChat subscription accounts are now involved in marketing promotion for Chinese businesses, I was wondering how you balance the news translation and reproduction aspect of the enterprise with the business and marketing side of your media group.' Thanks, Leo.

Mr Leo Lian:

Thanks for the question. I think usually because this is the way how we generate the revenue obviously from advertising, and that includes, as I said, Chinese background, local Chinese businesses and including Australian businesses as well as Chinese businesses that going overseas, they might go to European market, the States – the American market, as well as the Australian market, and we helping them dive into the local markets. So the way we advertise, the formats can be a native advertising, it could be like we write article about their products or services, which means it can be a knowledge sharing or one-on-one sessions that helping the users to gain knowledge about the business that the industry that it's in.

Another formats that can be like through a balance that's just to increase the impression of the advertisement and could be also through programmatic advertising. Whereas you can select the age, gender, demographics from the end. At the end of the day we try to put our position, balance and content delivering system whereas that we are delivering useful information to our audiences. Whereas on the other hand, we try to balance, we're not selling hub advertising to annoying our audiences on a daily basis.

Professor Fran Martin:

A very good principle. Thank you, Leo, for that very considered response.

It's unfortunately time for us to wrap up. Thank you everyone for the questions and I'm sorry there's many in the chat that we haven't managed to get to. That's no reflection on the questions. It's just we didn't have time. I'm now going to pass back to Corey.

Thanks, Corey, to wrap up and thank our panellists.

Dr Corey Lee Bell:

Thank you, Fran. And thank you to our speakers and panelists.

I understand there were some technical issues with the video during the introduction, so apologies for that.

To the members of the audience we'll be sending you an email asking for your thoughts on how the webinar went. If you could please fill out the feedback form, we'd really appreciate it. It will help us to make our events a better experience moving forward.

Once again, if you want to know more about the Australia-China relationship and about UTS:ACRI's research, more details are available on our website at australiachinarelations.org. The discussion today will also be available there. Please follow us on Twitter for the latest news.

And that's it for today. Thanks again to our speakers and to all our attendees and we'll see you next time.