

# Media Messages Matter: Towards a New Missiological Approach to Media Engagement

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## **A MEDIA-SATURATED GLOBALIZED WORLD**

Wherever we live, information and communication technologies increasingly influence and impact our human lives, our Christian witness and our Christian ministries. The varieties of local, global and glocal media messages provide complex contexts for the manifold task of bearing witness to Jesus Christ in the 21<sup>ST</sup> Century. The missional issues related to media engagement are therefore of real significance to the global church.

In the midst of changing technologies and cultural and social differences, it is possible to discern five central and ambivalent features of contemporary media:<sup>1</sup> (a) *Digitalization*. Internet is gradually becoming the most significant platform for media research, networking and publications, resulting both in convergence of old media formats and genres and creation of new media arenas. (b) *Democratization*. Increasing access to new digital publication channels and new arenas of social media creates numerous possibilities for wider participation and networking. (c) *Fragmentation*: The dramatic increase in media

arenas, participants and voices results both in a fragmented public discourse and a fragmented private consumption. (d) *Globalization*: Through the global spread of information technology, new platforms for media distribution are being established, such as broadband, satellite and mobile technologies. (e) *Pluralization*: Wherever technology goes, the media goes, and with the media come a plurality of values, perspectives, and worldviews.

These key but ambiguous features illustrate the urgent need to engage more intentionally with media in all their exciting diversity. The media are the primary means by which news, ideas, and stories spread. Increasingly, they affect every part of society in every part of the world. Therefore, contemporary Christian missiology and missions cannot neglect the fascinating and complex world of the media. This is especially important in view of *missio Dei*, World Christianity, and evangelism in the context of integral mission as three central paradigms in much current missiological thinking.<sup>2</sup>

This article introduces a new missiological approach to media engagement. It is based on a five-year reflective process within The Lausanne Movement<sup>3</sup> and makes ample use of significant Lausanne resources.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the article is written from within the Lausanne tradition,<sup>5</sup> but its missiological relevance should not be seen as limited to this specific evangelical context.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Lausanne on Media Engagement: An Historical Overview**

It is evident from foundational documents from global congresses and consultations that media engagement has been a Lausanne theme from the very beginning. As a term, media has historically been used in these documents to include electronic and print media (but usually not literature), whereas the term more recently also includes digital / new media.

The contexts for the explicit mentioning of media as well as the specific media emphases have varied in the three foundational Lausanne documents. *The Lausanne Covenant* (1974) included “the mass media” in the paragraph on “evangelistic partnerships”, with an emphasis on the legitimacy of specialist media ministries. *The Manila Manifesto* (1989) mentioned “me-

dia” in the section on “the whole world”, with an emphasis on the necessity of a discerning engagement with media as part of modernity. *The Cape Town Commitment* (2010) included “truth and the globalized media” in the section on “making the case for the truth of Christ in a pluralistic, globalized world”, with an equal emphasis on three major areas of concern. These three media foci are described as “media awareness, media presence, and media ministries”.

Two Lausanne Occasional Papers (LOP)<sup>7</sup> should also be mentioned in this brief overview of relevant Lausanne material on media. The first was published in 1989, entitled *LOP 26 Radio in Mission*, with leading global evangelical broadcasters as sponsors. The focus was on radio programming as a strategic channel for world evangelization. The 2004 Lausanne Forum on World Evangelization (Pattaya) resulted in a second media-specific LOP called *LOP 48. Media and Technology: The Rainbow, the Ark & the Cross*. This paper included significant theological, ethical and cultural reflections on the role of media, both in society at large and in church and mission.

Two significant Lausanne-related book publications should also be included. The first was authored by David F. Wells as a consolidated report (1987) on a Lausanne consultation on “The Holy Spirit and Evangelization” (1985). This volume was entitled *God the Evangelist: How the Holy Spirit Works to Bring Men and Women to Faith*, and it includes significant material on media critique.<sup>8</sup> The second volume<sup>9</sup> was a result of a Lausanne consultation on “Faith and Modernity” (1993), which was convened as a follow-up to Os Guinness’ influential plenary session on mission and modernity in Manila and the subsequent inclusion of this theme in *The Manila Manifesto*. The *Faith and Modernity* volume also includes critical perspectives on the media.

The more recent reflective process started in preparation for The Lausanne III Congress in 2010. The Cape Town Advance Paper on *Media and Technology* set the stage for the multiplex on *Media* on Day 1 of the congress. The threefold foci “media awareness, media presence and media ministries” from The Advance Paper was afterwards captured, as mentioned above, in “A Call to Action” in *The Cape Town Commitment* (2011).<sup>10</sup>

This was the foundation for the regional, advisory consultation in Kristiansand, Norway (2012), which again resulted in a global consultation in Brea, California (2013). The statement from this latter consultation was an exposition and application of the threefold media foci in *The Cape Town Commitment*. This global consultation also commissioned a task force to take key issues and strategies forward in an emerging Lausanne Media Engagement Network.<sup>11</sup>

### **Lausanne on Media Engagement: A Conceptual Framework**

#### *The three media foci*

*The Cape Town Commitment* is designed and employed as “a roadmap for The Lausanne Movement over the next ten years”<sup>12</sup> This central document introduces the three above mentioned media foci in the following way:

We commit ourselves to a renewed critical and creative engagement with media and technology, as part of making the case for the truth of Christ in our media cultures. We must do so as God’s ambassadors of truth, grace, love, peace and justice.

We identify the following major needs:

- A) **Media awareness:** to help people develop a more critical awareness of the messages they receive, and of the worldview behind them. The media can be neutral, and sometimes gospel-friendly. But they are also used for pornography, violence and greed. We encourage pastors and churches to face these issues openly and to provide teaching and guidance for believers in resisting such pressures and temptations.
- B) **Media presence:** to develop authentic and credible Christian role models and communicators for the general news media and the entertainment media, and to commend these careers as a worthy means of influence for Christ.
- C) **Media ministries:** to develop creative, combined and interactive use of ‘traditional’, ‘old’ and ‘new’ media, to communicate the gospel of Christ in the context of a holistic biblical worldview.”<sup>13</sup>

Thus, a threefold task for missional media engagement is presented with a brief agenda. However, it is necessary to justify and clarify this conceptual framework further, with proper attention to the historical and more recent Lausanne documents mentioned above. In order to do justice to the historical flow of thought within Lausanne, such a conceptual clarification of the three foci should begin with *media ministries*.

### *Media ministries*

This first media engagement task may be defined as the need to make active and creative use of any and every kind of appropriate media technology (whether old or new) to communicate the gospel of Christ in the context of a holistic biblical worldview. This area of media concern has played a central role throughout the Lausanne history, with a recurring emphasis on specialist media ministries, whether in radio, television, print, internet or new (social) media. *The Manila Manifesto* illustrates this consistent emphasis: “The Christian media have a powerful influence both in sowing the seed of the gospel and in preparing the soil.”

The focus in *The Lausanne Covenant* is on “the mass media” in “evangelistic partnerships”, alongside other specialist ministries in “Bible translation, theological education, Christian literature, evangelism, missions, and church renewal”. The emphasis is thus on evangelism and biblical teaching through “the mass media”. It should be mentioned, however, that subsequent media research has questioned the term ‘mass media’. This is both due to the variety of interpretative contexts and perspectives present in any media audience and – more recently – to an increasing emphasis on interactivity both technologically and socially.

In his classical commentary to *The Lausanne Covenant*, John Stott emphasizes that

[although] the right of such [parachurch] agencies to exist is agreed, and God is thanked for their work, yet the wisdom of their indefinite survival is not taken for granted... Some outlive their usefulness. In such cases voluntary termination is to be recommended. But this drastic action will not be necessary if the agency concerned is sensitive and flexible enough to keep adjusting itself to contemporary needs.<sup>14</sup>

There is thus a need for ongoing flexibility and adaptability in all specialist ministries, an insight which is highly relevant for any Christian media ministry serving on our ever-changing contemporary media scene.

Two parallel emphases should be highlighted in relation to *media ministries*: Whereas *The Manila Manifesto* introduces the need for appropriate self-criticism (i.e. “to engage in mission in the modern world without worldliness in modern mission”), *The Cape Town Commitment* focuses on the need for appropriate theological content (“to communicate the gospel of Christ in the context of a holistic biblical worldview”). This illustrates a wider and consistent concern throughout the Lausanne history, i.e. the need to balance action (here: active use of any and every appropriate media technology in evangelism, teaching and discipleship) and reflection (here: reflecting on theological, ethical and cultural issues related to media).

The media world of today is radically different to the situation in 1974 (Lausanne) or in 1989 (Manila). It may even be argued that the present impact of social media is transforming the contemporary media world in such a fundamental way, that even 2010 (Cape Town) is beginning to look like the distant past. In terms of *media ministries*, this development implies both that every Christian ministry (whether local church, organization or institution) is also a media ministry and that every Christian has a (potential) media ministry. The latter aspect may in fact be seen as a practical outworking of the significant emphasis on “the ministry of all believers”, as expressed in *The Manila Manifesto*.

#### *Towards a wider media engagement*

Even though the only explicit mentioning of ‘media’ in *The Lausanne Covenant* is in the context of specialist ministries in evangelistic partnership with churches and other para-church agencies, this classical evangelical mission document also contains implicit theological foundations for a wider missional engagement with media.

This includes the following five emphases: (a) ‘Christian presence in the world’ and ‘responsible service in the world’; (b) sharing ‘God’s concern for justice and reconciliation throughout

human society'; (c) the need 'to break out of our ecclesiastical ghettos and permeate non-Christian society'; (d) the gospel as evaluating 'all cultures according to its own criteria of truth and righteousness', and insisting on 'moral absolutes in every culture'; and (e) acknowledging 'that we ourselves are not immune to worldliness of thoughts and action, that is, to a surrender to secularism'.<sup>15</sup> The subsequent emphasis on *media presence* and *media awareness* may thus be seen as a natural application of these principles to the whole media world.

It should also be emphasized that the consistent Lausanne focus on 'evangelization' (as a wider term than 'evangelism') naturally results in a wider missional engagement than *media ministries*. This focus is now usually referred to as integral (or holistic) mission.

### *Media presence*

This second media engagement task may be defined as the need for talented Christians to enter mainstream media with professionalism and integrity. Such a focus was implicit in the first phase of Lausanne history, but has later become gradually more significant. Part of the reason is the increasing emphasis on the workplace as an arena for ministry and witness as a result of *The Manila Manifesto*. But it is also due to an increasing acknowledgment of the influential role of mainstream factual and fictional media both in expressing and shaping identities, ideas, and worldviews.

It is significant to note that this emphasis on *media presence* is highlighted in *LOP 26. Radio in Mission*:

In the broader context we need to encourage Christians, and especially the younger generation, to become involved in secular media and seek to become professional as Christians in this field so that the secular media are not devoid of Christian influence. They are powerful in society and we could find ourselves making the task of world mission harder if we neglect this key area.

*The Manila Manifesto* points to the workplace as a calling and as a significant context for witness, with obvious relevance also

for professional media roles, whether in news and documentary media or in creative and entertainment media:

Christians can commend Christ by word of mouth, by their consistent industry, honesty and thoughtfulness, by their concern for justice in the workplace, and especially if others can see from the quality of their daily work that it is done to the glory of God.

We have already seen the explicit emphasis in *The Cape Town Commitment* on encouraging active Christian involvement in mainstream media. However, despite its significant role in defining the public square, a reference to mainstream media is missing in the section “Truth and the public arenas” alongside the appropriate emphases on “government, business and academia”. This illustrates the need for further integrative work in the Lausanne context in this area.

#### *Media awareness*

This third media engagement task may be defined as the need for Christians to be characterized by more faithful discipleship (including both personal holiness and disciple-making) when encountering media messages. This area of concern was implicit in the early years of Lausanne, but became later increasingly explicit as cultural and ethical critique. It has recently been given an essential role as a combination of educational, evangelism and discipleship concerns. This implies that media literacy also should be a key concern within this whole missiological task.

As we saw above, the theological basis for this third media task was present already in *The Lausanne Covenant*. Furthermore, the emphasis in *The Manila Manifesto* on cultural study and critique is significant for the development of *media awareness* as a Lausanne concern. This includes the following affirmation: “We affirm our duty to study the society in which we live, in order to understand its structures, values and needs, and so develop an appropriate strategy of mission.”<sup>16</sup>

One aspect of this cultural study is the need for an appropriate cultural critique, including in the area of media. *The Manila Manifesto* offers the following insightful cultural critique:

In this connection we have become concerned about the impact of “modernity”, which is an emerging world culture produced by industrialization with its technology and urbanization with its economic order. These factors combine to create an environment, which significantly shapes the way in which we see our world. In addition, secularism has devastated faith by making God and the supernatural meaningless; urbanization has dehumanized life for many; and the mass media have contributed to the devaluation of truth and authority, by replacing word with image. In combination, these consequences of modernity pervert the message which many preach and undermine their motivation for mission.

It is appropriate to add two qualifications at this point. *First*, such an insightful critique of modernity and of the cultural captivity of much evangelical media engagement is certainly to be welcomed. Twenty-five years on, the heart of this cultural critique seems even more relevant and needs further reflections and appropriate action. Today, however, such a cultural critique needs to reckon both with “modernity”, “postmodernity”, and “globalization” as related analytical categories and complex phenomena.<sup>17</sup> *Secondly*, it may be that some aspects of this cultural critique need to be revised, in order to achieve an appropriate biblical balance between two extremes, i.e. on the one hand explicit or implicit icon-worship and on the other hand various iconoclastic attitudes.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, the missiological task of *media awareness* should include both media literacy and media critique as key concerns. It should also be added that the practical equipping in practical apologetics of every believer is closely related to *media awareness*: “We urge Church leaders and pastors to equip all believers with the courage and the tools to relate the truth with prophetic relevance to everyday public conversation, and so to engage every aspect of the culture we live in.”

### **Media Engagement: Theological, Missiological and Apologetic Foundations**

The need for theological, ethical and cultural reflections on media engagement was addressed in *IOP 48. Media and Technol-*

ogy: *The Rainbow, the Ark & the Cross* (2004). This perceptive analysis opens up for further explorations:

How can the Church break the strongholds of the marketplace of ideas using the media, besides using the media as evangelistic tools? Does the Church understand the nature and impact of the media? How can Christian media focus on reaching the unreached people, the people at-risk, the youth and children in megacities, and the marginal people in diaspora? How can the Church target the media to specific people in context with specific needs? Does the Whole Gospel mean more than a conversion process? Would it include the redemptive mandate (the Great Commission), the expression of love (the Great Commandment) and cultural development (the Creation Mandate)? What are the implications for using the media for spreading the Whole Gospel? How can we nurture Christians who are called to become leaders in the global media?

Such key issues need to be explored within an appropriate framework. The intention of the following paragraphs is to briefly outline essential theological, missiological, and apologetic foundations for media engagement, on the basis of *The Cape Town Commitment*.<sup>19</sup>

*Theologically*, we should view professional media callings as part of God's cultural mandate and of his mission to our world. In the words of *The Cape Town Commitment*; "we love God's world, we love God's word and we love God's mission". This opens up for meaningful ministry in a wide range of contemporary media contexts and with an equally wide range of professional media roles.

*Missiologically*, we should view media engagement as an essential part of "calling the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world": (a) Taking *the whole gospel* to the media world includes taking "the story the gospel tells, the assurance the gospel brings, and the transformation the gospel produces". This biblical gospel of Jesus Christ is "good news in a world of bad news", offering both forgiveness and hope and a new worldview perspective. (b) Involving *the whole church* in

media engagement includes the recognition both of special gifts and of the ministry of all believers. This is related to strategic new arenas and new opportunities represented by the globalization and the democratization of media. (c) Reaching out to *the whole world* presupposes media engagement, whether this is related to “every nation”, “every sphere of society” or “the realm of ideas”. Contemporary media – in all their variety – are arenas and avenues of pluralism, including secular worldview perspectives.

*Apologetically*, we should view media engagement as a dimension of our witness to Jesus Christ as “the truth of the universe”. This includes bearing witness to the fact that “truth in Christ is (i) personal as well as propositional; (ii) universal as well as contextual; (iii) ultimate as well as present”. Therefore, we need to encourage and equip Christian media professionals to introduce such central truth claims as credible and plausible, whenever possible and appropriate. There is also a significant place for talented Christian apologists on the public scene: “We need to identify, equip and pray for those who can engage at the highest intellectual and public level in arguing for and defending biblical truth in the public arena.”

### **Media Engagement: Identifying Key Issues**

#### *Media awareness: A forgotten dimension in mission*

Those of us who live in technology-rich places are all media consumers. Those who live in other parts of the world are being increasingly exposed to media messages. These factual and fictional messages are influenced by various secular and religious worldview perspectives, whether in terms of ethical values, views of humanity and reality, or fundamental faith-commitments. Equipping individuals, families, youth ministries and churches to engage with media messages at these deeper structural and worldview levels is largely a forgotten dimension of mission, both in the global north and the global south. We need to change that together – and to do it quickly and appropriately. Such strategic equipping includes research, resources, and practical training in worldview analysis of media messages, as well as showing the credibility and relevance of a holistic biblical worldview over against alternative worldview perspectives.

The global Lausanne consultation on The Gospel and Media (2013) identified four specific key issues in this neglected area:

(a) integrating media awareness into mission and discipleship strategies; (b) researching into the developments and implications of digital technology and media messages; (c) reflecting missiologically on digital technology and media messages, and (d) creating resources for understanding and evaluating media usage and media messages (media literacy and analysis) as part of both mission and discipleship.

*Media presence: A calling to public witness and integrity*

There is a wide variety of legitimate, strategic, and meaningful media roles to explore within the general media world for talented Christians. Journalism and documentary work reveals neglected facts, stories, and angles, which enables a more balanced public and private debate. Creative and entertainment media can present new and fresh ways of imagining Christian truths, which may generate genuine interest in significant moral and spiritual issues. Through the presence of skilful Christian commentators and apologists in mainstream media, the credibility and plausibility of the gospel and of a holistic biblical worldview may be commended to sceptics, seekers, and to Christians.

Accordingly, the global Lausanne consultation outlined four central issues in this strategic area:

(a) commending careers in mainstream media as worthy callings; (b) discipling, supporting, and networking Christians in mainstream media; (c) encouraging and equipping Christian leaders and apologists to be intentionally present as salt and light in mainstream media; and (d) encouraging and equipping of individual Christians to be thoughtful and intentional in their use of social media, including content creation.

*Media ministries: A ministry for every Christian believer*

In view of the above, we may infer that media ministry is a ministry for all Christian believers. Effective use of every kind of media technology, format and genre is important for worldwide evangelism, for discipleship, and for faith education. Specialist media ministries still have legitimate and strategic roles to play,

but new media technology potentially changes every single mission organization, youth ministry and local church into media outlets. This creates an increasing need for evangelistic partnerships in this whole area. At the same time, we need to explore the way that social media create increasing possibilities for a media ministry for every believer.

In accordance with these concerns, last year's global Lausanne consultation identified the following significant issues in this key area:

(a) exploring innovative ways of communicating the gospel in the context of a holistic biblical worldview, with a particular focus on unreached and unengaged peoples; (b) equipping of churches and individual Christians to make best use of a variety of media in mission and discipleship; (c) creating media content to the highest possible standards, both creatively and technically; (d) using technology, including social media, in flexible and innovative ways; and (e) encouraging of partnerships between media ministries, educational institutions, churches, and ministry networks.

### **Concluding Reflections**

I will conclude this essay with three insightful quotes for further reflection and action.

The first quote is from the statement from the global consultation in 2013, inviting "The Lausanne Movement, evangelical leaders, organizations, educational institutions, and local churches in all parts of the world" to pray for:

1. biblical discernment in our media usage, and biblical insight into the media messages we encounter
2. professionalism, integrity, and courage for Christians in mainstream media
3. creativity, innovation, and a spirit of partnership for specialist media ministries, churches, and individuals
4. a new generation of Christian media communicators, in every part of the world

The second quote is from theologian, producer and social

media expert Phil Cooke, presenting a challenge to Christian missions and missiologists:

I believe it's time to shift from primarily thinking about missions in terms of geographical boundaries, and start thinking in terms of digital boundaries. What do you think? From my perspective, that's a massive country just waiting to hear our message. Why are we sitting on the sidelines?<sup>20</sup>

The third quote is from veteran journalist and missiologist Knud Jørgensen, offering the incarnation as a significant model for media engagement:

Using the media is being used by the media. They are not neutral tools, but instruments of both fall and redemption. But if we excuse ourselves for fear of getting dirty fingers, we leave the scene to the powers of evil.

So, Christian participation in the media circus is a dilemma. But it is not a new dilemma; it is basically the dilemma of the Incarnation: God himself becoming vulnerable in the world of fall and sin. A dilemma which challenges us to be realistic and not fool ourselves: I know that the IT world does not create a better life; I know that the aggressive stream of pictures and words and music is like an epidemic that can attack my soul. But I also know that without the salt and light of the Gospel the world will perish, without the involvement of Christian professionals at all levels the world will be a wasteland and the media will become reflected images and caricatures of ghosts and goblins. Only Christ-followers have what it takes to fight the ghosts. It is our mandate to find room for the God-dimension and, by the same token, the human dimension in the orbit of satellites and the chat room of social media. Without our presence as authentic and credible role models, the world shall definitely amuse itself to death.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, if we are to *bear witness to Jesus Christ and all his teaching in every nation, in every sphere of society, and in the realm of ideas*, we cannot neglect the fascinating, complex, and exciting contemporary world of the media.

## Noter

- 1 These five features are presupposed as scene-setters for the subsequent discussion. However, each one of these features, including their definitions, priorities and relationships, is subject to critical discussion in contemporary media studies.
- 2 Kim, Kirsteen (2011). «Mission in the Twenty-First Century». In K. Kim and A. Anderson (Eds.). *Edinburgh 2010: Mission Today and Tomorrow* (Oxford: Regnum Books International), 351-364.
- 3 This article is based on a *Cape Town 2010 Advance Paper*, two Lausanne consultations (2012 and 2013) and a recent article in *Lausanne Global Analysis*. The argument is further developed in a new *Lausanne Occasional Paper*. See footnote 11 for references.
- 4 Reference is made to Dahle, Lars and Margunn S. Dahle (2014). "Resourcing the Global Church: A Critical Guide to Key Lausanne Resources". In M. S. Dahle, L. Dahle and K. Jørgensen (Eds.). *The Lausanne Movement: A Range of Perspectives* (Oxford: Regnum International Books), 113-128.
- 5 For an in-depth exposition and assessment of the history, theology and missiology of the Lausanne movement, see the essays in M. S. Dahle, L. Dahle, and K. Jørgensen (eds.) *The Lausanne Movement: A Range of Perspectives*.
- 6 It is my intention to follow up this article with a subsequent comparison between evangelical and ecumenical approaches to media engagement, thus also taking into account how the *oikumene* has dealt with the media issues over the last 30-40 years.
- 7 See <http://www.lausanne.org/en/documents/lops.html>.
- 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 65ff.
- 9 V. Samuel, P. Simpson, and C. Sugden (Eds.) (1994). *Faith and Modernity* (Oxford: Regnum Books International).
- 10 See Dahle, Lars and Margunn S. Dahle (2011). "Media Messages Matter: En utfordring til mediebevisstgjøring, medienærver og mediemisjon", in Ekenes, Rolf et al (eds.). *Misjon til forandring. Refleksjoner og visjoner fra Lausanne III (Skjetten: Hermon)*.
- 11 For references, see L. Dahle: "Media Messages Matter: Christ, Truth and the Media" (*Cape Town Advance Paper*, <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/pages/advance-papers>); the Cape Town multiplex session on "Media Messages Matter: On Global Technologies, Glocal Trends and Gospel Truth" (<http://www.lausanne.org/en/multimedia/videos/ct2010-session-videos.html>); *The Cape Town Commitment*, II.A.4, ('Truth and the Globalized Media', <http://www.lausanne.org/en/documents/ctcommitment.html#p2-1>); The Lausanne Regional Consultation on Media and the Gospel in Kristiansand, Norway (Nov. 2012; <http://www.lausanne.org/en/gatherings/issue-based/event/53-lausanne-regional-consultation-on-media-and-the-gospel.html>); The Lausanne Global Consultation on the Gospel and Media in Brea, LA (Nov. 2013; <http://www.lausanne.org/en/gatherings/issue-based/event/62-global-consultation-on-the-gospel-and>

media.html); L. Dahle: "Media Engagement: A Global Missiological Task", *Lausanne Global Analysis*, January 2014, volume 3, issue 1, 9-12 (<http://www.lausanne.org/docs/LGA/Lausanne-Global-Analysis-2014-01.pdf>); *LOP 66. The Gospel and Media: Together Towards Missional Reflection and Action* (2014), (<http://www.lausanne.org/en/documents/lops.html>). See also <http://www.lausanne.org/en/about/news-releases/2161-lausanne-movement-appoints-senior-associates-for-church-planting-and-media-engagement.html> and <http://www.lausanne.org/en/about/news-releases/2174-global-consultation-on-gospel-and-media.html>.

- 12 *The Cape Town Commitment*, "Foreword".
- 13 *The Cape Town Commitment*, II.A.4.
- 14 See <http://www.lausanne.org/en/documents/lops/69-lop-3.html>.
- 15 The quotations are from *The Lausanne Covenant*, paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 10, and 12.
- 16 It should be noted that, with the emphasis of significant evangelical cultural critics such as Os Guinness and David F. Wells, the structural issues have not been dealt with comprehensively in the Lausanne context. Accordingly, this is a key theme that needs to be explored further.
- 17 See e.g. D. F. Wells and O. Guinness (2012), "Discipleship and mission in the age of globalization", in J. E. M. Cameron (ed.). *Christ Our Reconciler. Gospel / Church / World. The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization*. (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter Varsity Press), 95-106.
- 18 Such a balanced biblical perspective was recently expressed by the Wheaton art historian Matthew Milliner (@millinerd): 'For Christians, word and image work in tandem to represent the Logos-Icon Jesus.' (Quoted by Andy Crouch, see <https://www.twitter.com/ahc/status/394941897359507456>.)
- 19 Reference is made to Dahle, Lars (2013). "Truth, Christian Mission and Apologetics: A Response and A Proposal." *Norsk Tidsskrift for Misjonsvitenskap / Norwegian Journal of Missiology* 67, nr. 1: 21-38; and Dahle, Lars (2014). "Mission in 3D: A Key Lausanne III Theme" in M. S. Dahle, L. Dahle and K. Jørgensen (eds.). *The Lausanne Movement: A Range of Perspectives*, 265-279.
- 20 <http://philcooke.com/taking-the-digital-mission-field-seriously/> (6<sup>th</sup> April 2014)
- 21 Jørgensen, Knud (2013). 'Mediatization or Incarnation', comment on Lars Dahle, 'A Vision for Media Engagement' in *The Lausanne Global Conversation*, posted 24<sup>th</sup> Oct. The only qualification I would add in relation to this insightful comment is that media are instruments also of *creation* and not only of fall and redemption.

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### **Abstract**

Media engagement has been a central missional theme throughout the history of The Lausanne Movement. This article explores this strategic theme in key Lausanne documents, with an emphasis on the recent reflective process related to The Cape Town Congress and The Cape Town Commitment. This process resulted in an identification of “media awareness, media presence, and media ministries” as three significant foci for media engagement. A conceptual framework for these three foci is introduced, followed by an outline of theological, missiological, and apologetic foundations. Subsequently, key strategic issues are identified for the three media foci, in order to bear witness to Jesus Christ and all his teaching in every nation, in every sphere of society, and in the realm of ideas.