

Pragmatic Teaching Case Study: Business Analysis of Entrepreneurship in China's Emerging Industry

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Abstract: This article creatively transforms a case study and interview with an entrepreneur and his startup media enterprise into a cohesive essay, incorporating elements of a teaching plan, case study, and profile interview. The special point is the case, and the storytelling presents a real-life journey of the protagonist Chen Yurong. Additionally, the case examines the interplay between personal passion, industry trends, market competition, and entrepreneurial strategy. With the rise of AI-generated content, smartphone media production, the metaverse, and the influencers in China, Meijing Media has faced both structural challenges and business dilemmas. At the same time, the entrepreneur's mentality is also a critical element in the transition and decision-making process for business strategy. This essay utilizes qualitative research methods, including SWOT analysis, Porter's Five Forces model, the theory of charismatic leadership, and interview techniques. In the article, the entrepreneur's business issues are categorized into market issues, industry issues, human resource issues, and mentality issues. While these methods are commonly found in various articles, research papers, and case studies, applying them to real-life situations alongside organizational behavior theory is still relatively rare. This approach can be considered innovative. This case aims to guide business students in building coherence and sharpening their strategic decision-making capacity in a competitive environment characterized by resource constraints. The final chapter offers insights from the lecturer's perspective, focusing on the structure of the case study. It discusses the practical application of theory, effective tactics for conducting business interviews, and considerations regarding the validity of the interview process. The article presents an innovative approach to thinking and a method for illustrating qualitative research in practical applications, based on real-world business interviews. It aims to provide insights and references for business management curricula and MBA courses. Additionally, it can serve as a comprehensive business case study, benefiting entrepreneurs and reinforcing entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Media Industry, Business Strategy, Business Case Study, Enterprise Transformation

1. Introduction

In the era of rapid technological development and its impact on employment markets, the rise of Generation Y has led to the adoption of new entrepreneurial paradigms driven by individualism, idealism, and a pursuit of self-expression. Amidst such transitions, this teaching case investigates the real-world entrepreneurial journey of Meijing Media, a sole proprietorship founded by Chen Yurong, a former project manager who pivoted toward the creative media industry in Shanghai. His story encompasses the dilemmas he faced as a solo entrepreneur navigating passion, market uncertainty, and digital transformation, which challenge conventional business management models.

Set against the backdrop of China's burgeoning yet intensely competitive media sector, the case explores the intersection of personal aspiration and structural constraints. With the proliferation of AI-generated content, influencer economies, and low-cost digital tools, Meijing Media confronts a volatile business environment that pressures traditional service-based firms. The founder's insistence on artistic integrity over commercial pragmatism presents a critical point of reflection on leadership traits and strategic adaptability within sole proprietorships. Employing qualitative methods, including SWOT and Porter's Five Forces analysis, alongside organizational behavior theories, the study guides students in assessing strategic decision-making under resource limitations. It further presents a modular business model that leverages case-specific collaboration rather than fixed employment, offering a contemporary lens into flexible organizational structures. Ultimately, this case encourages critical discourse on entrepreneurship, leadership style, and business survival in the age of digital disruption, while serving as a practical teaching tool for undergraduate and MBA-level business education.

2. Teaching Note and Syllabus

2.1 Case Objectives and Target Audience

This case is designed for discussion on entrepreneurship in uncertain environments, particularly in post-COVID and digital economies. Instructors may divide students into specific groups to simulate real-life decision-making. In this case, the study of Meijing Media's Entrepreneurial Journey is intended to be further developed into a

teaching plan applicable to both pre-university and postgraduate business education. At the A-Level curriculum level, it is suitable for subjects such as Business (9609), Global Perspectives & Research (9239), and Economics (9708). At the MBA level, the case can be integrated into core modules, including Strategic Marketing Management, Organizational Behavior, Business Decision Analysis, and Entrepreneurship & Innovation, offering rich, real-world insights to support academic learning and practical application.

2.2 Teaching Approach

This teaching case is designed to align with the following teaching outcomes, which are coordinated with the Cambridge A-Level Business (9609) and Global Perspectives & Research (9239) curricula, as well as undergraduate and four key MBA module programs. Upon completing this case, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of enterprise formation and sole proprietorship.
- Analyze emerging flexible employment patterns in modern business environments.
- Introduce leadership styles and the Big Five Personality Traits Theory, align with organizational behavior.
- Use the theoretical concepts in real-world business decision-making.
- Understand the media industry development in different countries.
- Use SWOT, Porter's Five Forces, to assess an entrepreneurial business.

2.3 Literature Review

Critics have identified significant gaps between the required knowledge and skills for the real world of business and the acquired academic knowledge and skills through business education (Bennis and O'Toole, 2005; Pfeffer & Fong, 2004; Mintzberg, 2004). Simulation & case studies develop students' problem-solving skills similarly, but more effectively, than lectures. (Farashahi & Tajeddin, 2018) In this context, it is argued that case studies should be viewed as a preferred method for teaching a variety of concepts in science courses. (Bonney, 2015) As well, in (Sergis, 2018) research, the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) has been repeatedly investigated in both research and practice contexts, primarily in terms of their capacity to foster students' autonomous learning and overall motivation for the learning process. This paper follows the aforementioned methodology and teaching theory to implement a bilateral communication and teaching approach in practice.

3. Entrepreneur and Startup Enterprise

The protagonist, Chen Yurong, is a local citizen of Shanghai who belongs to Generation Y. Driven by beliefs in individualism, idealism, and neo-liberalism, he resigned from his former position as a project manager to embark on a journey in pursuit of a career in the creative industry. The protagonist has a great passion for media, advertising, photography, and video editing. Meijing Media was a single-person enterprise, with stockholder Chen Yurong owning 100% of the company, which is a sole proprietorship.

Table 1: Corporate information of Meijing Media

Unified Social Credit Code:	91310120MA7AUG997Y
Legal Representative	Chen Yurong
Business Status	Active
Registered Capital	RMB 1 million
Registration Number	310120007368202
Enterprise Type	Limited Liability Company (Natural Person Sole Proprietorship)
Business Term	September 2, 2021 - September 1, 2051
Business Range	Film distribution; Production and operation of radio and television programs; Organizing cultural and artistic exchange activities; Advertising design and agency
Registration Address	Room 1201, Building 1, No. 258 Zhijiang Road, Fengxian District, Shanghai, China

Source: National Enterprise Credit Information Publicity System

According to the interview with Chen, he highlighted that presently his core business involves four aspects:

- Portrait Photography
- Commercial Promotional Video
- Film Crew Cinematography Director and Consultant
- Influencer Account Management and Promotion

From his perspective, the preference is for commercial promotional videos and TV advertisements. However, external issues drive him, prompting a shift in the business strategy. According to the interview, Chen focuses on combining digital promotion with physical engagement, network building, and cold calls, as well as exhibition participants. It also includes self-marketing account creation, in-store visits, fostering direct communication, and building connections. By combining a digital approach, physical visiting, and marketing, he argued that this business model focuses on creating meaningful relationships and collaboration opportunities to drive long-term growth.

4. Business Issues and Analysis

With the rapid development of the social media industry, the emerging trend of launching a media company, along with the surge of influencers, could face significant challenges. Based on the attribution theory, the business issues of Chen’s company can be divided into the following aspects:

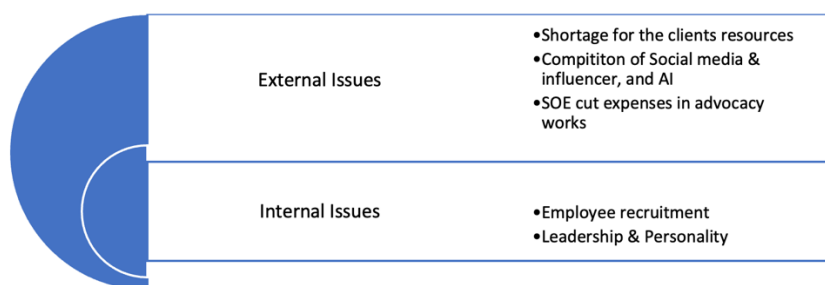


Figure 1: Matrix of Internal and External Business Issues

Chen Yurong 's business issues generally consist of external and internal factors. The following chapter will narrate these issues in detail.

4.1 Marketing Issues

Between 2020 and 2024, the number of newly registered enterprises in China exhibited fluctuating trends, culminating in a sharp decline to 27.37 million in 2024, representing a 16.38% decrease. During this period, the market value of the media industry encountered an inflection point in 2022, slowing down the increase. When comparing the value and opportunities for each enterprise, it is evident that there is much to be improved.

These shifts were influenced by COVID-19, which significantly correlated with high unemployment and triggered structural changes in the labor market. As a result, more young individuals have turned to flexible occupations, such as influencers, livestream hosts, independent photographers, and content creators. This surge in digital entrepreneurship reflects both the resilience and transformation of youth employment patterns in a disrupted economy. (Tan & Sheng, 2024)

Table 2: Increase Enterprises and Media Industry Market Value

	Increase Enterprises (Unit)	Increase Rate	Media Industry Market Value	Increase Rate
2024	27.37 million	-16.38%	Not Released	/
2023	32.73 million	12.55%	3151.82 billion	8.38%
2022	29.08 million	0.73%	2908.25 billion	-2.11%
2021	28.87 million	15.39%	2971.03 billion	17.76%
2020	25.02 million	5.26%	2522.97 billion	11.51%

Source: China Media Industry Development Report (2019-2024)

According to the China Media Industry Development Report (Cyberspace Administration of China, 2021), the latest market value of the media industry is 3151.82 billion. Nevertheless, the increase in media market volume did not match the growth of enterprises; the phenomenon was characterized by centralization, which led to market share becoming more fragile and monopolized, rather than both parties gaining increased opportunities. The tendency also includes creators who are active on short video platforms such as Douyin (TikTok in China), Kuaishou, and Bilibili, as well as self-media influencers. With the increase in newly registered media companies and the rise of self-media influencers, the media industry has faced greater competition and rivalry.

4.2 SWOT Analysis for Marketing Issues

The SWOT model is used to analyze the external and internal business comparative attributes (Nut & Backoff, 1993). In this context, with the usage of this qualitative measurement, the external marketing Issues aspect can be characterized as below:

Threat: The media industry is facing harsh competition due to the rise of social media and the emergence of independent photographers. Secondly, Chen previously worked as a project manager in a property management company. During this transitional phase of his career, he lacked an extensive professional industrial network and resources. Additionally, the shrinkage of segmentation and centralization also presented a significant threat.

Opportunity: Social media and independent photographers present both opportunities and challenges. Manager Chen's Meijing Media can also promote and advertise its business through self-account and social media. Furthermore, although the rise of influencers poses a threat, the market volume still demands photography, video editing, and content creation, which is booming, allowing Chen to attract business from self-media creators.

Weakness: Meijing's weakness is a lack of a systematic HR structure. A loosely organized sole proprietorship lacking formal management systems and embracing a one-person business model. Moreover, his leadership style hinders Meijing Media's ability to adapt to the transition.

Strength: The essential strength of Meijing lies in the passion and sincerity of its founder, Chen. Passion in the entrepreneurial context confirms its predictive power in explaining differences in firm growth. (Iyortsuun & Shakpande, 2022)

4.3 Industry Issues

The industry issues encompass insufficient funds due to the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) system reform, as well as the Power of AI Content Generation and the revolution in the trend. The 18th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party was regarded as a milestone for cutting administrative expenses. (Jinrong, 2018) In 2016, SOEs reduced management expenses and labor costs by RMB 12.57 billion. (Qishui, 2017)

On the other hand, based on the advances in AI, the camera function is prone to becoming more comprehensive and automated. In this case, photographers are regarded as less important than they were before. (capture, zooming, and exposure can all be done automatically) And AI head swapping and art generation are rapidly advancing technologies. They have decreased the need for physical elements like makeup and lighting in visual production, often resulting in images that rival or surpass traditional photography.



Figure 2: AI User Portraits: Two Typical Clients of Freely Accessible AI Tools and Platforms

Note: Photos generated by Ai, and all get the permission of Portrait rights

In the meantime, this means the personal skill requirement in shooting and using a camera has been dramatically minimized. (Amankwah-Amoah & Abdalla, 2024)

4.4 Porter's Five Forces Model Analysis for Industry Issues

Although the model has attracted some criticism due to the evolving nature of the Internet economy. (Dälken, 2014) Porter's five-force strategic analysis model is widely used by strategic analysts who want to understand the competitive dynamics of an industry.

Competitive Rivals: Meijing Media has faced diversified competition from various rivals, including internet celebrities, individual photographers, and AI-generated content. Influencers on platforms, such as TikTok and Bilibili, provide low-cost, metaverse-style, and high-interaction content that challenges traditional media. (Wang, 2022) And independent photographers, benefiting from affordable equipment, competitive pricing and agility. (He & Qiu, 2022)

New Entrants in an Industry: Flexible work hours, remote co-working, and the internet have effectively lowered the barriers to entering the media industry. Additionally, movie lenses and cameras, such as the Cooke and Sony FX series, are now more focused on consumer markets, with reduced prices that make them more accessible. Furthermore, the rise of apps has enabled individual photographers to easily obtain their own business orders. Overall, these factors contribute to a decline in the barriers to entry in the industry.

Supplier Power: Chen's Companies operate both commercial and residential photography facilities. The necessary equipment, including cameras, lighting, and other tools, is all available in his home workshop. However, sponsors face uncertainty due to the market's volatility and decline.

Customer Power: In the present media and creative industry field, the customer can usually be summarized in four aspects: Self-media creators, Commercial Orders, SOE Promotional Video, Flat Photo. The media segmentation is now becoming severely clear. Self-media creators primarily focus on restaurant introduction, makeup and cosmetics, education, and consulting. In this regard, their revenue usually depends on the sponsors. The commercial order, manufacturing, and consumption companies all have stable collaboration partners. SOE Promotional Video sometimes encounters the same situation as commercial orders, but it is even more bureaucratic. The tendering and bidding procedure usually involves corruption and bribery. (Zhang & Yun, 2017) They have stable inbreeding, which the Protagonist Chen hardly meddles with and interferes in this domain.

Threat of Substitutes: The threat of substitutes for Meijing Media is closely tied to rapid advancements in AI and the growing use of smartphones by content creators. AI technologies can now automate tasks that were traditionally handled by professionals, such as focusing, lighting, and editing. At the same time, many influencers use smartphones and editing apps to produce high-quality content independently, reducing the need for traditional media services. These low-cost, user-friendly tools make professional photography and videography appear less essential, posing a significant threat to Meijing Media's business model.

4.5 Employment and Human Resource Issues

The human resource management in Meijing Media's organizational structure is flexible and Imperfect. Currently, it consists of merely one employee, CEO Chen. The author asked him why he had not hired more staff to handle technical work, leaving him intently responsible for commercial and administrative tasks.

CEO Chen responded:

"If you recruit a team, your monthly expenses will be around tens of thousands. If there are cases, that's great. If there aren't, you'll still spend tens of thousands each month. Every day, you will be working for someone else, earning money to support the entire team. In contrast, when I work alone, I only need to earn 10,000 and 20,000 RMB a month to make ends meet."

In this regard, research on the media technician market shows the labor prices for photography and video editing as follows:

Table 3: Part-Time Labor Wages in the Media Industry

Position (Part-time)	Price	Domain
Photography	699 RMB/2 hours	Family Portrait
Photography	850RMB/ hour	Wedding
video editor	100/hour	Video Making
MAKE-UP Artist	800/day	Make up

Source: Outsource platform information: MyWed, Hunliji

Table 4: Full-Time Labor Salaries in the Media Industry

Position (Full-time)	Price	Domain
Photography	12000RMB/month	Fashion & Clothing
Photography	13500 RMB/month	Children Portrait
video editor	11000RMB/month	Products, Edit, Public Account Operation
MAKE-UP Artist	7500 RMB/month	Cosmetic, make-up

Source: Boss-Recruitment App

In this case, according to the labor force expense and the uncertainty of business case, Chen withhold his opinion for working individually, as neither has the capability nor the need to hire a full-time employee. The new model he prefers is a “Case-Orientation” pattern.

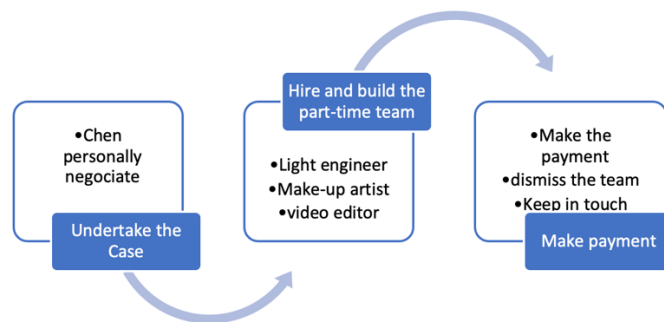


Figure 3: Employee Structure Based on Chen Yurong’s Case-Oriented Model

Source: Content was summarized from the interview

4.6 Other Information Related to the Case Problem

Through business decision-making and leadership assessments, organizational behavior is a dimension which widely used in business management, especially in relation to the Big Five personality traits. (Hassan & Asad, 2016) In terms of leadership style, many of the prominent leaders have the personality and characteristics of charismatic leaders or even Narcissists. (Rosenthal & Todd , 2006) Donald Trump, Elon Musk, and others are all regarded as having this type of personality.

However, the Overconfidence and Refusal to take advice, somehow is risky for the startup company and entrepreneurs.

Table 5: Big Five personality traits and Description

Dimension	Type	Description
O	Openness to Experience	Curiosity, creativity, and openness to new experiences and ideas.
C	Conscientiousness	Degree of organization, responsibility, and self-discipline.
E	Extraversion	Level of sociability, energy, and enthusiasm in social interactions.

Dimension	Type	Description
A	Agreeableness	Tendency to be cooperative, trusting, and altruistic.
N	Neuroticism	Emotional stability and susceptibility to negative emotions.

A complex interplay of personality traits and operational strategy shapes Chen Yurong's leadership style. According to the Big Five personality traits, Chen acknowledges that his strengths in interpersonal communication and relationship management make him more naturally suited to film production rather than technical roles. However, his tendency toward neuroticism presents a significant internal weakness in business decision-making. He also admits that his rigidity in making decisions may hinder Meijing Media's adaptability and future growth. Still, he believes that entrepreneurs must possess strong willpower and determination. Early studies on entrepreneurship suggested that passion helps individuals cope with the challenges of entrepreneurial pursuits (Baum & Edwin A., 2004) In this case, certain personality traits can act as a double-edged sword.

5. Conclusion

The Meijing Media's case offers a multifaceted angle on the realities of entrepreneurship in China's emerging creative industry. In the same time, the business Issues of this company mainly encompass entrepreneurship, business, and industry aspects. Chen Yurong's entrepreneurial journey reflects both the resilience and the risks associated with acting as a sole proprietor. The case highlights that success in the media industry is no longer defined solely by technical skill or artistic integrity, but increasingly by adaptability, strategic planning, and resourcefulness.

Furthermore, the theory and methodology not only focus on SWOT and Porter's Five Forces but also incorporate the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM), Organizational Behavior theory, and attribution theory to explore the case study and qualitative research.

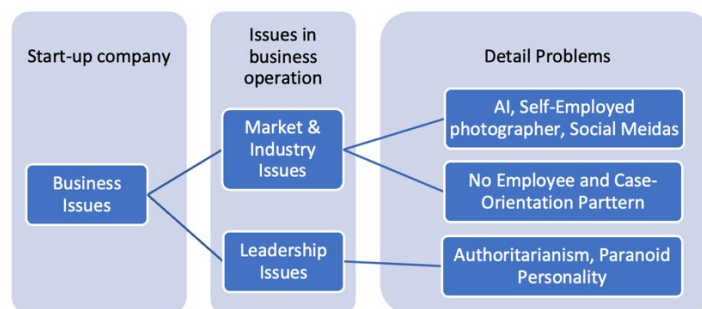


Figure 4: Summary of Key Business Challenges Faced by Meijing Media

This case also further helps business and entrepreneurship students consider how personal beliefs, market changes, and new AI technologies impact a business's success. It also encourages students to understand the real-life challenges entrepreneurs face and the complex business decisions they must make.

In addition, the article also presents an innovative approach to thinking and a method of depiction that combines qualitative research with practical applications in real-world business interviews. It aims to provide insights and references for business management curricula and MBA courses.

6. Case Teaching and Business Interview Tactic

6.1 Teaching Note and Research Approach Usage

This case is designed for both researchers and lecturers to better understand entrepreneurship in the emerging media industry, the research approach usage and core teaching note can be summarized as below:

- Data collection & Accuracy of data sources - **Table 1: Increase Enterprises and Media Industry Market Value**
- Interview Skill – profile interview in research and report
- Business Decision making – use SWOT, Porter Five, analyze business environment and issues
- Enhance the analysis by incorporating insights from organizational behavior

6.2 Case Questions for Students:

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of Meijing Media has in current business operation?
- How do technological advancements like AI design and content generation impact the industry?
- How do Chen's characters traits influence his business decision making and orientation?
- What strategy would you give to Chen's company for business prospects over the next 5 years?

6.3 Business Interview Tactic

- Interview transcripts: When conducting interviews, it is important to get consent and record. This includes not only verbal agreement but better with a written or digital consent form.
- Pre-Interview working: in advance prepare the industrial data for reference, draft the outline, questions, and your purpose.
- Emotional Management Skills: Know how to console. For example, Chen said, *"Why does everyone have their own obsessions deep? It's just a matter of whether they choose to express them and share them with others. You know I don't care anything, and I don't bother with it."* In such moments, the ability to calmly acknowledge emotions and gear the conversation forward becomes more important.

6.4 Lessons Learned and Application in Emerging Market Education

The case and storytelling of Meijing Media are particularly valuable for teaching students about entrepreneurship in real-world environments, such as China's digital creative industry sector, the new-era influencer economy, and the booming epoch of independent media and content creation. It highlights the mentality and qualities that a successful entrepreneur should possess, including resilience, thoughtful planning, adaptability, and strong leadership. Teachers can use this case in lessons on business innovation, digitalization, and entrepreneurship training, especially in the emerging markets that face similar technological and structural challenges.

Ethical Declaration

This study involved interviews with human participants and received ethical approval from the relevant institutional ethics committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection.

AI Declaration

This paper utilized an AI tool (ChatGPT by OpenAI) to assist in matching business subjects, refining language, checking grammar, and enhancing the clarity of expression in specific paragraphs.

The author entirely developed the ideas, structure, analysis, and academic content. The AI-generated suggestions were only served as a reference and edited to ensure alignment with the intended meaning and academic integrity of the paper.

Declaration of Originality and Exclusive Submission

I hereby declare that the manuscript with the title *"Pragmatic Teaching and Case Study for Business Management: Business Analysis of Meijing Media's Entrepreneurial Journey in China's Emerging Media Industry"* is my original work and has not been published previously, in whole or in part, in any journal, book, or other academic outlet.

Furthermore, I affirm that this manuscript is not under consideration for publication elsewhere and will not be submitted to another journal while under review by your publication.

All authors have read and approved the manuscript and have agreed to its submission to your journal.

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