

Traditional media assignment



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Media Traditional Television Media convergence is inevitable as new media challenges the dominance of traditional media and traditional media reacts to this challenge. Discuss. Introduction Media convergence has become an issue over the last ten years as new technologies such as the Internet and computers have become intermingled with ‘ traditional media’ such as television and newspapers. This media convergence transcends social, cultural, economic, technological and industrial changes, all of which will be discussed in the dissertation (Jenkins, 2006, pp. -5). This convergence can happen in a number of ways, but the main focus is on the convergence of types of media technology in society and within the media industry itself (Bell, 2006). This is generally thought of as ‘ new media’ such as computers colliding with ‘ traditional media’ such as television and print media (Franklin, et al, 2008). Apart from the technological convergence, the dissertation will also look at how audiences are engaging and making sense of these technologies.

This is often referred to as ‘ cultural convergence’ within media (Jenkins, 2008). The problem to be addressed here is whether or not media convergence within technological and cultural terms is inevitable as new media pushes forward and challenges traditional media forms. Although it is clear that technological convergence is occurring, the problem is more complex than this and also includes transitions within culture, the media industry, markets, genres and audiences (Jenkins, 2004, pp. 37-41).

Therefore, the problem posed here is how to look at the challenge to traditional media from new media, and how the traditional media is responding. Is this pattern of challenge and response leading to an inevitable

convergence of media in all aspects? Methodology In order to answer this question, the researcher will use the method of document analysis throughout the dissertation. Document analysis is a qualitative method of reviewing the content and meaning of texts, and is appropriate in this case because of the accessibility of documented evidence and opinion on the subject of media convergence.

A qualitative method is needed in a subject like this because the key elements of research are focused around cultural trends and opinions, technological changes, and not around specifically quantitative elements. Furthermore, as cultural phenomena, texts are the ideal way to review cultural changes within media (Stokes, 2003, pp. 52-54). However, as a subjective medium it can be difficult to use textual analysis, because a hypothesis needs to be formed before beginning the analysis.

This will not be a problem in this case though because the problem of media convergence and its supposed inevitability has already been identified as the focus of the dissertation through initial research. Document analysis also allows the researcher to look at the specific cultural and social context of media documents, as well as using primary, secondary and general documents to create a full picture of the research problem. There will be a large focus on primary documents regarding media convergence, media culture and technology within the research (Altheide, 1996, pp. -6). The aim of this essay to give an answer as to the inevitability of media convergence in light of the challenges from new media to traditional media as well as the response from traditional media to this challenge. Firstly, this will involve fully defining media convergence in its various guises and what media

convergence on an industrial, cultural, technological, market-based and audience-based level would constitute (Durham and Kellner, 2006).

Then there will be a review of the literature on the emergence of new media and its challenge to traditional media in a technological, industrial and cultural sense (Thorburn, Jenkins and Seawell, 2003, pp. 281-314). The section after this will look at the reaction from traditional media to this challenge, and how this has reshaped traditional media fields such as television and print media (Lawson-Borders, pp. 27-43). A section will then examine the issues of media convergence in light of the challenges and responses between traditional and new media.

To illustrate some of these challenges in a real-world setting, the case of China's media climate will be examined. China has undergone a large number of reforms in media over the last ten years and the issues of convergence are particularly relevant to such a setting of technological, social and industrial change (Hong, 1998, pp. 41-53). From these chapters a conclusion will be drawn with regards to the future inevitability of media convergence in a variety of contexts ??? technological, cultural, industrial, market-based, and audience-based. Literature Review

The emergence of new media and its challenge The major challenge from new media has come from technological innovation over the last ten years, with the emergence of computer technology and the Internet. For the purposes of this dissertation, there will not be a lengthy discussion about what constitutes 'new' or 'old' media as put forward by Manovich (2001), but rather it will be content with the idea that new media includes

computers, the Internet and digital mobile devices as the standard, whereas ‘ traditional’ media encompasses print media, television and radio as standards.

This new media has significant functional equivalence with traditional media such as print media and television, and is therefore taking some of this market (Adoni and Nossek, 2001, pp. 76-81). Consequently, the competition for audience numbers and cultural significance began. The old ideals and concepts of traditional media have been put under pressure by the flexibility, innovation and new approaches of new media (McQuail, Siune, and Euromedia Research Group, 1998, pp. 1-3). New media forms such as mobile device streaming (Nilsson, Nulden and Olsson, 2001, pp. 4-36), the Internet (Lister, Dovey and Giddings, 2003, pp. 35-37), and news websites and feeds (Digital Spy, 2008) have changed the parameters of what constitutes media in today’s world. Not only has new media changed the technological parameters, but it has changed the market and cultural climate of media as well. There have been questions about how the market needs to respond to new media in terms of regulations ??? for example how broadband services should be monitored or regulated in media terms (Blackman, 1998, pp. 166-169).

Broadcast licensing rules have had to be adapted or reviewed in light of the explosion of new media sources and types around the world, which has caused controversy and disagreement as to how to handle these new mediums (Weare, Levi and Raphael, 2001, pp. 47-55). There has been a change in the way audiences are now viewing media, and with the media and social culture so closely linked this has helped change social attitudes.

The likes of MySpace and YouTube are good examples of the way in which new media is challenging social norms generated by traditional media forms.

This has stretched to the realm of politics, where new media is now seen as a potentially more effective tool for furthering democratic process than traditional media, despite the conceptual difficulties of putting this into practice (Barnett, 1997, pp. 211-216). Another area that has been changed by this new media challenge is the actual teaching of media and journalism. New media has meant that journalists in traditional media need to understand the new ways of broadcasting and delivering information effectively, particularly in light of how politically controlled the finances and content are of many traditional news media organizations.

The education has shifted from traditional media to multi-media (Quinn, 2001, pp. 84-87). Education in other areas is also being influenced by the challenge of new media to traditional media, and has been particularly influential in the field of interactive learning programs (Fallahkhair, 2003). These challenges to traditional media by new media have occurred rapidly, and the effects are wide-ranging. The traditional media world has had to respond to this challenge in order to survive. The reaction from traditional media

The reaction from traditional media has not been one of competition or rejection of new media, but an understanding that this type of media is now part of the landscape and needs to be embraced. This is what has led to the so-called 'convergence' of media throughout the world over the last ten years. Initially the response from traditional media was one of technological

convergence ??? this was inevitable in the sense that new technologies that can give a competitive edge are always adopted in such an industry where possible.

In this case the technological driver was digitalization in terms of television, and the spread of Internet news within printed media (Henten, Falch and Tadayoni, 2003). However, as technology progressed so did cultural and social changes, as well as market changes within the world of media. In order to stay relevant and part of the cutting-edge of culture, traditional media has had to adapt to and converge with new media in terms of policies, techniques and attitude in some area - in addition to the technological convergence.

The structure for storing media and content has changed as ICT has progressed, and has created the need for traditional media to be more instant in its deployment of content and services (Lindqvist and Siivonen, 2002). Established print media firms have embraced the new media to help expand their services and reach untapped audiences. For example, The Guardian now has a full online media section that allows it to reach a far larger and more varied audience than previously possible through its traditional print publications (Guardian News and Media Limited, 2008).

It has also allowed traditional journalists to cover more content than before and express their own views with other journalists. Rather than being run by big business, convergent press forms such as journalism sites are now run by journalists themselves (European Journalism Centre, 2008). The resources available for the consumers and journalists have increased drastically, as has

the ease with which information can be accessed (ABC, 2008, and Future Foundation, 2008). This is not simply down to the emergence of new media, but the convergence of new and traditional media.

The nature of traditional media advertising has also been changed, with print media companies now creating websites and online services to complement their traditional print forms (WARC, 2008, and Zenith Optimedia, 2008). The industry has also responded by broadening the scope of its regulations and research to encompass these new media types (Advertising Research Foundation, 2008), and in some cases create whole new sites and companies devoted to media convergence and advertising (Haymarket Media, 2008).

Media advertising has moved from the realms of print and television to become an interactive, digital and global source online (European Interactive Advertising Association, 2008). The traditional media of television has also responded by converging with new media technologies and attitudes.

OFCOM now has a website, and deals with not only traditional TV and radio regulations but now has newer wireless and online communications regulations in place (OFCOM, 2008). Perhaps most crucially the convergence has allowed for television audiences to be more widely recognized and understood.

It is now easier to monitor audience trends, and this information is now available not only to traditional media industry professionals but new media consumers, users and creators as well (BARB, 2008, and Screen Digest, 2008). The response from traditional media has not been to fight back on its own, but to merge with new media in order to take advantage of its benefits.

Issues of media convergence As can be seen, media convergence is and was inevitable in technological terms because of the need of traditional media to compete with the innovations of new media as well.

However, it is not yet clear how far this convergence goes, and whether or not full media convergence on a cultural, market-based, audience-based and industrial level is occurring or will occur. The bar has been set by new media companies in terms of innovation, and it seems that although a number of companies within traditional media are following this example (Lawson-Borders, 2003, pp. 98-99), the traditional media industry itself is perhaps more focused on technological convergence than a complete convergence of attitudes and processes.

The major effect of convergence at this time appears to be the digitalization of traditional media. Although this has not completely changed the way in which traditional journalism is handled, it has changed its presentation and also blurred the lines between larger corporations and smaller entities (Kawamoto, 2003, pp. 5-12). Evidence of this can be seen in recent worldwide news stories where new and traditional Medias became visibly interdependent. The Virginia Tech massacre is one such example, perhaps the first of its kind.

In this case the new media and traditional media fed off each other for information and opinion, and not just in a technological sense. Whilst some question the strain in ethical boundaries such convergence causes, it is clear that convergence can and will occur in more than just a technological form (Garofoli, 2007). However, it is still not clear whether complete media

convergence is in fact inevitable. It seems that much might depend upon the consequences of such a convergence (Anderson and Elckelman, 1999), as well as the reaction from audiences and culture as a whole (Wilkinson, 2008).

China, media and convergence China is a good example of how convergence has come about in a real-world setting. As with other areas of the world, China's convergence issues are seen as convergence of technologies to create multi-media networks (Ure and Xiong-jian, 1999, p. 17) However, the pace of convergence and change has perhaps been more rapid than in places such as the UK or US, with tighter government controls on media in place. In order to maintain a balance between the traditional and new media, China has had to move further towards complete convergence than some other countries.

However, there is still a long way to go in China with regards to convergence, particularly in terms of cultural issues such as the heterogeneous development of cultures and attitudes. China shows that whilst technological and market-driven media convergence may be inevitable, the inevitability of complete convergence depends upon political and cultural issues associated with audience reactions and needs as well as the slow-changing institutions of power behind traditional media (Donald, Keane, and Hong, 2002, pp. 3-7).

Although perhaps not as extreme as the Chinese situations of 'dissident vs. state', it is true that convergence on levels other than technological and financial is perhaps not inevitable, even it is seems extremely probable at this point (Akhavan-Majid, 2004, pp. 553-555). The next step for media

convergence is certainly to create a regulatory system that allows traditional and new media forms to combine in a way that allows not only technological innovations but differing attitudes, viewpoints and market goals to converge.