

# Understanding digital convergence



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## CONVERGENCE ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS FOR DIGITAL TELEVISION AND THE INTERNET IN THE U. K. AND EUROPEAN UNION

The age of media ordinance used to be rather simpler before engineering dramatically changed how wireless, telecasting, and other mediums interact. Today, the Internet and digital telecasting, among other promotions, have changed how people use and interact with the media every bit good as with each other across states and continents. While this phenomenon known as digital convergence has created a universe of chance for new thoughts to distribute and entree to a larger assortment of programming and information, it has caused a figure of concerns for regulators who must still supply construction and legal countenances on the usage of these meeting mediums.

This paper focuses chiefly on digital telecasting and the Internet as a footing for understanding the constructs behind digital convergence, old ordinances that were in force, bing attacks to challenges and legal power issues, the tactics taken by the European Union, and solutions presented by both the European Union and the United Kingdom.

### *Understanding Digital Convergence*

Digital convergence is a catch-all phrase for a figure of dramatic alterations in engineering. There is device convergence, which is taking two devices like an iPod and nomadic phone and seting them together ( Open Gardens 2006: 1 ) . There is nomadic convergence among devices and devices that can talk to each other ( Open Gardens 2006: 2 ) . However, the largest country, and the 1 in which this paper focuses on, involves the thought of “ co-mingled

bits" ( Open Gardens 2006: 1 ) . This has been defined as the " merge of communicating substructures, media content, and electronic devices, which is bring forth new media services and new manners of delivery" ( Reading 2005: 2 ) . With the velocity at which globalization is taking over both personal and professional lives and quickly increasing technological alteration, digital convergence is a clear response to that tendency ( Reading 2005: 2 ) .

The move to a digital universe has led to the ability to hold telecasting images be sent along telephone lines, digital messages across the Internet because they can be " broken up and reconfigured easy, " and reproduction of information " perfectly" on compact phonograph record ( Darlington 2001: 1 ) . This digital engineering besides allows for convergence, which involves blending " audio, picture and informations to make new multimedia merchandises and services" ( Darlington 2001: 1 ) . This next-generation engineering will quickly alter the degree of picks and personalisation involved in digital telecasting and the Internet ( Cameron 2006: 1 ) .

Driving this alteration are tendencies related to " the rapid digitization of content, greater bandwidth, increased treating power and the Internet" ( Open Gardens 2006: 3 ) . As portion of this tendency, digital telecasting is defied as " television based on digital engineering, which makes possible the development of new synergistic communications channels with the users" ( IMO 2005: 1 ) . Digital telecasting has been being developed by " dominant orbiter broadcasters" and partially by " member province authoritiess, national regulators and broadcasters" ( Naranen 2003: 1 ) . Along with digital telecasting, the Internet is altering how people interact with each with entree <https://assignbuster.com/understanding-digital-convergence/>

now readily available through broadband, overseas telegram and fiber-optic links every bit good as the radio applications protocol ( Internet Rights 2003: 7 ) .

The other chance is that the spots of informations “ will be borderless, stored and manipulated with perfectly no regard to geographical boundaries” and distance will hold “ little meaning” due to the velocity in which that digital informations travels ( Darlington 2001: 1 ) . For this information to go freely around the universe and be available to any one, there must be a set of criterions ( Open Gardens 2006: 4 ) . From this move, telecommunications and broadcast medium are coming together due to the vary nature of digital engineering to supply “ a common format for the transmittal of signals” ( Darlington 2001: 1 ) . A recent study from OFCOM suggested that consumers are driving the tendency toward digital convergence at a more manic gait with diminutions in telecasting in favor of online services ( OFCOM 2006: 2 ) . The industry is “ being transformed by greater competition, falling monetary values and the eroding of traditional grosss and audiences” ( OFCOM 2006: 4 ) .

The primary scheme involves the handiness of pick, the interoperability of systems, and the presence of a competitory market ( Digital Broadcasting Strategy 2004: three ) . As such, ordinance becomes necessary in order to supervise the participants in the market and guarantee equity, ethical behavior, privateness, freedom of look, and the chance for competition ( Kreuzer 2005: 4 ) . As Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights said: “ Everyone has the right to freedom of look. This right shall include freedom to keep sentiments and to have and leave information and

<https://assignbuster.com/understanding-digital-convergence/>

thoughts without intervention by public governments and regardless of frontiers" ( AREA 1997: 2 ) . No where has this become every bit debatable as the Internet, which has been praised as " a wholly unfettered medium" that offers limitless information that crosses all boundaries ( Mohan 2000: 1 ) . However, convergence challenges ordinance by making a complex environment that crosses geographical, cultural and societal boundaries ( AREA 1997: 3 ) .

### *Existing Internet and Broadcasting Regulations*

The British overseas telegram telecasting webs do " provide local telephone service and NTL, the proprietors of the telecasting senders antecedently managed by the Independent Broadcasting Authority" ( Darlington 2001: 1 ) . What is go oning is that " both British Telecom and Cable & A ; Wireless progressively wish to supply amusement services like picture on demand and are be aftering longer term enterprises in the field of multi-media, likely in partnerships with a scope of different programme providers" ( Darlington 2001: 2 ) .

Regulative barriers are maintaining telecommunications and airing from a complete convergence, but it is engineering, services and ownership that are forcing to take these barriers ( Darlington 2001: 1 ) . In 1997, the DG XIII Green Paper on Regulation of Communications Convergence was published and suggested that regulative model include " the proviso of substructure, services, content and on conditions for entree to that content ( via Television, computing machine or telephone webs ) ( Marsden 1997: 3 ) .

The first effort at modulating the digital telecasting industry started in 1995 as the Advanced Television Standards Directive but it did really small to “ facilitate the outgrowth of a individual European digital Television market supported by common standards” ( Naranen 2003: 4 ) . Previously, in the U. K. , communications policy was guided by the Department of Trade and Industry ( Marsden 1997: 5 ) . The 1997 Convergence Green Paper suggested three countries of regulative reform that included “ building on current construction, developing a separate regulative theoretical account for the new activities to co-exist with telecoms and airing based upon the German theoretical account, or increasingly presenting a new regulative theoretical account to cover the whole scope of bing and new services” ( Llores-Maluquer 2007: 3 ) . In 2000, the European Union set up the “ Multimedia Home Platform ( MHP ) criterion utilizing Java language” and it was officially recognised by the European Telecommunications Standards Institute as a manner to present synergistic telecasting and facilitate Internet shoping on different user terminal platforms” ( Naranen 2003: 5 ) .

The U. K. so proposed the combination of current regulative organic structures for broadcast medium and telecommunications be combined with an Internet Watch Foundation to organize the footing for a individual regulator referred to as the Office of Communications ( OFCOM ) ( Darlington 2001: 4 ) , which was created in 2003 ( Pfanner 2006: 1 ) . This organic structure ensures consumer protection, entree and interconnectedness every bit good as ensures the “ availability of quality communicating, telecasting and wireless service” in the U. K. ( Kreutzer 2005: 28 ) . Thought its Internet Watch Foundation, OFCOM can “ control unwanted content on

the Internet” ( Internet Rights 2003: 4 ) . This regulative organic structure “ has important possible to impact society through attending to the content transmitted to the general populace over differing information networks” ( Weinstein 2003/2004: 3 ) . Their function is to simplify the complex broadcast medium market roles every bit good as degree the field in footings of competition and ordinance ( Foster 2005: 5 ) . Likewise in 2003, the Council of Europe “ passed a recommendation to member provinces on steps to advance the democratic and societal part of digital broadcasting” ( IMO 2005: 2 ) .

Previously, the thought of mass media had ever been closely regulated, but meeting mass media is altering how this can be conducted due to publish with civil society and rights ( Internet Rights 2003: 2 ) . The European Union has created the Information Society Forum, which has been focused on the societal and legal deductions of digital convergence ( Darlington 2001: 3 ) . Encoding is used a batch right now to “ geographically restrict who sees what because of the limited screening rights they have obtained from content owners” ( Cameron 2006: 3 ) . Until determinations are made to open up the content to everyone, digital telecasting suppliers are utilizing this engineering of encoding to pass what is viewed.

Since both the European Union and U. K. broadcasters and industry research workers agree that it is truly content that is at the nucleus of the convergence issue, ordinance becomes more of import because the information shared within this content is capable to scrutiny, cultural niceties, linguistic communication barriers, and freedom of look ( BECTU 1998: 2 ) . In all facets of current ordinance, there has been a focal point on <https://assignbuster.com/understanding-digital-convergence/>

content, criterions, media ownership and programme ownership to find the best manner to pass the Internet and digital telecasting ( BECTU 1998: 3 ) .

### *Key Challenges*

There are a figure of cardinal challenges for the European Union every bit good as hurdling for the U. K. to get the better of. In footings of Europe, the battalion of linguistic communications “ will make it hard to develop pan-European multimedia applications” ( Darlington 2001: 3 ) . Atomization is besides evident in civilization, technological developments, and regulative and legal models among the assorted states in the European Union ( Darlington 2001: 3 ) . Although the European Union “ determines baseline regulative policy, single states still maintain national policy...that can curtail confederations between regions” ( Forbes. com 1999: 2 ) . As such, merely the largest companies that are state-funded within certain states have been “ hoard ( ing ) digital development initiatives” ( Forbes. com 1999: 2 ) . Standardization can besides be hard when a superior engineering is developed where it is hard to accomplish a critical mass in the market among consumers due to changing economic and societal state of affairss within the European Union ( Cowie and Marsden 1998: 15.

There are a figure of challenges in respects to developing and modulating digital telecasting in Europe as one research worker notes:

Digital Video Broadcasting Project, a European-based pool of the telecasting industry, successfully developed the common digital broadcast medium transition criterions but there is still a deficiency of common middleware criterions used for synergistic services and pay-TV entree. This state of

<https://assignbuster.com/understanding-digital-convergence/>



affairs is sectioning the European digital telecasting markets dominated by satellite broadcasters with their proprietary criteria, forestalling the viewing audiences from accessing a full scope of digital channels with one device, and doing unneeded costs and holds in the production of synergistic DTV services ( Naranen 2003: 1 ) .

However, the biggest challenge still is the deficiency of legal and regulative representation for the Internet ( Cameron 2006: 2 ) . What is going on now is that the convergence of digital telecasting, comprised of private webs, and the Internet, considered a public web, is making disputing legal and regulative quandary ( Cameron 2006: 4 ) . The primary inquiry that the European Union and the U. K. have is “ who decides what we can and can't do? ” ( Cameron 2006: 4 ) . Overall, this connects back to the issue with licensing every bit good. In observing the challenges involved, one research worker said, “ While the separation of distribution from programming is theoretically attractive, in pattern the federal or cross-subsidised systems which represent the government-licensed position quo in most European states are reliant on the independent regulator ” ( Marsden 1997: 4 ) . The criteria that are created must be enforced on an international degree or they will not hold the credibility or muscle to work ( IMO 2005: 2 ) .

In footings of the U. K. , it is hard for this market place to make multi-media merchandises due to its little size every bit good as tough competition, tight ordinance, and a “ poorly educated and ill trained ” labour market ( Darlington 2001: 3 ) . Right now, “ the telecasting spectrum is still used harmonizing to a program originally prepared in the late 1950s ” ( Cameron 2006: 2 ) . Another issue in the U. K. is the fact that ISPs come and travel

<https://assignbuster.com/understanding-digital-convergence/>

because there is a “ lack of transparency and accountability” that is merely non acceptable in the “ era of converged communications services” ( Cameron 2006: 5 ) . On-demand services have besides changed the really nature of advertisement and, presently, there are no specific guidelines about how this will be handled as portion of the digital convergence ( Cameron 2006: 7 ) . Those that provide the content are besides challenged to understand “ how the public’s perceptual experience of value may alter, on a market-by-market and even segment-by-segment basis” ( Brightman 2007: 3 ) . The other issue in the U. K. has to make with the barbarous monopolistic behavior of Sky, which does non offer the consumer any pick but to use and pay for whatever packages the company sets in footings of football lucifers or other particular events ( Cameron 2006: 8 ) .

### *The European Union’s Approach*

First and first, the European Union understands that “ regulating the Internet is about more than information substructure and economics.... is besides about building an information society in which societal and cultural values can be preserved” ( Samuelson 1999: 1 ) .

In 2005, the i2010 enterprise called the European Information Society 2010 was launched as portion of the Lisbon Agenda to turn to the digital convergence challenges and chances ( Reading 2005a: 2 ) . The committee has been given the undertaking to build a model that creates the necessary tools for the European Union and its member provinces to “ promote and speed up a favorable development of the communications and media industries” ( Reading 2005a: 3 ) . The first portion of the enterprise purposes

at modernizing the European Union regulations “ to fit the emerging digital economy” while get rid of the out-of-date regulations that are inhibit the “ development of the communications and media industries” ( Reading 2005a: 3 ) . The model will concentrate on developing “ rich content markets based on fast and flexible webs, devices and interfaces on unfettered criteria and interoperable solutions” ( Reading 2005a: 3 ) .

Besides in 2005, European regulators proposed the Television Without Frontiers ( TVWF ) directives on new media and the Internet ( Ross 2005: 1 ) . The job with enforcing new regulations is that much of the media being addressed is considered non-linear, which by its really name suggests a challenge in modulating something that sounds slightly intangible ( Ross 2005: 2 ) . Current European Union broadcast medium ordinances include “ quotas on local content, to guarantee a broad assortment of locally produced content in an attempt to continue a culture” ( Ross 2005: 3 ) . In certain cases, because of this quota and the belief that more credibility would be established, a self-regulatory codification of pattern is the penchant where “ regulatory duties are taken on by the manufacturers and users of content instead than jurisprudence or regulative organic structures of statutory creation” ( Leonardi 2004: 3 ) .

### *Solutions from the U. K. and European Union*

The U. K. approach encourages the development of a specific group “ responsible for publishing counsel, describing growing on, work outing jobs and chairing argument on converged media systems such as IP telephone, cosmopolitan connectivity, IPTV and media on-demand” ( Cameron 2006:

2 ) . This group would so spouse with “ legislators, technicians, executives and advocates involved with the deployment of these platforms and services” in a manner that contributes to the U. K.’s digital ecosystem and larger overall economy” ( Cameron 2006: 2 ) . One solution is to acquire rid of the last linear signal and exchange to compressed digital by 2012, which will open up “ bandwidth for new channels and services” ( Cameron 2006: 2 ) . In turn toing the challenge of ISPs, it has been suggested that all “ tiers of ISPs need to be to the full licensed on a national register” like other broadcasters and have that registry be overseen by a cardinal authorization that can modulate and supervise the patterns of these ISPs ( Cameron 2006: 6 ) .

Consequences so far indicate that the U. K.’s digital telecasting market is the “ most developed in the world” ( Cameron 2006: 1 ) . Interestingly plenty, digital telecasting in the United States is still slow to come online due to “ the struggle of self-interests” by rivals instead than looking to follow standardization to react to consumer demand ( Cowie and Marsden 1998: 17 ) . In a recent study, it was found that “ thirty-five per centum of British families surveyed had bought some kind of package, ” such as broadband Internet connexions, fixed-line and nomadic telephone and pay-TV ( Pfanner 2006: 1 ) . There is besides considerable motion towards more options for consumers in the U. K. For illustration, BT Vision is a television-via-broadband service while BSkyB is working with Google to “ provide picture, hunt, advertisement and communications services for Sky” ( Pfanner 2006: 1 ) . OFCOM has besides suggested that the BBC regulate along side the other

suppliers to assist construct impulse for the digital telecasting convergence ( Burt and Malkani 2003: 1 ) .

In footings of both the European Union and the U. K. , there needs to be elucidation of how IPTV content is regulated. Presently, the European Union is seting together a legal model about broadband telecasting content ( Cameron 2006: 4 ) . A figure of rules suggested by Ray Gifford and Kyle Dixon may supply some believable solutions to the ordinance quandary:

Policymakers should ne'er react to entreaties for equal regulative intervention in isolation. Policymakers should avoid imposing regulations where market forces can accomplish the same consequence. Policymakers should acknowledge the importance of stable, well-protected belongings rights in go oning the upward spiral of investing and invention in digital communications ( Ross 2005: 4 ) .

In general, the European Union needs to look at convergence as an chance, so, hence, must concentrate on altering criterions and fitting capablenesss with those in other parts of the universe ( Reading 2005: 3 ) . All ordinances should besides concentrate on turn toing the harmful content and other issues related to this negative side of convergence while, at the same clip, non restricting the “ freedoms offered by globalised media ( Reading 2005: 4 ) so that European consumers can “ participate in the global inter-cultural exchange of ideas, thoughts and creativeness offered by meeting media in a globalising world” ( Reading 2005: 5 ) .

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive lays down specific regulations related to the “ protection of bush leagues and human self-respect and of <https://assignbuster.com/understanding-digital-convergence/>

audiovisual commercial communications combined with more elaborate regulations for television” - both additive and non-linear ( Rumphorst 2006: 5 ) . Entering 2007, this directing appears to hold gained the cooperation of the “ European Parliament, the Council of Ministers of Culture and the European Commission” as a manner to present stricter ordinance yet open up content to be available across the European Union market with the blessing of lone one Member State ( Llorens-Mauquer 2007: 4 ) . In add-on, it has been suggested that OFCOM “ undertake impact appraisals in regard of the bulk of its policy and regulative proposals” due to the “ growing complexness of the converged services value chain” ( Broadband Stakeholder Group 2005: 1 ) .

Whatever the solutions may be for the European Union and the U. K. , it is of import to retrieve that by its very definition, convergence “ is a dynamic procedure that involves important and changeless change” ( Deloitte 2005: 2 ) . It will be critical to equilibrate “ public and private, citizen and consumer” in the media policy ( Richards 2007: 7 ) . It would function both the European Union and the U. K. to concentrate on making a Digital Media Vision that builds on what OFCOM began ( Richards 2007: 11 ) .

## Mentions

AREA UK ( 1997 ) . *Area U. K. 's remarks on the green paper on the convergence of the telecommunications, media and information engineering sectors, and the deduction for ordinance.* Available at: hypertext transfer protocol: //europa. eu. int/ISPO/convergencegp/area. html.

BECTU. org. uk. ( 28 October 1998 ) . BECTU *response to “ regulating communications.”* Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //www. bectu. org. uk/policy/pol011. html.](http://www.bectu.org.uk/policy/pol011.html)

Brightman, I. ( 18 January 2007 ) . *United Kingdom : media anticipations – TMT tendencies 2007 – portion one* . Deloitte, Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //www. mondaq. com/article. asp? articleid= 45640 & A ; latestnews= 1 & A ; print= 1.](http://www.mondaq.com/article.asp?articleid=45640&A;latestnews=1&A;print=1)

Broadband Stakeholder Group. ( April 2005 ) . *Better policy devising ; Ofcom’s attack to impact appraisals.*

Burt, T. and Malkani. G. ( 4 December 2003 ) . *Public may acquire hearing on hereafter of airing media ordinance* . Financial Times.

Cameron, A. ( 2006 ) . *An action program for Ofcom* . Digitaltx, Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //www. digitaltx. tv/attachments/An. Action. Plan. For. Ofcom-Digital. TX. Limited\\_www. digitaltx. tv\\_. pdf.](http://www.digitaltx.tv/attachments/An.Action.Plan.For.Ofcom-Digital.TX.Limited_www.digitaltx.tv_.pdf)

Cowie, C. and Marsden, C. ( 1998 ) . *Convergence, competition and ordinance* . International Journal of Communications Law and Policy. Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //www. digital-law. net/IJCLP/1\\_1998/ijclp\\_webdoc\\_6\\_1\\_1998. html.](http://www.digital-law.net/IJCLP/1_1998/ijclp_webdoc_6_1_1998.html)

Darlington, R. ( 21 February 2001 ) . *What is multimedia convergence and why is it so of import?* Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //www. rogerdarlington. co. uk/Multimediaconvergence. html.](http://www.rogerdarlington.co.uk/Multimediaconvergence.html)

Deloitte. ( 2005 ) . *The trillion dollar challenge rules for profitable convergence* , 1-13.

Digital Broadcasting Strategy. ( June 2004 ) . *Consultation papers* .

Forbes. com ( 1999 ) . *Broadband bid* . Available at: hypertext transfer protocol: //www. forbest. com/1999/03/30/feat\_print. html.

Foster, R. ( 2 June 2005 ) . *Competition and the public involvement: a more crystalline attack* . OFCOM.

IMO ( 2005 ) . *Media and digital convergence: policy and development tendencies in Europe and Croatia* . Available at: hypertext transfer protocol: //www. imo. hr/culture/conf/medconf03/index. html.

Internet Rights ( 1 January 2003 ) . *Media ordinance and convergence* . Available at: hypertext transfer protocol: //www. internetrights. org. uk/index. shtml? AA\_SL\_Session= 8fa795873994ed10dd54938b98227a99 & A ; x= 608.

Kreuzer, A. N. ( 31 October 2005 ) . *Convergence statute law and its impact in the European Union, the United Kingdom and South Africa* .

Leonardi, D. A. ( 30 April 2004 ) . *Self-regulation and the broadcast media: handiness of mechanisms for self-regulation in the broadcast medium sector in states of the EU*. Available at: hypertext transfer protocol: //www. selfregulation. info/iapcoda/0405-broadcast-report-dl. htm.

Llorens-Maluquer, C. ( 23 January 2007 ) . *Carles Llorens nowadays “ the audiovisual media services directing and its policy-making: the convergence* <https://assignbuster.com/understanding-digital-convergence/>



*argument revisited.*” Stanford University, Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //shl. stanford. edu: 3455/3/100](http://shl.stanford.edu:3455/3/100).

Marsden, C. ( 31 October 1997 ) . *Convergence or coexistence? Television and telecommunications policies diverge in the convergence argument* . University of Warwick, Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //www. law. warwick. ac. uk/elj/jilt/wip/97\\_3mars/marsden. htm](http://www.law.warwick.ac.uk/elj/jilt/wip/97_3mars/marsden.htm).

Mohan, M. ( 2000 ) . *Regulative challenges in the emerging Internet media environment* . Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //www. isoc. org/inet2000/cdproceedings/8b/8b\\_1. htm](http://www.isoc.org/inet2000/cdproceedings/8b/8b_1.htm).

Naranen, P. ( 2003 ) . *European digital telecasting: future regulative challenges* . IAMCR Conference, Barcelona.

OFCOM ( 8 October 2006 ) . *Ofcom communications market study reveals new industry tendencies and alterations in consumer behavior* . Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //www. ofcom. org. uk/media/news/2006/08/nr\\_20060810](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/media/news/2006/08/nr_20060810).

Open Gardens. ( 30 April 2006 ) . *Digital convergence = mashups* . Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //opengardensblog. futuretext. com/archives/2006/04/digital\\_converg. html](http://opengardensblog.futuretext.com/archives/2006/04/digital_converg.html).

Pfanner, E. ( 10 December 2006 ) . *Survey paths digital convergence in U. K. and elsewhere* . International Herald Tribune, Available at: [hypertext transfer protocol: //www. iht. com/bin/print. php? id= 3845668](http://www. iht. com/bin/print. php? id= 3845668).

Reading, V. ( 29 June 2005a ) . *i2010 and digital convergence as an engine of growing and occupations* . European Commission Responsible for Information Society and Media.

Reading, V. ( 31 August 2005 ) . *The media and globalization* . European Commission Responsible for Information Society and Media.

Richards, E. ( 18 January 2007 ) . *IPPR media convention* . Available at: hypertext transfer protocol: //www. ofcom. org. uk/media/speeches/2007/01/ippr.

Ross, P. ( September 2005 ) . *Regulation without frontiers: Europe shows U. S. policymakers how not to encompass convergence* . The Progress & A ; Freedom Foundation, Available at: hypertext transfer protocol: //www. pff. org/issues-pubs/ps/ps1. 15frontiers. html.

Rumphorst, W. ( 4 November 2006 ) . *Broadcast medium goes digital: regulative demands* . European Broadcasting Union.

Samuelson, P. ( 1999 ) . *Five challenges for modulating the planetary information society* . University of California at Berkeley.

Weinstein, S. ( Winter 2003/2004 ) . *OFCOM, information-convergence and the ne'er stopping mizzle of electric rain* . International Journal of Communications Law and Policy, 1-39.