

Chapter 3

Introduction to Convergence

Convergence

Dictionary definition of the word convergence is when two or more things come together to form a new whole.

The ability of different networks and user equipment to carry similar services & the ability of one network or user equipment to carry different services. Handsets that carry voice, data and video services. Cellular networks carrying streaming video in broadcast mode and broadcasters being able to provide data services on unused portions of their spectrum. There are three major perspectives:

1. Same services via different networks and technologies
2. Same terminals use different networks
3. Same customized services in different countries

Possibility of various networks platforms to provide practically the same set of services. Unification of user's devices, such as telephone, PC and TV set in the form of a single terminal. Convergence is the coming together and integration of two or more technologies. Digital television, computers and telecommunications being combined is an example of convergence. Following are the major integrations:

1. Integrated service platform for phone, Internet, music, video games
2. Integration of phone and Computer
3. Global System for Mobile communication (GSM) Wi-Fi handsets
4. GSM DVB (Digital Video Broadcasting) handsets
5. Integration of content production and consumption

Media Convergence

Convergence of media occurs when multiple products come together to form one product with the advantages of all of them. Media Convergence is gathering and dissemination of news across a multi-media platform. Media Convergence is the process of combining and presenting of different media (multimedia) into a single delivery system. The Internet is an example of convergence.

Media convergence is the merging of mass communication outlets – print, television, radio, the Internet along with portable and interactive technologies through various digital media platforms. Media convergence is the blending of multiple media forms into one platform for purposes of delivering a dynamic experience.

Technologically rich societies have entered the digital age, and media industries are grappling with new opportunities – and threats – afforded by what is called “convergence”. Media people tend to get very excited about convergence, because it holds so much promise. The melding together of different media, incorporating new personalized services is both impressive and overwhelming.

Text + photos + audio + video + graphics = Multimedia.

Convergence within Journalism

In the converged media organizations of the future, the journalists who best understand the unique capabilities of multiple media will be the ones who are most successful, drive the greatest innovations, and become the leaders of tomorrow.

Convergence is occurring on many levels. Convergence within content, within the newsroom, within the way news is disseminated and within the way information is collected. Media organization which runs newspaper, television and website separately after the concept of convergence now combined all three products (newspaper, television and website). Staff of newspaper, television and website still operates independently but share resources and communicate with one another. The branches all cross promote each other, the website has its choice of content from both the news and television branches and reporters are often interviewed by the television station for its newscasts.

Vision of Converged World

1. Single terminal point to access information
2. Development of information technology
3. Reformulation of media economics and politics
4. Reorganization of media companies
5. Media digitalization
6. Media Freedom
7. Integration of world economy and politics

Challenges for Convergence

1. New Markets
2. Licensing
3. Audience
4. Pricing
5. Trained Personnel
6. Multimedia Skills
7. Time
8. Competition
9. Quality
10. Social Responsibility