

Doing More With Less?

Convergence and Public Interest in the New Zealand News Media

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

.....
Tamara Walker, 2009

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ABSTRACT

The traditional news media is being reshaped by the phenomenon known as media convergence. This thesis, which is presented as a journalistic, multimedia website (see <http://www.artsweb.aut.ac.nz/mediaconvergence>), explores media convergence in New Zealand. Its primary objective is to gauge the impact of convergence on the extent to which journalism fulfils its public interest duties. To this end, the defining elements of convergence are examined, along with its driving factors and impact on day-to-day newsroom practices. The research project is based on in-depth interviews with news media experts and practitioners and the results of an industry survey. The research findings indicate that convergence poses significant risks to public interest journalism. At present, however, there is more evidence of benefits than detriments.

Introduction

Communication has been at the heart of our species from our very emergence some 100,000 years ago, and communication is central to democratic theory and practice. New technologies are in the process of forming the central nervous system for our society in a manner unimaginable, even in the media-drenched late twentieth century. No previous communication revolution has held the promise of allowing us to radically transcend the structural communication limitations for effective self-government and human happiness that have existed throughout human history. But such a communication revolution will not occur because of a magical technology; it will only occur because organized people make it so. (McChesney, 2007, pp. 4-5)

The consequences of the revolution Robert McChesney writes of will be determined, to a large degree, by those who control and manage the media. The future of the news media and public interest journalism lies in how they choose to “grasp the potential of the times we are in” (McChesney, 2007, p. 5).

The research question for this thesis is: How is media convergence in New Zealand influencing the extent to which journalism fulfils its public interest role?

The answer to this question holds significant implications for democracy. Political democracy rests on an assumption that the public is capable of making informed decisions. It can only work if there is a real marketplace of ideas and issues for public consideration (see, for example, Alger, 1998). In its ideal form, journalism is the communication conduit through which the information that makes this possible is delivered to the public. It is also charged with the duty of holding those in power accountable for their actions. Therein lie the important public interest roles of the news media.

Media convergence has the potential to either benefit or hinder the news media’s ability to fulfil its democratic responsibilities.

In the words of Robert McChesney:

Book after book weighs in with detailed and thoughtful expositions on the necessary social conditions to promote democratic deliberation and viable self-government ... But the nature of the media system and how it is structured, and how that might affect the conditions for the informational needs of a democracy, are often nowhere to be found. (2007, p. 14)

The reasons for, and consequences of, media convergence are receiving a wealth of attention in the world of academia. But little attention has been paid to what is actually happening in New Zealand's newsrooms. Research is required to gauge the extent to which media convergence is influencing the practice of journalism in New Zealand and the impact it is likely to have on public interest journalism. There is a need for solid industry research, otherwise there is risk of academic postulating about something that may be happening, but to an unknown extent.

This thesis attempts to analyse convergence from the perspective of those on the inside of the New Zealand news media. In particular, it addresses the issue of defining media convergence, what is driving it, the impact it is having on day-to-day newsroom practices and the way in which it is influencing public interest journalism. Media convergence is a broad concept; this thesis focuses on those aspects of convergence which relate to newsroom practices. Topics such as blogging, citizen journalism, broadband uptake, and regulatory issues posed by new media are related to, but beyond the ambit of this research. So too are predictions of what the New Zealand news media will look like in the future – for example, a prognosis for the printed newspaper. These topics warrant research in their own right but in-so-far as they are related to media convergence, the researcher believes it is important to focus on the grassroots first. Also, it would have been impractical to extend the boundaries of this research any further.

The title of the thesis is: *Doing More With Less? Convergence and public interest in the New Zealand news media*". *Doing More With Less?* is intended to be thought-provoking rather than a question that the researcher sets out to answer. It reflects a point of tension in the industry over whether convergence is occurring as a means of increasing the production of quality journalism or a means of simply reducing costs. The research for the thesis combines the basic principles and methods of journalism (the standard who, what, when, where and why questions) with normative and political economy approaches.

The normative theoretical underpinnings to the research influence everything from the research question to the research conclusions. They are based on assumptions relating to the ideal functions of the news media, what journalism *should* do in a democratic

society. These ideal functions include providing objective, balanced, diverse and accurate information, contributing to a marketplace of ideas, encouraging a participatory democracy and acting as a watchdog to hold those in power accountable for their actions.

The political economy approach focuses on how the political and economic structure of a society – which in New Zealand is predominantly democratic-capitalist – influences information. It is based on an assumption that a country's economic system has significant implications for society, politics and culture. Understanding media convergence involves also understanding ownership and control of media entities and their production processes. Journalism cannot be properly studied without also looking at the political and economic setting in which it exists.

This is a suitable theoretical base for researching media convergence because the political and economic setting plays a significant role in determining convergence practices and the impact they will have on public interest journalism. As Martin Hirst and John Harrison wrote in *Communication and New Media: From Broadcast to Narrowcast*: “A political economy approach to the business of media helps explain the dual nature of media as both content (information and entertainment) and commodity (product)” (2007, p. 31). The struggle between commercial ideals and journalistic ideals is a recurrent theme in the research project.

The research project for this thesis is presented as a multimedia website (see <http://www.artsweb.aut.ac.nz/mediaconvergence>). It includes visual, audio and particularly video and text-based content of a journalistic style. The content is based on interviews with New Zealand media experts and practitioners. It also incorporates information from existing literature on journalism and convergence and the results of an industry survey carried out by the researcher.

It seemed fitting to use a creative approach for this thesis. New communications technologies and the rise of digital media have reshaped the traditional news media. It has been forced to adopt and adapt in this new environment. The researcher felt that by immersing herself in that environment she could gain first-hand insight into what is being experienced at the coal face. Not only is the website a reflection of the very convergence it addresses (a synthesis of form and content), but it is a piece of

journalism in itself. Presenting the thesis in this manner has allowed the researcher to practice journalism at the same time as studying it and further developing her skills.

Literature Review

Introduction

The past three decades have seen two major trends which have penetrated and reshaped media landscapes worldwide.

One trend has been the rapid developments in technology – advancements in communications and mobile technologies and the rise of digital media. Media organisations are now able to transmit information to and from virtually anywhere in the world (Henry, 2007). They are also able to gather, create and deliver content in ways and forms outside of their traditional realms. The internet is often used as a platform to feature text, audio and still images, animation and video (Ketter, Weir, Smethers & Back, 2004; Klinenberg, 2005). There's been a blurring of the boundaries between traditional news media.

The second trend has been the substantial relaxation of media ownership regulations in the Western world. Governments have progressively lifted restrictions on foreign and cross-media ownership of news outlets. For example, in 2006, the Australian government abolished foreign ownership restrictions and removed most cross-media ownership laws (Pham, 2007; Broadcasting Services Amendment (Media Ownership) Act 2006). The US government has also eased restrictions on cross-media ownership (see www.fcc.gov/ownership/#background). However, in both countries steps are still taken to ensure the presence of sufficient independent voices in individual markets and in Australia, no more than two of the three commercial platforms can be controlled by the same organisation in a single market.

In New Zealand, the Commerce Commission should protect against media monopolies, but since the early 1990s there have been no regulations specific to media ownership (Rosenberg, 2008)¹.

The deregulatory trend has led to greater commercialisation, concentration and consolidation of the news media.

¹ Deregulation of the New Zealand media market is discussed in more detail in the thesis research project.

Media environments are now being shaped by two seemingly contradictory trends.

Henry Jenkins argues:

[O]n the one hand, new media technologies have lowered production and distribution costs, expanded the range of available delivery channels and enabled consumers to archive, annotate, appropriate and re-circulate media content in powerful new ways; on the other hand, there has been an alarming concentration of ownership of mainstream commercial media, with a small handful of multinational media conglomerates dominating all sectors. (2004, p. 33)

The practices taking place in this new environment have come to be known as media convergence. According to Huang et al (2006), media convergence is a relatively new topic in media research, with few academic writings appearing prior to 1998. In what follows, existing literature on convergence is discussed. Firstly, various attempts at defining the phenomenon will be addressed. This will be followed by discussion of the motivations driving convergence, its implications for day-to-day practice in newsrooms and finally, the implications for the quality of public interest journalism.

Defining Media Convergence

In 1983, communications scholar Ithiel de Sola Pool used the term ‘convergence’ in his book *The Technologies of Freedom*. Rich Gordon (2003) credits Pool with popularising the word ‘convergence’ in connection with communications technologies. Pool described what he called “the convergence of modes: ... Conversation, theatre, news, and text are all increasingly delivered electronically. ... [E]lectronic technology is bringing all modes of communications into one grand system” (as cited in Gordon, 2003, p. 58).

However, others (for example, Appelgren, 2004) suggest the concept was first introduced in 1979 by Nicholas Negroponte, founder of Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Media Lab. Negroponte used three overlapping circles labelled “Broadcast and Motion Picture Industry”, “Computer Industry” and “Print and Publishing Industry” to illustrate how the three media industries would come together as a single entity (Gordon, 2003; Appelgren, 2004).

Today, 'convergence' is used in such an array of contexts, and takes such a variety of forms, that it is difficult to identify one standard definition. The research literature points to various definitions of media convergence with different names and descriptions depending on the perspective of the author. Some have developed models incorporating various types or processes of convergence, others have focused only on a specific aspect. Some have taken a general approach – Jane Singer (2006, p31), for example, broadly defines convergence as “newsroom convergence refers to some combination of news staffs, products, technologies, and geography among the previously separate provinces of print, television, and online media.”

Gordon (2003) provides a more comprehensive model which includes five distinct forms of convergence. 'Ownership convergence' refers to corporate strategies often involving media mergers and acquisitions (the merger of AOL and Time Warner, for example). 'Tactical convergence' is often a marketing strategy involving partnerships between different media outlets. 'Structural convergence' involves changes in job descriptions and organisational structures within a newsroom. 'Information-gathering convergence' requires reporters to be multiskilled and able to produce stories with words, audio and video. And finally, 'storytelling convergence' involves journalists rethinking the way they tell stories, taking into account the potential of multimedia.

Based on a review of relevant literature, Huang et al (2006) identify four categories of convergence directly relating to how journalism should be taught in colleges. 'Content convergence' involves sharing content among competing news outlets. 'Form convergence' refers converging video, audio, data, text, still photography and graphics for on-demand audiences. 'Corporate convergence' can include vertical or horizontal integration, mergers, acquisitions and partnerships. It involves collaborative efforts like sharing content. And 'role convergence' is the blurring of boundaries between the roles of reporters.

Larry Dailey, Lori Demo and Mary Spillman (2005) have constructed a convergence continuum for studying collaboration between newsrooms and its effect on news content and delivery. It progresses from low to high degrees of cooperation and integration. These authors treat ownership and technological convergence as separate processes. The first point on the continuum is 'cross promotion' (the process of using elements of a partner's content in a promotional capacity). The second is 'cloning'

(essentially the unedited display of partner's product). This followed by 'cooperation' (sharing information on selected stories while still competing and producing original content) and 'content sharing' (partners regularly meet to exchange ideas and jointly develop special projects). The final stage of the continuum is full 'convergence' (where cooperating partners have a shared editorial desk and teams from various platforms work together to tell stories utilising the strengths of each medium).

This approach has been criticised for being too narrow in focus (Appelgren, 2004) and for treating convergence as a continuum with a finite process (Domingo et al, 2007). Domingo et al propose four dimensions of convergence and say "each of the dimensions can have a different level of development, making convergence an open process with many possible different outcomes..." (2007, p. 2).

Stephen Quinn (2004) believes full convergence is not about cooperation or content sharing or cross promotion. "Full media convergence involves a radical change in approach and mindset by both managers and journalists. It involves a shared desk where the key people, the multi-media editors, assess each news event on its merits and assign the most appropriate staff for the story" (Quinn, 2004, p. 116). It requires editorial managers to be aware of the strengths of each medium so that they can discuss potential multimedia coverage. Quinn also notes all information must be fed into and accessed from a central database.

Full convergence seems to be distinguished from lower degrees of convergence by the complete coordination of news processes in one newsroom (for example, Domingo et al, 2007; Dupagne and Garrison, 2006).

While the various paradigms and definitions differ in terms of terminology and explanation, they share recurrent themes. The common ground appears to be the blurring of the boundaries between traditional media as media outlets move into multimedia production and a trend towards cooperative partnerships.

This researcher's focus is on those convergence processes and practices which influence day-to-day newsroom operations and journalistic practices. The researcher proposes the following definition of media convergence:

Media convergence is a set of processes which culminate in converged media companies – or “full” convergence.

It involves a set of processes including: a) utilisation of digital and mobile communications technologies to produce and deliver content in multiple mediums for multiple platforms, which is accessible virtually anywhere, any place and any time; b) reorganising newsroom structures and workflows to accommodate multi-platform journalism; c) centralisation and consolidation of news operations; and d) cooperative partnerships with other media outlets.

Full media convergence occurs when these processes take place in a single, integrated newsroom.

Further references to media convergence in this exegesis are based on this definition.

Rationale for Media Convergence

Market deregulation and the rise of digital platforms have created an environment which facilitates convergence, but they by no means necessitate it. Convergence is a process that utilises opportunities presented by free markets and modern technology to achieve specific goals. Decisions to converge are based on a combination of commercial objectives, journalistic objectives and market realities. There are three themes evident in rationale for media convergence: pessimistic, optimistic and the realistic.²

Pessimists tend to claim convergence is driven solely by motivations to increase profits. Viewed as a business model, convergence is a means of centralising operations and producing more news with the same, or fewer, resources (Quinn, 2005). Research indicates the industry’s primary motive for encouraging multiskilling and cooperation across media is to save money by reducing staff numbers and cutting production overheads (Singer, 2004, as cited in Deuze, 2004; Domingo et al, 2007). Media organisations can also extend their marketing reach by taking advantage of opportunities for cross-media promotion and multi-media advertising campaigns. Janet Kolodzy (2006) says journalists tend to distrust convergence. They view it as a marketing ploy – a way to promote the news as a ‘product’ rather than a public service.

However, some argue convergence in fact involves a lot of spending for companies (for example, Deuze, 2004). In response to accusations that profits and the exploitation of

² These themes are also evident in analyses of the convergence’s impact on public interest journalism.

journalists are the focus of convergence, Diane McFarlin, publisher of *The Sarasota Herald-Tribune* says: “For me, convergence is not about doing more with less, but about doing more with more. Efficiencies? That’s not why we’re in it. We are losing money from convergence. Don’t ever expect to make a lot of money from convergence” (as cited in Huang, Rademakers, Fayemiwo & Dunlap, 2004, p. 75).³

Optimists argue convergence provides opportunities for better quality journalism and to better serve the public interest. According to Singer, although commercial factors seem to be a major impetus for convergence, “common rationales also include interest in exploring new ways to tell stories and in facilitating communication both with and among audiences” (Singer, 2006, p. 31). The key is in playing to the strengths of each medium by efficiently distributing and utilising resources and technological tools (Quinn, 2005; Kolodzy, 2003). Journalists can then tell stories in ways most meaningful, relevant and convenient for their audiences.

Newspaper consultant Andreas Pfeiffer says: there is a fundamental dichotomy⁴ in:

The fundamental dichotomy then, is the potential conflict between a business view of convergence multiple-platform publishing as a tool for increased productivity and marketing – versus journalists’ aspirations in which convergence offers them the potential to do better journalism. The latter approach is unlikely to save money. (as cited in Quinn, 2004b, p. 111).

Ian Hargreaves (2003) says the problem is that quality journalism costs money but its financial return is highly uncertain.

Realists recognise that convergence is also a reaction to external or uncontrollable factors that threaten the viability of media organisations. The development of mobile communications and digital platforms, including cell phones, the internet and digital television, has broadened the range of options for delivering news (Domingo et al, 2007). As a result, traditional audiences have become fragmented. Their expectations have changed and there is now demand for access to information anywhere, anytime and in a variety of forms (Kolodzy, 2003; Covington, 2006; Murdoch, 2007). According to Gracie Lawson-Borders, media organisations should no longer refer to themselves as television stations, radio networks or newspapers. In today’s media environment it is

³ On a similar note, Donna Reed, a former editor of *The Tampa Tribune*, says: “The goal of convergence is not and never was a reduction in numbers... Simply, two brains are better than one” (as cited in Huang et al, 2004, p. 78).

⁴ The tension between journalistic and commercial objectives in the news media is a recurrent theme in this thesis.

about being in the “content business” (2005, p. 5). Furthermore, a study carried out by The Media Center at the American Press Institute indicates that people are not solitary consumers of media – they multitask (as cited in Birge, 2004). Audiences are no longer loyal to one medium only.

For some, convergence is a means of survival. Research shows newspaper circulation in the US is falling at a rate of roughly five percent per year, and viewership of television news is also dropping, while new media outlets are booming (Covington, 2006). To protect their place in the market and maintain a competitive advantage, media organisations need to adapt to the new environment and diversify their content and means of delivery (Thelen, 2002).

Implications for Newsrooms

According to Hirst and Patching (2005), the practice of journalism is changing and it is becoming increasingly difficult to accurately define the work of a journalist.⁵

Convergence practices exist at different levels of media organisations. At the organisational level there’s the development of cooperative media relationships and restructuring of newsrooms. And at the frontline level there’s requirement for more diverse skills and changes in production processes.

The organisational level

Convergence often involves media outlets forming collaborative partnerships with each other. Dailey, Demo and Spillman (2005) found ownership is not an overriding factor in determining the existence of a partnership – collaboration can take place whether outlets are commonly or independently owned. The research literature suggests the most common partnerships are between television stations and newspapers (see, for example, Dailey, Demo & Spillman, 2005; Quinn, 2005). Collaborative partnerships could involve a number of strategies⁶, but particularly cross-promotion and the pooling of

⁵ The explosion of blogging websites and the phenomenon of citizen journalism are also muddying the definitional waters (Duffield & Cokley, 2006). However, this issue is beyond the ambit of this thesis.

⁶ Murray (2003) uses the term ‘content streaming’ (the migration of content from one platform to another) as an umbrella term to describe what happens in such relationships. It encompasses: ‘synergy’, which usually refers to ownership amalgamations designed to maximise content reuse; ‘content warehousing’,

resources. The tactics employed in these strategies will differ depending on the degree of integration between the media partners.

Cross-promotion generally involves each partner attempting to draw its audience's attention to the other, and encouraging them to become audiences of both. This could be achieved by an initiative as simple as including a partner's logo or icon on the television screen or newspaper page. Or it could go a step further and include regularly scheduled, cross-platform content, like having a television reporter write a print column or a print reporter appear on television discussing a feature to appear in the following day's paper. Some television stations embrace what Gordon (2003) refers to 'enterprise reporting', in which a story can go to print first and subsequently increase the television audience later in the day. Newspapers, on the other hand, embrace partnerships with television outlets as a way to tap into and gain a share of the latter's vast audiences (Gordon, 2003).

Pooling resources can involve the basic sharing of news tips and information, or more collaborative efforts such as having one reporter gather information for a story and passing it on to others. The work of one reporter on a particular story could be used as the common source for any version of the story for the different platforms (Domingo et al, 2007). Huang et al (2006, p. 229) argue that sharing tips and information does not entail convergence because it has been done for decades. However, the partnerships for sharing that exist today are more formalised than the ad hoc relationships formed in the past.

Sometimes these partnerships become formal enough to warrant the introduction of new roles. In America, for example, the *Indianapolis Star* and WTHR-TV, the local NBC affiliate, agreed to share the cost of employing a director of news partnerships whose job involved fostering collaborative content production (Gordon, 2003). According to Wasserman (2006), convergence to date consists primarily of formerly print-based news organisations branching out into audio and visual media and internet distribution. But this too has created new roles. The *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* employed an online multimedia reporter who covers news events, shoots video, takes still photos and creates multimedia presentations for its website (Gordon, 2003).

For companies that have fully integrated multi-platform operations into one newsroom, significant restructuring has taken place. In March 2000, the *Tampa Tribune*, WFLA-TV and the Tampa Bay Online began operating out of the newly built Tampa News Center (Dupagne & Garrison, 2006). Dupagne and Garrison describe the new set-up:

Organizationally, the 120,000 square foot, four-story New Center was designed to foster interaction and coordination between the staff members of TBO.com, WFLA-TV, and *The Tampa Tribune*. The first floor ... houses two large WFLA production studios. The second floor provides space to both the WFLA and TBO.com newsrooms. The third floor is home to the *Tribune* newsroom and TBO.com executive offices. ... A central piece of the building is an atrium, which rises through the second and third floors. Lying in the middle of the atrium on the second floor is the so-called “superdesk” – a circular multimedia assignment desk where editors of the three news organizations work side-by-side. (2006, p. 242)

The frontline

The research literature indicates that one of the most prevalent impacts for journalists working in a converged media environment is that they are working under increased pressure. This is largely a result of the 24-hour news cycle that has emerged with digital technology. Tofani (2001) says the dominant message in today’s newsroom is ‘produce, produce, produce’. Singer drew on case studies of four converged newsrooms in the US to examine conceptual and sociological shifts among newspaper journalists (2004). She found time pressures are a major issue for journalists taking on extra workload.

Journalists in newsrooms practicing convergence may also find themselves being required to work across multiple platforms. Some may be expected to gather information using multiple media tools; others may be expected to have the skills to develop that information in multiple mediums (see, for example, Domingo et al, 2007; Corrigan, 2002). Domingo et al (2007) defined three parameters to analyse multiskilling trends. ‘Media multiskilling’ requires journalists to produce content for different media, ‘issue multiskilling’ entails them reporting on news related to different subject areas; and ‘technical multiskilling’ involves journalists taking on most production tasks. In their study of Spanish news outlets, the researchers found the most common form was media multiskilling and only a few media companies had adopted all three forms at the same time.

But while some see multiskilling journalists as the way of the future, others say they will be, and should be, rare (Gordon, 2003). Charles Kravetz, the Vice President for news and station manager of New England Cable News believes the “backpack journalist” – a superhack master of multimedia... may be the subject of avant-garde j-school courses, but it’s not likely to become the norm” (as cited in Huang et al, 2006, p. 228).

Optimists argue multiskilling guarantees a more coherent coverage of the same event across different platforms. But pessimists argue that too much multiskilling is a recipe for chaos – that requiring journalists to be jacks-of-all-trades will lead to them being masters-of-none – and that newsrooms still need specialist reporters (Birge, 2004; Huang et al, 2006; Huang et al, 2004). It is doubtful one person could cover a major story for to a high standard for multiple platforms. Covington (2006) says media managers who want it all need to remember that “if everything is a priority, then nothing is”.

However, Quinn says today’s journalist should say: “I’m not working in a newspaper, I’m working in news” (2004, p. 119). This is part of a new mindset to acknowledge the blurring of the boundaries between traditional media. The new mindset also requires multimedia editors to take on board new considerations such as which stories are best-suited to which medium and which platform news should carry breaking news. It involves changing work patterns and reassessing priorities. Kerry Northrup, director of the Ifra-sponsored Newsplex believes: “A true multiple-media editor will be one who recognises, for instance, that breaking news reporting is no longer a staple of printed journalism, and therefore that printed newspaper content must rise to a higher level while working in concert with its online siblings” (as cited in Quinn, 2005, p. 32).

At present, it is questionable how much content on news websites is shovel-ware (taken from one source and put on the web with little thought given to adapting it for its new use), how much is repurposed (taken from one platform and repackaged for another), and how much is unique to the web. But editors will increasingly need to consider the new ways of telling stories made possible by digital media and mobile communications technologies (Gordon, 2003). They will also need to consider increasing interactivity with audiences by utilising new opportunities for two-way communication.

There is a lot for journalists and editors to adapt to in this new environment. Singer (2004b) found that journalists have concerns about the compatibility of different newsroom cultures and approaches to news. Demands and pressures differ for print, broadcast and online news reporters (Singer, 2006). Those in print often perceive television reporters to be shallow and interested in image over substance, or visually interesting spot news over issue-orientated public service stories. Those in television, on the other hand, often consider print reporters to be “ruffled, hostile and unappreciative of the challenges involved in putting together a good broadcast news piece” (Gordon, 2003). Journalists working in the converged media are being forced to overcome cultural stereotypes inherent in each medium.

However, Singer also found that:

[C]onvergence experiences are leading print journalists to realise, perhaps for the first time, that colleagues in other media have many of the same values, self-perceptions and skills. ... Despite lingering concerns about television quality and the types of stories it does best, convergence is highlighting commonalities rather than presumed differences among news workers. ... That said, medium-driven variations in professional practice may well continue to separate them. (Singer, 2004, p. 850)

Singer (2004b) says journalists who see convergence as an opportunity to advance professionally and generally have a favourable attitude towards change are less likely to oppose convergence. The offer of training and compensation is also likely to ease resistance.

Implications for Public Interest Journalism

Pessimists argue that deregulatory policies are enabling the big to get bigger and allowing concentration of power among a shrinking number of media giants (see, for example, Singer, 2004; Murray, 2003). Furthermore, as media organisations become increasingly consolidated and profit-focused, journalists and editors find themselves juggling the public interest with the commercial interests of conglomerates. Andrew Nachison, director of the Media Center at the American Press Institute argues media managers have become so caught up in the economics of the industry that they don't recognise they're making decisions based on economic rather than journalistic principles (as cited in Quinn, 2005, p. 30).

In their book *Manufacturing Consent*, Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman (1994) devised a propaganda model of media performance which exemplifies many of the concerns held for the public interest role of journalism. Chomsky and Herman pointed to five filters through which information must pass before it reaches the public. Three of those filters are particularly relevant in the converged media environment because of their potential to influence the public sphere.

The first filter is 'size, ownership and profit orientation'. The authors suggest: "The dominant media firms are quite large businesses; they are controlled by very wealthy people or managers who are subject to sharp constraints by owners and other market-profit-oriented forces; and they are closely interlocked, and have important common interests, with other major corporations, banks and government." The second filter involves the need to lure advertising revenue, and the third involves reliance on powerful and official sources of information. These filters allow people with vested interests a degree of control over the media, weakening editorial boundaries. As a result, the information the public receives can be tainted.

Concentrated media ownership can hold many dangers. As well as giving corporate media elites the power to unduly influence public discourse, it can impede the entry of new players to the market, deter innovative and risky journalism, turn information into a commodity, and stifle diverse points of view (Chris, 2006, p. 64).

Optimists argue that convergence provides a multitude of options for news delivery and increased potential for two-way communication. It is possible, they say, for a greater variety of voices to be expressed in the news than ever before. But pessimists argue that concentrated cross-media ownership in single markets – shrinking the number of media outlets and sharing content – stifles the diversity of voices (see, for example, Huang et al, 2006; Pham, 2007; Klotzer, 2006; Chris, 2006). Murray (2003) says the multiplicity of media products produced by multi-platforming policies in no way generates a parallel diversity in output.

Not only are there fewer media companies producing content, but that content is being shared around instead of independently sought out. The 'gather once; publish many times' process of convergence produces a single message. Singer (2006) found that

forces such as an increased emphasis on the blending of promotion with news delivery as well as a decrease in the number of mediated voices being heard in a community, do exist, and are exacerbated by convergence.

Furthermore, Corrigan (2002, p. 21) says numbers of well-known journalism traditionalists have spoken out against the convergence trend because it leaves no time to think, reflect and analyse. Much of today's journalism is dissemination of information rather than the collection of it. Reporters often have less time to conduct critical research and interview diverse sources, and media reports are easily dominated by press releases. A study of converged news operations in Oklahoma City found journalists had concerns regarding accuracy, sensationalism, source relations and the use of news content as a promotional tool (Singer, 2006).

However, these concerns may be unfounded. A case study on *The Tampa Tribune*, part of the Tampa News Center, found that convergence has, overall, sustained the quality of news reporting (Huang et al, 2004).

Optimists argue that convergence improves the quality of journalism. One of the benefits of journalism in the age of convergence is the capacity to provide information in places and formats meaningful and relevant to the public. Reporters are more creative in their reporting and aware that utilising multiple platforms gives them more reach and has a greater impact on the community (Huang et al, 2004). The *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* general manager for electronic media, Lou Ferrara, says convergence provides journalists with "more points of entry to a story, the technology to do more in-depth reporting, and in a more timely way..." (as cited in Huang et al, 2004, p. 75).

Singer (2006) found that journalists in converged newsrooms had generally positive views of convergence in the context of serving the public. "Most expressed the belief that shared expertise and resources result in a stronger and more multifaceted news product that reaches more people" (Singer, 2006, p. 48). Forrest Carr, news director of the News Center in Tampa, says:

[O]ne of the greatest benefits of convergence, the daily sharing of tips and info, is not a process of which the audience is normally aware. This process alone has dramatically improved the newsgathering ability of each platform – and has thereby improved our service to our consumers. (as cited in Huang et al, 2006, p. 84).

However, literature suggests that although there are some benefits to the public, journalistic imperatives are losing out to business imperatives (see, for example, Singer, 2006). For example, digital technology makes copy-sharing easier, but because commercial motives are in the driving seat the focus is on how much money can be made from it, not how it can benefit public interest journalism.

The way in which the business-journalism dichotomy is resolved will have profound implications for journalism – a profession described as “constituted by independent truth-telling that’s intended to serve the public by illuminating important social and political realities” (Wasserman, 2006, p. 34). The news media is more than just a business – the profession of journalism has a public responsibility. But there is an inherent struggle in trying to achieve the objective of telling the truth and informing society and the objective of making money.

Business-related goals are not necessarily at odds with journalistic objectives; nor are they inherently damaging to the public interest role of journalism – the two are not mutually exclusive. However, there is concern that journalism will be marginalised as “yesterday’s newsrooms transform themselves into tomorrow’s market-driven, multimedia information utilities” (Wasserman, 2006, p. 34). Klinenberg (2005) says the news media has always been commercially orientated, but there’s fear the logic of the market has penetrated to unprecedented depths of the modern newsroom. The danger lies in making news values subordinate to business considerations.

Research Opportunity

Research is required to gauge the extent to which convergence processes and practices are taking place in the New Zealand news media. What impact are they having on the day-to-day practice of journalism? How is the quality of journalism faring? The answer to these questions will provide insight into whether, and if so how well, the country’s news media is fulfilling its democratic responsibilities under the increasingly converged circumstances in which it finds itself.

Research Design

The primary research for this thesis incorporated both qualitative and quantitative components (the qualitative research being the main component).

Qualitative Research

The qualitative component of the research involved in-depth, semi-structured, open-ended interviews with New Zealand news experts and practitioners. According to Jane Singer, “[s]uch field research is called for when the goal is to learn about, understand, or describe a group of interacting people” (2004, p. 843). The style of interviewing adopted in this research allowed participants to explain their experiences with, and views on, convergence in detail.

The researcher conducted 21 interviews in total. The interviewees were a convenience sample, which is appropriate in exploratory research such as this, and what Singer calls a purposive sample, which “seeks subjects with specific characteristics” (2004, p. 843). Interviewees were selected based on their expertise in the news media, the degree to which they are being affected by convergence and their position in their organisation. The researcher also sought to ensure as many of the country’s mainstream media organisations (print, television, radio and online-only news outlets) as possible were represented.

The interviewees included media experts, managers, editors and journalists.⁷ Media experts (academics, for example) can provide insight into what is driving convergence and what impact it is having, or is likely to have, on the quality of public interest journalism. Media managers can help provide an understanding of the reasons behind convergence practices and editors and journalists can provide insight into what these practices mean on the frontline – how the day-to-day practise of journalism is being affected. Interviewing both media managers and editors/journalists covers both the business and journalistic sides of convergence.

⁷ See Appendix A for a list of all interviewees.

The interviews took place between October, 2007 and October, 2008. They were recorded on camera (15 interviews) and over the phone (six interviews) using audio-recording equipment typical of that used in radio newsrooms. They lasted from 30 minutes to an hour. All interviews were transcribed verbatim for analysis. The analysis involved identifying common themes and exceptions to those themes, and categorising interview responses accordingly. The themes generally reflected the issues raised by the interview questions and were directly related to the aspects of convergence being studied. It was important that the responses of interviewees be interpreted in the context of the question they answered so as to avoid misinterpretation.

Quantitative Research

The survey⁸ was designed to add another dimension to the thesis research, alongside the qualitative interviews. A questionnaire was used with six questions and a text field where respondents could add open-ended comment. Three of the questions used Likert Scales, which required the respondent to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements. The other three questions simply required the respondent to select which of the listed responses they agreed with. For two of these questions they could select all those responses they agreed with, for the other they could only select one response.

The survey was carried out between August, 2008 and January, 2009. It used a convenience and purposive sample. As stated above, this type of sample is appropriate in exploratory research such as that being undertaken for this thesis. The researcher's objective was to use the survey results to provide an overview of how those in the New Zealand news industry view media convergence. The questionnaire was sent by email to approximately 130 media experts, managers and practitioners. In an attempt to maximise the response rate, reminder emails were sent to most of those who did not respond within six to eight weeks. Many of those who still did not respond were sent a second reminder.

The actual sample population size is unknown because the researcher asked some of those who she emailed to forward the questionnaire to their colleagues. The

⁸ A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

questionnaire was also posed on the Yahoo group website, Journz, along with an invitation to participate in the survey.

Forty-six people returned completed questionnaires. The resulting data is presented in tables in Appendix C.

A number of analytical issues became evident as completed questionnaires were returned and collated. For example, some people gave more than one response where they should only have given one. These issues are discussed in the 'limitations' section of the exegesis.

Research Project Overview

The research project is divided into five main sections: Journalism and Open Society; Defining Convergence; Why Converge?; Convergent Journalism; and Convergence and Public Interest.

The first section, Journalism and Open Society, provides the contextual information required to fully understand media convergence, as well as an insight into why the topic warrants attention. It discusses the significance of the news media, the tension between commercial and journalistic ideals in the news media and threats to journalistic integrity. It also outlines the unique characteristics of the 21st century media environment, such as the changing behaviours of news consumers.

The second section looks at the theoretical and practical approaches being taken to defining media convergence and identifies some of the common aspects. The definition of media convergence proposed by this researcher is also presented.

In the ‘Why Converge?’ section, the various factors driving media convergence are addressed. This researcher believes this is a significant issue because the reasons for convergence have a strong influence on journalistic practices and subsequently the quality of journalism. The driving factors are discussed as either enablers or motivations. Enablers (market deregulation and innovative technology) make convergence possible while motivations actively drive decisions to converge. The thesis research revealed technology is believed to be a primary force driving convergence, but so too are motivations such as the desire to meet commercial and journalistic ideals. Convergence is also often understood as a reaction to certain demands or challenges presented in the 21st century media environment – audience fragmentation and commercial realities, for example. This section also addresses the difficulties convergence presents for traditional media revenue sources.

The fourth section, Convergent Journalism, provides insight into media convergence at the frontline. It addresses the skills and production mindsets required in multi-platform, multimedia newsrooms, and how journalists are reacting in this environment. It also examines the restructuring taking place in newsrooms (for example, centralisation of

sub-editing operations) and the cooperative relationships being formed in the converging media.

The final section addresses the essence of the thesis. How is media convergence influencing the news media's fulfilment of its public interest duties? This section provides an indication of if and how the convergence practices implemented by news organisations are reflecting their motivations and achieving their desired results. The research reveals both concerns and perceived benefits for the quality of public interest journalism. The risk of convergence threatening accuracy, thorough research and overall journalistic quality is addressed, as is the opportunity for more meaningful journalism. The impact of convergence on the diversity of voices presented in news content is also explored.

Research Limitations

Hindsight is a wonderful thing. While the researcher was aware of some of the limitations of this research from the outset, others were revealed while the research was being carried out.

The survey⁹, for example, had certain design issues which did not become evident until completed questionnaires were returned and the data was being collated. Comments of some respondents indicated the need for an 'I don't know' option in the question, 'What is media convergence?'. The lack of this option means some of the responses may have been based more on guess-work than experience or knowledge.

The findings of the questionnaire are also limited because some people gave more than one response where there should have been only one, and others left some parts unanswered. It is unclear whether respondents intended to respond like this or simply made mistakes. Questionnaires were completed electronically – respondents were instructed to click on a box to select their response. The researcher did not realise the potential this created for respondents to inadvertently select, not select, or deselect a response. For example, clicking on a box twice would undo a selection.

The researcher was aware of other limitations from the outset. The ability to present research findings that are absolutely up to date is limited by the rapid rate at which this situation is developing. The researcher found on numerous occasions that just as she reached an understanding of the situation, it would change. However, a conscious attempt was made to be as contemporary as possible.

The ability to compare the responses of interviews was at times complicated by the lack of a common understanding of media convergence. Despite attempts to clarify the intended meaning, it was difficult to override interviewees' preconceptions. It is therefore possible interviewees were not always talking about precisely the same thing. The researcher has attempted to mitigate this by addressing different definitions of convergence, making useful comparisons and including her own definition as a reference point.

⁹ A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

The very nature of the news media made getting interviews with the most suitable person and achieving a high response rate with the survey a challenge. The news media is fast-paced and hectic at the best of times and those on the frontline are constantly up against deadlines. Compounding this was the timing of the research – it was undertaken at the same time as the general election and the Beijing Olympics. However, those who took part in interviews and/or the survey were still credible and worthwhile participants.

There have also been limitations to the presentation of the research project. For example, the researcher did not have a professional camera operator. Volunteer camera operators were used on a few occasions, but this meant handing over quality control. For the remainder of interviews the researcher acted as camera operator and interviewer, but this meant she was unable to control the quality of audio. The researcher also began the project with no experience when it came to designing and building a website and using the editing software made available to her. Overcoming these challenges was a learning experience which in itself contributed to a better understanding of what some journalists are experiencing in the converged media.

Research Conclusions

Media Convergence in New Zealand

The findings of this research indicate that New Zealand is not experiencing the convergence trends taking place in other parts of the world – or at least not to the same degree. In particular, there are no integrated newspaper-web-television newsrooms in New Zealand. This could indicate that at present the New Zealand news media is only testing the waters when it comes to convergence. But it is more than likely a sign of the country's relatively small media market. There are few players and the vast majority of those in the game are large, foreign-owned media conglomerates. There is little room for cross-media mergers and acquisitions such as those taking place in, for example, the US. Consequently, there is less scope for multi-platform news operations. Most multi-platform operations in New Zealand tend only to involve extending news operations to include online – as opposed to another traditional platform.

The findings also indicate that the country's news organisations are not experiencing convergence in the same ways. The print media appears to be undergoing the most change. The country's two main newspaper groups, Fairfax and APN, are restructuring with the objective of centralising operations. In addition to introducing websites into their news operations, they are employing online-only teams and producing content specifically for the web. This is in contrast to the country's television and radio news outlets, which tend to base a larger portion of their online content on that which has already been produced for the primary platform. Newspapers also seem to be more embracing of opportunities for multimedia.

Answering the Research Question

How is media convergence in New Zealand influencing the extent to which journalism fulfils its public interest role?

The implications for public interest journalism, as outlined in the editorials included in the research project, are both positive and negative.

On the positive side, the research findings suggest the news media is improving participatory democracy by reaching more people than in the past. News outlets in the converged media are making information available in a variety of places and forms and also on demand. They are engaging audiences who would otherwise be less informed. As Radio New Zealand chief executive and editor-in-chief says: “They can access it in a whole range of different ways, using all sorts of different reception technology, all over the world and whenever they feel like accessing it” (personal communication, August 5, 2008).

The converged media also appears to be advancing the public’s ability to make informed decisions. Content that can’t be included in newspapers or radio and television bulletins simply because it won’t fit, is now being provided on the internet – which is free from the time and space constraints of traditional media. The public is being presented with a more complete picture of events and issues, which enables them to make more sound decisions.

It appears diversity is also being fostered. The two-way communication taking place in the converged media gives the public a chance to offer their views on issues in the media. It also gives them an opportunity to suggest possible stories. Most news outlets are actively seeking information from the public. This means journalists are exposed to more diverse opinions and sources of information, which increases the likelihood of more diverse viewpoints being presented in the news.

On the negative side, one concern is that general journalistic quality standards will diminish as a result of multiskilling. As is the case overseas, there is much talk in New Zealand of the jack-of-all-trades and master-of-none: The multiskilling journalist who produces content for multiple areas of the media but not to the high standards of specialist journalists. There is risk of these journalists being pressured to put speed and quantity ahead of accuracy and thoroughness. But the research findings suggest this concern might be overstated – the degree of multiskilling required in today’s newsrooms is minimal. The news media remains cognisant of the importance of specialist journalists.

While the research findings indicate convergence is benefiting diversity, they also indicate it could be stifling it. For the public interest to be served, the news media needs to provide a variety of stories and a variety of viewpoints on each story. Some argue that with the multitude of options available for accessing news today, it follows that there is also more choice in content. Others argue that more platforms do not necessarily equate to greater variety of information.

There is also concern that diversity will suffer as a result of centralisation of news operations and cooperative partnerships in the converged media. The risk is in organisations like Fairfax making information gathered by one newspaper available to all. The result could be that newspapers end up becoming a bunch of clones. However, the research findings suggest there is little need for concern here. The news media appears to be recognising the need to maintain individuality. Fairfax editorial development manager Clive Lind, for example, acknowledges that “one size simply doesn’t fit all” (personal communication, July 28, 2008).

Concern over cooperative partnerships between media outlets with common audiences, on the other hand, appears to be warranted. Cavanagh believes more and more frequently the sources of news and information can be traced back to fewer places (personal communication, August 5, 2008). If two outlets share information, they are not even attempting to unearth different perspectives or unique angles. Furthermore, it appears that not only are news outlets sharing information, they are using shared information without checking it first. The research findings indicate news organisations are content to put their faith in their partners.

In conclusion, media convergence in New Zealand is having both a positive and negative influence on the extent to which journalism is fulfilling its public interest role. However, it appears that to date the benefits are more evident than any detriments. But absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. The risks still exist. The future of public interest journalism remains to a significant degree in the hands of those who control and manage the media and how they decide to “grasp the potential of the times we are in” (McChesney, 2007, p. 5). If their decisions are motivated purely by a desire to increase profits, they put journalism on thin ice. In the age of convergence, journalism is in need of guardians.

Opportunities for Further Research

The researcher believes a thorough content analysis comparing today's news content to that of 20 years ago would be valuable. Only research such as this will provide evidence of how public interest journalism has fared in the wake of media convergence.

Case studies of convergence practices in not-for-profit public broadcasters and profit-orientated private broadcasters would also be worthwhile. Comparing the two may reveal just how big a role the drive for profits is playing in convergence. This research could extend beyond New Zealand.

Further research at the coal face is also warranted. A comparison of the experiences and views of people in different areas of the media and in different positions would provide a comprehensive picture of convergence in the New Zealand news media. Does whether a person works in television, radio, print or online induce different attitudes towards convergence? Do news executives view convergence in the same way as journalists? This research could be carried out with a survey using a questionnaire similar to that used in the current research, but with multiple samples.

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Glossary of Terms

Backpack journalist: A self-sufficient journalist who can gather, edit, produce and present news in multiple mediums for multiple mediums. Backpack journalists are also referred to as one-man-bands, platypus journalists, Sojos and Mojoes.

Cross-promotion: A marketing technique in which news outlets draw the public's attention to other news outlets in order to increase exposure of their brands and products.

Digital media: Media content that can be created, distributed and received in a digital format.

Diversity: In the context of this project, diversity refers to the number and variety of stories covered by news outlets and the number and variety of viewpoints within each story.

Full convergence: When media convergence takes place in a single, integrated newsroom.

Interactive media: Media that involves two-way communication so recipients can contribute as well as receive information.

Journalism: The collecting, writing, editing, producing and presenting of news.

Media Convergence*: Media practices including a) utilisation of digital and mobile communications technologies to produce and deliver content in multiple mediums for multiple platforms, b) reorganising newsroom structures and workflows to accommodate multi-platform journalism, c) centralisation of news operations and d) cooperative partnerships with other media outlets.

*Media convergence is a very broad concept – this website is primarily concerned with its journalistic applications and implications.

Medium: The form media content takes (text, audio, still images, animation and video).

Multimedia: Media content that incorporates more than one medium (for example, an audio-visual slideshow).

Multiskilling journalists: Journalists who gather and/or produce content in more than one medium.

New media: Any media platform or content that is an extension of traditional media (radio, television and print). Usually used in reference to online media but also applies to, for example, digital television.

News media: The part of the mass media that focuses on presenting information on

current events and issues to the public.

Platform: The system by which content is delivered and received (radio, television, internet, print, mobile phones etc).

Public interest: The well-being or welfare of the general public. Serving the public interest is central to journalism's democratic responsibilities.

Repurposing: The process of converting content produced for one platform for use on a different platform.

Shovel-ware: Content taken from one source and put on the web with little thought given to adapting it for its new use.

Traditional media: Media organisations that produce and deliver content only for the traditional platforms (radio, television or print).

Video journalist: A journalist who can handle all aspects of video production on their own, acting as reporter, camera operator and editor.

Appendix A

List of Interviewees

Alan Cocker: Head of School of Communications, AUT University

Bill Francis: General Manager of Talk, The Radio Network

Bruce Davidson: Managing Director, Pagemasters

Clive Lind: Editorial Development Manager, Fairfax Media

Debra Millar: Group Publisher, ACP Magazines (now former)

Edward Gay: Online Reporter, *New Zealand Herald*

Gavin Ellis: Former Editor-in-Chief, *New Zealand Herald*

Glyn Jones: Editor, TVNZ Plus (now former)

Ian Llewellyn: Press Gallery Journalist, New Zealand Press Association

Jeremy Rees: Multimedia Editor, *New Zealand Herald*

Julie Starr: Digital Media Consultant

Kevin Hercock: News Director, Radio Live

Mark Jennings: Head of News and Current Affairs, TV3

Matt Brown: Editor, Radio Sport

Peter Cavanagh: Chief Executive and Editor-in-Chief, Radio New Zealand

Richard Sutherland: Managing Editor, New Zealand News Channel

Selwyn Manning: Co-Editor, Scoop Media

Simon Collins: Social Issues Reporter and EPMU Delegate, *New Zealand Herald*

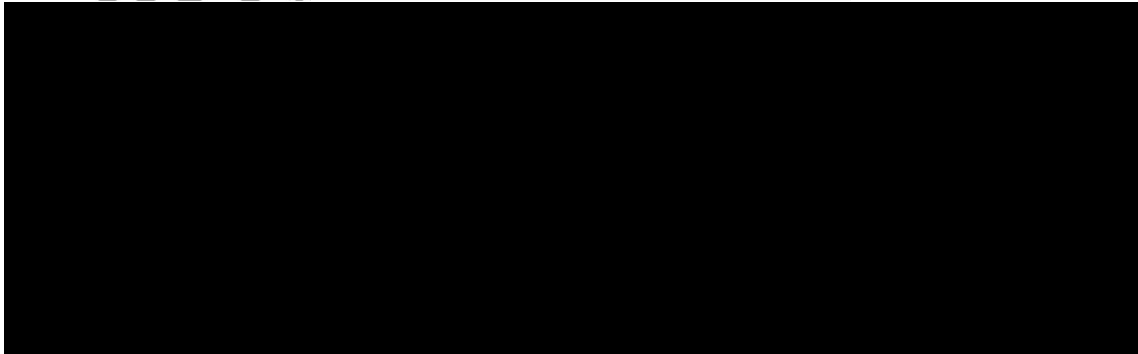
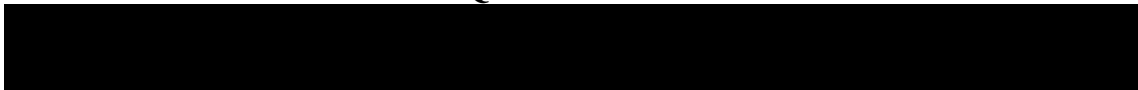
Sinead Boucher: Group Online Editor, Fairfax Digital

Te Anga Nathan: General Manager, News and Current Affairs, Maori Television

Trevor Mallard: Labour MP and Minister of Broadcasting (now former)

Appendix B

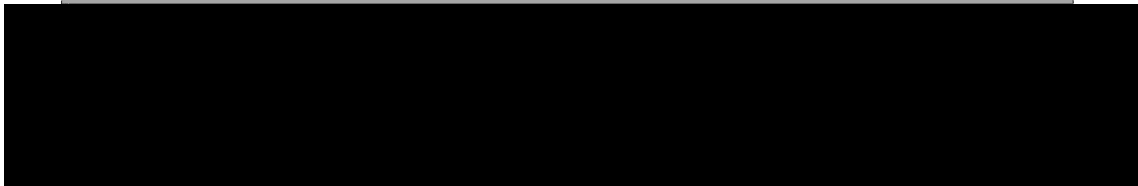
Questionnaire



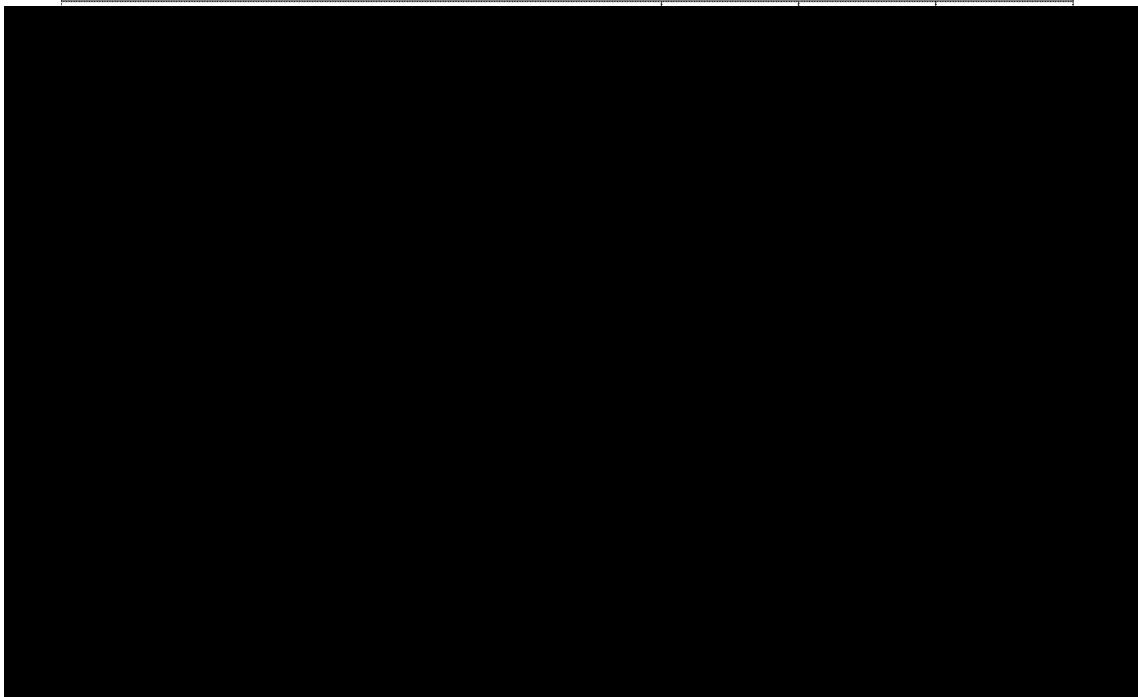
tamara@worldnet.co.nz) or her supervisor, Greg Treadwell, on (09) 9219999 ext 7875 (email:



Personal Details



A) What is media convergence? (please select one answer for each statement)



B) What is driving media convergence? (please select one answer for each statement)

1. Opportunities to make commercial gains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Advanced communications technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The expectations of the public	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Opportunities for improving the quality of journalism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C) How is media convergence affecting the roles of journalists? (please select all answers you agree with)

- They need be able to gather information suitable for multiple platforms
- They need to be able to produce content suitable for multiple platforms
- They need to be able to work in online media
- They are expected to focus more on the delivery of news than the collection of it
- They have less time to research
- They have more time to research
- They are under more pressure to produce copy
- They are under less pressure to produce copy
- The jobs of journalists have not changed significantly

D) How is convergence affecting the quality of journalism? (please select all answers you agree with)

- Reporting is more prone to inaccuracies
- Reporting contains more diversity of voices
- Reporting contains less diversity of voices
- Reporting is increasingly led by press releases and powerful sources
- Reporting increasingly lacks depth
- Reporting covers more issues and events
- Reporting is more coherent across platforms
- Reporting is increasingly led by press releases and powerful sources
- There is no significant impact on the quality of journalism

E) What impact is convergence having on journalism's public interest role? (please select one answer)

- Positive
- Negative
- Both positive and negative
- No impact

F) How important are the following attributes for journalists? (Please select one answer for each attribute)

G) Would you like to add any comments? If so, please write them in the space below.

Appendix C

Survey Data

(Total respondents = 46)

WHAT IS MEDIA CONVERGENCE? (% Respondents)			
	Essential	Not essential	Not part
A media company owning multiple media platforms	36.9	56.5	6.6
Collaborative partnerships between various news outlets and platforms involving cross promotion	28.9	62.2	8.9
Collaborative partnerships between various news outlets and platforms involving the sharing of resources	20.0	71.1	8.9
Collaborative partnerships between various news outlets and platforms involving repurposing of content	25.0	70.4	4.6
Introducing new jobs and roles in the newsroom	48.9	33.3	17.8
Journalists gathering information suitable for stories for multiple platforms	48.9	48.9	2.2
Journalists producing stories for multiple platforms	50.0	50.0	0.0
Combination of print, broadcasting & online & joint story planning & production for several platforms	40.0	55.6	4.4
Adding a website to existing operations	40.0	42.2	17.8
Blurring of boundaries between print, broadcast & online media skills/formats/production strategies	24.4	62.2	13.4

WHAT IS DRIVING MEDIA CONVERGENCE? (% Respondents)					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Opportunities to make commercial gains	51.1	37.8	8.9	2.2	
Advanced communications technology	50.0	47.8	2.2		
The expectations of the public	31.1	35.6	24.4	8.9	
Opportunities for improving the quality of journalism	4.4	26.7	37.8	24.4	6.7

HOW IS CONVERGENCE AFFECTING ROLES OF JOURNALISTS? (% Respondents)	
They need to be able to gather information for multiple platforms	71.7
They need to be able to produce content suitable for multiple platforms	71.7
They need to be able to work in online media	54.3
They are expected to focus more on delivery of news than collection of it	23.9
They have less time to research	58.7
They have more time to research	2.2
They are under more pressure to produce copy	65.2
They are under less pressure to produce copy	
The jobs of journalists have not changed significantly	17.4

HOW IS CONVERGENCE AFFECTING THE QUALITY OF JOURNALISM? (% Respondents)	
Reporting is more prone to inaccuracies	39.1
Reporting contains more diversity of voices	43.5
Reporting contains less diversity of voices	19.6
Reporting is increasingly led by press releases and powerful sources	39.1
Reporting increasingly lacks depth	39.1
Reporting covers more issues and events	47.8
Reporting is more coherent across platforms	21.7
Reporting is more suited to the needs of readers/audiences	39.1
There is no significant impact on the quality of journalism	13.0

WHAT IMPACT IS CONVERGENCE HAVING ON JOURNALISM'S PUBLIC INTEREST ROLE? (% Respondents)	
Positive	10.5
Negative	14.0
Both Positive and Negative	51.2
No Impact	4.6

HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE FOLLOWING SKILLS/ATTRIBUTES FOR JOURNALISTS? (% Respondents)				
	Very Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
Online Production Skills	4.3	41.3	47.8	6.6
On Camera Experience	4.3	21.8	47.8	26.1
Production Skills For Multiple Platforms	6.7	40.0	44.4	8.9
Information Gathering Skills For Multiple Platforms	29.5	45.4	25.1	
Being A Specialist In One Platform	6.7	28.9	42.2	22.2
Writing Skills	78.3	21.7		
Critical Thinking	80.0	20.0		
Time Management	71.7	28.3		
Adaptability	58.7	41.3		
Creative Approach To Story telling	42.2	40.0	15.6	2.2
General Knowledge	71.1	28.9		
Specialist Subject Knowledge	19.6	50.0	30.4	
Understanding The Strengths Of Each Platform	20.9	51.1	28.0	
Research Skills	62.8	32.6	4.6	