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# A convergence of modes: present status of online news sites a content analysis of 100 online newspaper web sites

Renee Chantal duPlessis

*Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College*

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**A CONVERGENCE OF MODES: PRESENT STATUS OF ONLINE NEWS SITES  
A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF 100 ONLINE NEWSPAPER WEB SITES**

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree  
Master of Mass Communication

In

The Manship School of Mass Communication

By  
Renée duPlessis  
B.F.A., University of Arizona, 1994  
August, 2003

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the current status of online news sites in terms of their level of convergence, and how they are affected by different organizational factors such as organizational influence, cross media partnerships and circulation size. A content analysis of the top 100 circulated newspaper dailies in the United States was conducted to provide understanding as to the current status of these online newspaper sites. A number of categories were examined including newspaper circulation size, updatedness, cross media partnership/ ownership, and level of convergence.

Results showed that the majority of the Internet newspaper sites examined shared a media partnership on their site. It also showed that a significant amount of these newspaper Web sites had a high level of convergence, and that those with cross media partnerships had a higher level of convergence than those that did not have any partnerships.

The study advances our knowledge on how these online newspaper sites have utilized technology in information delivery, as well as what types of partnerships they share and if they utilized their media partners' information.

Future studies may further examine the different types of partnerships involved, whether they were strictly parent owned partners or simply affiliated partnerships. Also, time will only allow technology to advance even further, allowing further studies to examine the level of convergence on newspaper Web sites in the future, and possibly whether cross media partnerships still show a higher level of convergence over individually owned newspaper organizations.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

"The traditional media of the Fourth Estate (originally called 'the Press') are converging with computing and telecommunications to create nothing less than a new medium of human communication--with the Net at its heart."<sup>1</sup>

"The archdeacon contemplated the gigantic cathedral for a time in silence, then he sighed and stretched out his right hand towards the printed book lying open on his table and his left hand towards Notre-Dame, and he looked sadly from the book to the church: 'Alas,' he said, 'this will kill that'. . .".<sup>2</sup> "This was the presentiment that as human ideas changed their form they would change their mode of expression, that the crucial idea of each generation would no longer be written in the same material or in the same way, that the book of stone, so solid and durable, would give way to the book of paper, which was more solid and durable still."<sup>3</sup>

The growing convergence among the telecommunications, computing, and media industries spurred by deregulation and privatization and coupled with the rapid globalization of new information and communication technologies is enabling the construction of a digital globe linked by satellite and computer networks. The potential of digitization -- the convergence of text, sound, video, and graphics into binary digits that can be stored, retrieved, and transmitted electronically -- together with increased

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<sup>1</sup> Don Tapscott, Chair, Alliance of Converging Technologies, cited In C. Martin (1997), The Digital Estate.

<sup>2</sup> Victor Hugo, Notre Dame de Paris. Retrieved from The History Project, Columbia University, New York. 1996. <http://www.mediahistory.umn.edu/compute.html>

<sup>3</sup> Hauben, Michael. (.). The Effect of the Net on the Professional News Media: The Usenet News Collective - The Man-Computer News Symbiosis. Columbia University, New York. <http://www.mediahistory.umn.edu/compute.html>

networking capabilities has revolutionized news media. Present-day online news sources are ever changing in an attempt to reach their maximum capabilities. What was once the norm, to find only the day's news regurgitated onto the newspaper's Web site, is now becoming obsolete.<sup>4</sup> When the Internet first entered into the world of the average consumer as a source for news, it was mostly thought of as an arena that spread rumor, allowed average people to become publishers, and stored vast amounts of information that was not found in conventional media such as radio, TV or newspapers.<sup>5</sup> Some media analysts (Dibeau & Garrison 2000) have proclaimed the Internet to be the future of communication of all types -- business, personal, and other forms of human and machine interaction.<sup>6</sup> Media critic Jon Katz (1999) believed that the future of journalism is found on the Internet and that online news will one day become mainstream journalism. "The [World Wide] Web is transforming culture, it is transforming language, transforming information, and we're seeing this in very dramatic and measurable ways, which some liken to the invention of movable type."<sup>7</sup>

With the inevitable convergence of traditional and new media, the media industry began putting its products online. It did this to create a Web presence and to increase their brand awareness.<sup>8</sup> Just being online was enough to gain competitive advantage over others in the industry, but the era of just re-packaging the day's news for online access

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<sup>4</sup> Zingarelli, Mary. (2000). Surfing the Wave of Flux: A Journey into How Conventional Media are Adapting to Meet the Demands of the New Online Medium. *School of Journalism and Communication*, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario. May, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Zingarelli, Mary. (2000). Surfing the Wave of Flux: A Journey into How Conventional Media are Adapting to Meet the Demands of the New Online Medium. *School of Journalism and Communication*, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario. May, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> Dibeau, Wendy & Garrison, Bruce (2000). "Market Types and Daily Newspapers: Use of World Wide Web Technologies," Paper presented at the Media in transition Conference at MIT, October, 1999.

<sup>7</sup> Katz, Jon (1999). "The Future is the Net." *Media Studies Journal*, 14-15

<sup>8</sup> Chan-Olmstead, Sylvia & Park, Juk Suk. (2000). From on-air to online world: Examining the content and structures of broadcast TV stations' Web sites. *Journalism and Mass Communications Quarterly*, Vol. 75, No. 2, Summer, 1998.

are gone. The news industry has discovered that the Internet has the potential to become a new form of media, alongside newspaper, radio and television.<sup>9</sup> The growth of online newspapers has been fast and furious. Worldwide, online newspapers grew from 20 in 1994 to more than 1,200 in the United States alone in the year 2000.<sup>10</sup> Today there are more than 4,000 newspapers online in the United States alone.<sup>11</sup>

With such a new and explosive medium, the Internet has surely changed over even just the past year alone. The history of the Internet and of online news is so new and so fast to change in comparison to how other traditional forms of media evolved that it is important to make an historical record of its development. It is a good time to document the infancy of a new communication technology and a chance to examine how new technology evolves from other traditional forms. This study will explore the current status of online newspaper sites, the level of technological convergence, as well as cross-media ownerships on these sites.

This new converged product that develops from these factors has multimedia features including streaming audio, streaming video, and Flash photography technology. These newspaper sites are no longer like their print counterparts; they are no longer just the written words and pictures digitally displayed. More Americans are relying on the Web for more and more information.<sup>12</sup> Bruce Koon, President of Online News Association, and Executive News Editor at Knight-Ridder Digital claims, “that the role of

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<sup>9</sup> Zingarelli, Mary. (2000). Surfing the Wave of Flux: A Journey into How Conventional Media are Adapting to Meet the Demands of the New Online Medium. *School of Journalism and Communication*, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario. May, 2000.

<sup>10</sup> Newspaper Association of America, (2001). Highlights: The year in review [Online]. Available: [http://www.naa.org/info/facts01/5\\_highlights/index.html](http://www.naa.org/info/facts01/5_highlights/index.html)

<sup>11</sup> [www.newslink.org/news/html](http://www.newslink.org/news/html)

<sup>12</sup> Beard, Marty. Growing Respect for Online News. *Media Life Magazine*. 3, (2), February, 2002.

the Internet in news dissemination continues to evolve.”<sup>13</sup> “Newspapers’ online versions, no longer bound by static sheets of processed pulp and ink, are now enriching stories not only with more photos and graphics, but also with movement and sound. Television has come to newspapers, as links between online papers and TV stations are formed.”<sup>14</sup> Numerous media organizations are teaming up together; newspapers, local TV, and online news organizations are operating in the name of convergence. Many also have moved into the same buildings, creating new models of newsrooms, with broadcast, online and print all sharing the same newsdesk.<sup>15</sup>

By examining the Internet newspaper sites specifically at their level of present convergence, we can see what the future may look like. A number of factors that may affect the information brought to the consumer through these changed newspaper Web sites. The overall purpose of this study is to examine the organizational factors including newspaper circulation size and cross-media ownerships/ partnerships that affect the level of convergence on online newspaper Web sites.

Cross ownership of media may lead to market dominance and may lead to the power of changing the news content on these Web sites. Some companies and organizations work together and form partnerships for the sole purpose of gaining market dominance and economic growth.<sup>16</sup>

Organizational structure in news organizations may play a role in how the news is distributed to the consumer online in addition to institutional factors such as governmental policies of media corporation deregulation and how that could influence

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<sup>13</sup> Beard, Marty. Growing Respect for Online News. *Media Life Magazine*. 3, (2), February, 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Williams, Jason. (2000). Sites go straight to video. *Editor & Publisher*, 133, (6), February 7, 2000.

<sup>15</sup> Moses, Lucia. (2001). Convergence hits the heartland. *Editor & Publisher*, 134, (43), November 5, 2001.

<sup>16</sup> Shoemaker, Pamela J. and Reese, Stephen D. "Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content, Second Edition," 1996, Longman Publishers USA.

the organizations to operate differently, therefore creating a difference in how the news is presented to the online consumer.

There is no easy way to answer all the questions that may arise in developing a more perfect medium because the medium is changing constantly. This study examines the current status in 2003 of online news sites in terms of their level of convergence, and how they are affected by factors such as cross-media partnerships and circulation size.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

To understand how online newspaper sites have become such different media from their print counterparts, it is important to understand the background on technological features that may have led these sites to become more technologically inclined in their news delivery. Similarly, past governmental policies that have shaped the present media laws and regulations will help create an understanding of how companies have partnered, and in turn, more partnerships have developed on Internet newspaper sites. With more cross-media ownership stems the belief that content may be affected and news delivery may contain multiple forms of advanced technology such as streaming audio, streaming video and Flash photography.

#### **Technological Advancement**

New technology has advanced the world to great levels. The constant evolution and advancement of technology allows the Internet to continue its growth and expansion because of the potential that comes with these technological factors. One type of technological factor that may lead to an effect on news content is high speed Internet access. Internet users are able to access news faster and more efficiently with less effort. Many different types of high speed access to the Internet exist. The transfer of data on a broadband connection is digital rather than analog. An old 56K modem took the PC's digital information and converted it to analog so it could be transmitted over a phone line to another computer, and likewise for the return trip. A broadband connection circumvents this constant conversion. Digital signals also are much less error-prone than

their analog counterparts.<sup>17</sup> Because it makes the transfer of data between computers so efficient, broadband can deliver information 9-50 times faster, without tying up a phone line. There are five different types of broadband Internet access. Fiber optic is the fastest broadband technology and the one most often used by medium-to-large businesses. DTV and satellite are problematic, because they are one-way connections.

Cable was the first broadband technology to hit the big time and it remains the most prevalent. It's offered by a service that's already installed in most homes; installation and configuration is fairly simple, and the cost is comparable to an AOL subscription and that second phone line a consumer does not need. DSL also provides users with a dedicated Internet connection. But availability becomes an issue with DSL. It requires that a subscriber be within a certain distance of a central office.

Broadband technology has been around for some time, but has been slow to take off. In August 2000, about 147 million people had Internet access in the U.S. Of that, only about five million were broadband subscribers. In 2001, those numbers rose to 166 million online, of which 11 million had broadband access. It continues to grow at an astounding rate year after year; however still only 20% of U.S. Internet users have high-speed access to the Internet. This is a deterrent as most people will not sit and wait for large downloadable pictures, audio or video to load onto their computers. As the use of high speed access increases, online news will become a convergence model of radio, television and its traditional counterpart, the print form of the newspaper.

Streaming video is a technique for transferring data such that it can be processed as a steady and continuous stream. With streaming, the client browser or plug-in can start displaying the data before the entire file has been transmitted. For streaming to work,

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<sup>17</sup> Kecko, Mark. (2002). Broadband Wagon. *Media Magazine*, February, 2002.

the client side receiving the data must be able to collect the data and send it as a steady stream to the application that is processing the data and converting it to sound or pictures. This means that if the streaming client receives the data more quickly than required, it needs to save the excess data in a buffer. If the data don't come quickly enough, however, the presentation of the data will not be smooth, or of a quality level.<sup>18</sup> Flash is a bandwidth-friendly and browse-independent vector-graphic animation technology. As long as different browsers are equipped with the necessary plug-ins, Flash animations will look the same.<sup>19</sup>

According to a study by Arbitron Inc. and Edison Media Research, eighty million consumers, representing 35% of Americans ages 12 and older, have watched or listened to streaming media online.<sup>20</sup> Just two years ago, only 24% of Americans said they had watched or listened to streaming audio or video. The study also finds that “streamies,” those who have watched or listened to streaming media online, are willing to pay subscription fees for the right mix of offerings. According to the study, four in 10 audio “streamies” said they would agree to pay a small fee for any of the following features: commercial-free content, audio of the highest quality (no pausing or “buffering”) and content they couldn't find elsewhere.<sup>21</sup> Consumers in large numbers are switching over to broadband services when and where they are available. The broadband demand is great and on the rise; 55% of Americans said they would subscribe to broadband services once they became available (Forrester, 2000).

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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.pcwebopedia.com/TERM/s/streaming.html>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.pcwebopedia.com/TERM/F/Flash.html>

<sup>20</sup> [http://ww.mediapost.com/dtIs\\_dsp\\_news.cfm?newsID=107353](http://ww.mediapost.com/dtIs_dsp_news.cfm?newsID=107353)

<sup>21</sup> [http://ww.mediapost.com/dtIs\\_dsp\\_news.cfm?newsID=107353](http://ww.mediapost.com/dtIs_dsp_news.cfm?newsID=107353)

On April 10, 2003, eMarketer released its *Broadband Worldwide* report, which stated that broadband -- high-speed Internet via cable or DSL -- will be in more than one-fifth (22%) of US homes this year, rising to one-third (32.2%) by 2005. eMarketer says that overall Internet penetration is 59% of US households at present.<sup>22</sup> eMarketer projects broadband households worldwide will grow from 57 million in 2002 to 154 million households in 2005, posting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 39%.<sup>23</sup> This recent projection is astounding in comparison to an estimate in May of 2000 that 36 million broadband subscribers are expected by 2005, overtaking dial-up access (Strategis, Jan., 2001). The worldwide Internet access market will reach 179.5 million homes over the next eight years, with broadband multimedia connections in 126 million households. Of the latter total, 43% would have cable modems, 31% DSL, and 26% either satellite or terrestrial wireless. (C.A. Ingley & Co.).

In addition to the ease and efficiency of broadband access to the Internet are different ways in which news sites will begin to distribute the news content. These will feature the possibility of updated stories on breaking news. Stories may be updated through new statistics throughout the day, for example, because of the ability and ease of updating the site. Users may click on a LIVE radio address from the President of the United States or listen to a recorded version through the news site.

### **Governmental Policy**

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) state that social institutional factors that influence news content suggest that factors external to the communicator and the organization --

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<sup>22</sup> [http://www.mediapost.com/dtls\\_dsp\\_onlineminute.cfm?minuteID=201881&archive=mi](http://www.mediapost.com/dtls_dsp_onlineminute.cfm?minuteID=201881&archive=mi) Retrieved April 10, 2003.

<sup>23</sup> [http://www.mediapost.com/dtls\\_dsp\\_onlineminute.cfm?minuteID=201881&archive=mi](http://www.mediapost.com/dtls_dsp_onlineminute.cfm?minuteID=201881&archive=mi) Retrieved April 10, 2003.

economic and cultural forces, and audience -- determine content.<sup>24</sup> The Federal Communications Commission has a strong hand in how cross-media ownership rules and regulations are enacted. The FCC is responsible for developing and modifying broadcasting and other media rules and policies to address changing technologies and changing competition and ownership patterns. The challenges in this area arise from changing ownership patterns, legal challenges to FCC rules and policies, converging markets and industries, and increasingly rapid changes in technologies employed by service providers. The Telecommunications Act, signed by U.S. President Bill Clinton in February 1996, for example, has encouraged mergers, takeovers, and joint ventures between different media and telecommunication corporations.

Consistent with statutory directives, these factors have led the FCC to make rebuilding the factual and analytical foundation of its media ownership regulations and competition policies a top priority. The FCC examines whether current forms of media regulation are achieving statutory policy objectives and determines how changes in regulations may affect the policy goals of competition, diversity, and localism.<sup>25</sup>

In late 2001, FCC Chairman Michael Powell created the Media Ownership Working Group and tasked it with developing a solid factual foundation for re-evaluating FCC media ownership policies. The studies performed by the MOWG are the first step in developing a sound empirical basis for FCC media ownership policies that promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Shoemaker, Pamela J. and Reese, Stephen D. "Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content: Second Edition," 1996, Longman Publishers USA.

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.fcc.gov/>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.fcc.gov/ownership/>

With the relaxed regulations allowing mergers of large media organizations raises an issue of partnerships among different media organizations and which companies have the authority and power to make the decisions in the partnership. Whether or not it's a partnership or an ownership relationship, it brings another level of discussion: that of the organizational influence of the parent company or partnering media companies.

On June 4, 2003, the FCC made another crucial ruling in the latest movement on media regulation. The most important areas from the June 4th decision to the media business covered four areas. One: One company is now allowed to own multiple TV stations in a local market. Two: the commission incrementally increased the 35% limit on reach. That means a company may own TV stations reaching no more than a 45% share of U.S. TV households. Three: ownership criteria for radio stations were changed in several ways. For example, in markets with more than 45 radio stations, a company may own no more than eight. Four: Newspaper companies may now buy TV stations. This may play a very important role in how convergence of technology and partnerships on Internet newspaper sites trend during the next few years.

In the end, the FCC decision was driven by Chairman Michael Powell's belief that the rules eventually would be overturned by court rulings. He said in a statement after the vote: "I must punctuate one irreducible point: Keeping the rules exactly as they are, as some so stridently suggest, was not a viable option. Without today's surgery, the rules would assuredly meet a swift death."

Newspaper Association of America President and CEO John F. Sturm even indicated his organization would push for full repeal of all media ownership regulations. "The relaxation of the rules will allow newspaper-owned broadcast stations to offer more

and better local news and public service programming, as well as all-news formats to radio markets of all sizes. It will positively impact competition in local markets and provide healthy and diverse competition to large radio station owners. Local audiences will be the big winners." Tribune Company President and Chief Executive Officer Dennis FitzSimons was in agreement with Sturm. "The media landscape has dramatically changed -- consumers have more choices for news, information and entertainment than ever before. The FCC's action today recognizes these changes. Our readers, viewers and listeners across the country are the real winners today -- they will benefit as we explore additional ways of enriching the content of our newspapers, television stations and Web sites."<sup>27</sup>

### **Cross-Media Partnerships at Present**

For the purposes of this study, cross-media ownership/ partnership is defined as a form of media alliance in which a company owns one type of media such as newspaper, forms the alliance through purchasing a company of a difference type of media such as television. News content can easily be jaded or influenced by the different corporations that these parent companies own. Bagdikian (1992) points out that corporate goals can permeate the entire firm, as illustrated by a case in which an editor at Simon & Schuster, a division of Gulf + Western, proposed publication of a book in 1979 that was critical of large corporations. While the book didn't mention Gulf + Western by name, the president of Simon & Shuster rejected the proposed book because it made all corporations look bad.<sup>28</sup> As media organizations get larger and more diverse, the many

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<sup>27</sup> [http://www.mediapost.com/dtls\\_dsp\\_news.cfm?newsID=207890&newsDate=06/03/2003](http://www.mediapost.com/dtls_dsp_news.cfm?newsID=207890&newsDate=06/03/2003)

<sup>28</sup> Bagdikian, B. (1992) *The Media Monopoly*. Boston: Beacon Press.

different entities will have a part in the economic goal and how news is affected.<sup>29</sup> Parent companies are beginning to merge their subsidiary companies onto one website. The media partnerships formed are reflected in a number of different ways. Logos, promotional content, and news delivery of the other media partner may be on each site. No longer are these newspaper Web sites dedicated to only their own company's news. Many media organizations are owned by non-media owners. For instance, ABC is owned by Disney, which also owns ESPN. As well, General Electric owns NBC and all of its news branches (MSNBC, CNBC); therefore, the lines of authority at NBC News extend from the lowest-level news employee to the chairman of the board at General Electric.<sup>30</sup> Viacom, Infinity, and CBS all share the same owner company. These media stretch across television, radio, outdoor, and a number of other entities.

Examples of cross-pollination abound in markets big and small. The Wall Street Journal contributes news programming to CNBC through a partnership with NBC. In a three-way collaboration in Norfolk, Va., Cox's cable channel, Belo's ABC-affiliated TV station, and Landmark Communications Inc.'s The Virginian-Pilot produce a cable news show. And news-gathering relationships are blossoming in New York, Los Angeles, and Hartford, Conn., where the Tribune Co. has three new newspaper-TV combos.<sup>31</sup>

### **Cross-Media Partnerships on the Internet**

As of April, 2003, ABC unveiled ABC News Live, a 24-hour Internet feed of raw news video. Major League Baseball announced MLB.TV. It will Webcast 1,000 games this year, marking it the league's biggest online venture ever. Microsoft began a service

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<sup>29</sup> Shoemaker and Reese, (1996)

<sup>30</sup> Shoemaker and Reese, (1996), p. 144

<sup>31</sup> Moses, Lucia. (2000). TV or not TV? Few newspapers are camera-shy, *Editor & Publisher*; New York; Aug 21, 2000 Vol: 133, No. 34, p.22-23

that lets users with broadband send live video to each other at rates as high as 15 frames per second, which approaches TV quality.<sup>32</sup> According to Canada's CanWest Global Communications' COO Richard Camilleri, CanWest will soon roll out electronic versions of its newspapers with embedded video linked to features including weather pages and advertising. The classified advertising section of the newspapers is an area that could benefit from video enhancements, as well as retail advertisers, who could expand their reach by having television advertisements placed directly onto a newspaper page displayed on the subscribers' computer. CanWest, which was solely a broadcaster until late 2000 when it bought the chain of daily and weekly newspapers from Hollinger Inc., has been cross-promoting and cross-selling, the cornerstones of the company's convergence strategy ever since. *USA Today's* Editor Tom Curley told *Advertising Age*, "We are no longer a newspaper; we are a network. We feed content to TV. We feed content to the Internet from the same core platform."<sup>33</sup> According to an article from Editor & Publisher, *USA Today* is on the air. *USA Today* launched "USA Today Live," a Web and TV news program that will develop the newspaper's stories for all of Gannett Broadcasting's TV stations. "USA Today Live" will feature interviews by the paper's editors and reporters, and, in turn, Gannett TV stations will provide links to news stories for [USAToday.com](http://USAToday.com).<sup>34</sup>

According to the Newspaper Association of America, 2003 is a very big year for convergence on the Web. Many newspapers partnered up with local partners in 2002 and 2003, including: The Advocate in Baton Rouge, LA; The Bakersfield Californian, Belo

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<sup>32</sup> [http://www.mediapost.com/dtls\\_dsp\\_onlineminute.cfm?minuteID=201881&archive=mi](http://www.mediapost.com/dtls_dsp_onlineminute.cfm?minuteID=201881&archive=mi) Retrieved April 10, 2003.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.adage.com/news.cms?newsId=35977>

<sup>34</sup> Anonymous. (2000). Gannett plan a model of media convergence, *Editor & Publisher*; New York; February 21, 2000 Vol. 133, No. 8, p. 41.

Interactive with the Dallas Morning News; The Chicago Tribune Interactive; The Caller-Times in Corpus Christi, Tex; New York Times Digital and the Washington Post-Newsweek Interactive.<sup>35</sup> They use the term “convergence” in reference to two or more formats of media converging on to one site. There are several case studies of companies marrying two of their media into one component. What is revealed by each of these different partnerships varies.

While cross-media operations expanded across the country, they also created problems cross-media partners need to work out to find solutions to facilitate and advance convergence.

The Web sites for *The Advocate* of Baton Rouge and WBRZ-TV News 2 reached a new level in early April, 2003, when the two sites merged and became [www.2theAdvocate.com](http://www.2theAdvocate.com). Phoenix-based NBC affiliate, KPNX and the dominant local paper, *The Arizona Republic*, is another example; both are owned by Gannett. The television station’s website and the newspaper’s website are one and the same. *USA Today*, also owned by Gannett, is featured on the site as well, with a link to its own newspaper site. A number of these situations have grown all over the country. While each faces its own challenges and issues, more and more of such arrangements are started each year.<sup>36</sup> Richmond, VA. based Media General Inc. cemented its convergence in February 2000 when it moved the Tampa Tribune, NBC affiliate WFLA-TV, and the Tampa Bay Online (TBO) Internet service into a \$40-million building designed to encourage interaction among the news-gathering operations. The biggest challenge it faced was incompatible computer systems which forced printing stories out and running

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<sup>35</sup> <http://www.naa.org/artpage.cfm?AID=4786&SID=104> Retrieved May 1, 2003.

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.journalism.org/resources/research/reports/ownership/default.asp>

them to other news departments. The Chicago-based Tribune Co. has faced similar technological difficulties in its attempts to integrate the print and broadcast properties it acquired when the Times Mirror Co. was purchased. “Sneakernet” is the term it uses to refer to what it does on a daily basis, literally meaning to physically carrying information from one place to another.<sup>37</sup>

Print journalists traditionally have looked askance at their broadcast brethren. But in a world where news outlets risk getting drowned out, newspapers are looking to TV as a way to publicize their names among a wider audience. While it’s hard to find numbers to back it up, it is assumed that a mention of the next day’s newspaper headlines on the nightly news can lead to increased sales the next morning, driving circulation and, ultimately, advertising revenue.<sup>38</sup>

Now that the FCC has deregulated many of the rules that prohibited multiple media outlet ownership, there is a new issue to research, that of the cross-media partnership and its effect on news content. An example of organizational influence on news content comes from Belo’s *The Dallas Morning News* when it began its news partnership with local ABC affiliate WFAA Channel 8, also a Belo property. Hotlines were set up in each newsroom so assigning editors could pass on news tips. Print journalists were encouraged to think about how their stories could extend not only to the Web but to TV. Since the newspaper ran into problems covering television stations without bias, they decided to cut out television station reporting all together. As newspaper-TV alliances become more common, both sides are claiming that their

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<sup>37</sup> Anonymous. Media convergence face technical barriers. *The Quill*, Chicago, Vol. 89, Issue 2, March, 2001.

<sup>38</sup> Moses, Lucia. (2000). TV or not TV? Few newspapers are camera-shy, *Editor & Publisher*; New York; Aug 21, 2000 Vol: 133, No. 34, p.22-23

cultures aren't easily reconciled and often they are making up the rules as they go along. As far as cross-promotion of all of these subsidiary companies of Belo, the company asks for the URL to be everywhere on TV and print. Its Web site URL and logo are all over every single piece of stationary from either side of the company. The *San Francisco Chronicle* didn't wait long to find a new broadcast partner after its agreement with KTVU-TV ended on May 19, 2003. The Hearst-owned paper made a pact with Viacom's KPIX-TV and radio station KCBS, plus a separate commitment with Univision. Similar to other local-media partnerships, reporters from the *Chronicle* and KPIX will collaborate for features and investigative reports. Cross-promotion also plays a role, and the *Chronicle's* director of media partnerships anticipates advertising cross-sell opportunities.<sup>39</sup>

While the perception and reception of these new technologically advanced features are still not recognized as being positive or negative, these technological advances and partnerships are still happening at a fast rate.<sup>40</sup> These are all factors that may have an effect on just how the news content may be affected.

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<sup>39</sup> <http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=56>

<sup>40</sup> [http://www.mediapost.com/dtls\\_dsp\\_onlineminute.cfm?minuteID=201175](http://www.mediapost.com/dtls_dsp_onlineminute.cfm?minuteID=201175) Retrieved April 11, 2003

## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Technological Convergence on the Internet**

Newspapers, with their rich news-gathering resources and the space to tell in-depth stories, and TV, with its mass-audience reach and visuals, seem to be a match made in heaven for convergence. How publishers and users define the relation between online and print newspapers illustrates the process in which a new medium evolves from an extension of an earlier format into a distinct medium by itself.<sup>41</sup> The news industry has always been information intensive, providing editorial, advertising, and general information content. The genre of the traditional print and broadcast media has been extended by the advent of the Internet. Both content and delivery are impacted by the ability to generate multimedia content and immediate, customized delivery regardless of physical location. The digital environment represents a significant change for the news industry. The availability of multimedia, including audio, video, photographs, images, and text has allowed the development of new content for digital news producers and providers.<sup>42</sup>

#### **Studies on Media on the Internet**

Several studies focused on how content and delivery of media have been affected by technological advancement. Palmer & Eriksen (2000) did a content analysis of 50 news Web sites (newspaper, newsmagazine, and broadcast TV). Results of the analysis revealed that the digital news product's content reflects the producer's original medium

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<sup>41</sup> Fidler, R. (1997). *Mediamorphosis: Understanding New Media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge.

<sup>42</sup> Palmer, J., & Eriksen, L. (2000). Digital news: Content, delivery, and value propositions for an intangible product, *Journal of End User Computing*, April-June, 12(2), pp 11-19.

(e.g. print version or broadcast) although often augmented with a greater number of articles or additional media. Delivery is immediate, and many digital news producers are customizing content and delivery through search and retrieval mechanisms.<sup>43</sup>

Also in regard to content studies, Watters, Shepherd, and Burkowski (1998) showed how new communication technologies would enable the integration of news from a wide variety of sources and provide access to supplemental material from enormous archives of electronic news data in digital libraries as well as the continual streams of newly created data.<sup>44</sup> These digital libraries could hold multimedia of all sorts of different types, including streaming audio, streaming video and Flash photo technology.

Studies on delivery show that digital news products can publish "extras" and can be continually updated (Shaw, 1997, Eriksen, 1997). Immediacy and interactivity are available through the digital version that cannot be replicated in the paper version (Shaw, 1997a) and an interactivity that is hard to replicate in the broadcast version (McMillan, 1998). A study on news sites and interactivity, in particular hypermedia, was done to develop a general model that captures users' interactions within hypermedia environments and to relate this model specifically to browsing and journalism (Fredin & David, 1998). Sylvia M. Chan and Jung Suk Park examined television stations' application of the Web features that presumably would contribute to the effectiveness of their Web sites from both the organizations' and consumers' perspectives. Their content analysis found that news-related content played an important role, and interactivity and personalization were not readily observed on these Web sites. They found that broadcast

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<sup>43</sup> Palmer, J., & Eriksen, L. (2000). Digital news: Content, delivery, and value propositions for an intangible product, *Journal of End User Computing*, April-June, 12(2), pp 11-19.

<sup>44</sup> Watters, C.R., Shepherd, M.A., Burkowski, F.J., (1998). Electronic news delivery project, *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*; New York; 49(2), pp 134-150.

TV stations seem to be following a safer route of expansion into this new medium by reassembling and re-proposing their distinctive existing products for online delivery.<sup>45</sup>

These findings are similar to those done on Internet newspaper sites in particular.

### **Studies of Newspapers on the Internet in Particular**

Up to now, studies have suggested that the Web sites of traditional media are simply “regurgitated” content from the traditional print counterpart (Shepherd, Duffy, Watters & Gugle, 2001). Researchers call such content-sharing “shovelware.” Numerous studies have shown in the past that “extensive content-sharing characterizes the relation between many online newspapers and their print counterparts.”<sup>46</sup> As Peterson (1997) suggested, as more newspapers provide online news services, those using the services may assume that the material found online is exactly what would have been found on the same day in that news organization’s newspaper.<sup>47</sup> Zingarelli (2000) examined Internet news to identify factors that affect its state of flux. She noted at the time of her research in 2000, a large number of Web sites were successful copies of their newspaper or broadcast form. She also stated that there were more sites trying to move away from being a simple carbon copy. That is where the state of flux began, in the attempt to move from being a carbon copy to something more.<sup>48</sup>

Previous research on newspaper Web sites include studies done on content delivery and its effect by technology. A content analysis on graphics (Li, 1998) in three

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<sup>45</sup> Chan-Olmstead, Sylvia & Park, Juk Suk. (2000). From on-air to online world: Examining the content and structures of broadcast TV stations’ Web sites. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 77, (2), Summer. 2000.

<sup>46</sup> Chyi, Hsiang I. & Lasorsa, Dominic L. (2002). An Explorative Study on the Market Relation Between Online and Print Newspapers. *The Journal of Media Economics*. 15 (2), 91-96

<sup>47</sup> Peterson, I. (1997, February 10). *Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved via eLibrary April 11, 2003.

<sup>48</sup> Zingarelli, Mary. (2000). Surfing the Wave of Flux: A Journey into How Conventional Media are Adapting to Meet the Demands of the New Online Medium. *School of Journalism and Communication*, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario. May, 2000.

U.S. Internet newspapers found that the online versions of the papers gave more priority to providing textual information than graphic information, and large graphics were more likely to appear on home pages than on front pages and news article pages.<sup>49</sup> Other studies (Berry, 2001) on newspaper Web sites dealing with multimedia have researched the recall index of online news stories with multimedia versus the same story in a plain text version. Findings did not support a significant difference in comprehension, recall, or response arising from the presence or absence of multimedia.<sup>50</sup> As well, numerous studies on interactivity have been done (Newhagen, Cordes & Levy, 2001; Li & Zeng, 2002; Pavlik, 1996), all showing that interactivity is a key component to online news. While these studies showed different aspects of online newspapers that were affected by factors, they failed to include such factors as streaming video, streaming audio and Flash photography that make up the level of convergence on these Web sites.

### **Convergence on the Internet**

Many researchers have attempted to define the term *convergence*. Some (Stipp, 1999) refer to it as the combination of television and computers, which creates a variety of multimedia products and companies from different industry sectors.<sup>51</sup> Others believe (Thielmann & Dowling 1999) convergence focuses on the integration of online services into existing multimedia industries.<sup>52</sup> Researchers and scholars have differed on the magnitude and effect of convergence in changing the process and product of the

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<sup>49</sup> Li, Xigen. (1998). Web Page Design and Graphic Use of Three U.S. Newspapers. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. Vol. 75, No. 2, Summer, 1998.

<sup>50</sup> Berry, Leigh. (2001). Comprehension and Recall of Internet News: A Quantitative Study of Web Page Design. *Journal of Magazine and New Media Research*. Vol. 3, No. 1, Spring, 2001.

<sup>51</sup> Stipp, H. (1999). Convergence now. *The International Journal on Media Management*, 2(2), 60-68. Retrieved from Chan-Olmstead, Sylvia M. and Kang, Jae- Won. 2003., *Journal of Media Economics*, 16 (1); p5

<sup>52</sup> Thielmann, B., & Dowling, M. (1999). Converge and innovation strategy for service provision in emerging web-TV markets. *The International Journal of Media Management*, 1(1), 4-9.

multimedia industry. Picard (2000) believed that convergence itself does not produce any revolutionary change in content but simply creates new economies of scope that permit the existing communication and distribution of content to be faster, more flexible, and more responsive to consumer demand.<sup>53</sup> With the advancement of technology, more newspapers are converging across the country.

While there seems to be a lack of studies conducted empirically, those that have been conducted have focused on is the specific content of the stories, through text, graphics and length of articles. Because of such rapid technological advances very little has been examined empirically on the level of convergence on newspaper Web sites, and the technological features that make up the level of convergence, including streaming audio, streaming video, and Flash photography. These studies failed to reflect the current status of the Internet newspaper and ignored such issues as the level of convergence on newspaper Web sites. This study seeks to present the current status of online newspaper sites and their level of technological convergence.

### **Organizational Influence**

The organizational approach (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996) argues that media content is influenced by the ways in which communications workers and their companies organize work.<sup>54</sup> Organizational influence on news content stems from a number of different factors including the corporate owner or parent company's policies, corporate

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<sup>53</sup> Picard, G.R. (2000). Changing business models of online content services: Their implications for multi-media and other content producers. *The International Journal on Media Management*,2(2), 60-68. Retrieved by Chan-Olmstead, Sylvia M. and Kang, Jae- Won. 2003., *Journal of Media Economics*, 16 (1); p5.

<sup>54</sup> Shoemaker, Pamela J. and Reese, Stephen D. "Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content, Second Edition," 1996, Longman Publishers USA.

ownership patterns, and the advertisers and sponsors.<sup>55</sup> Shoemaker and Reese (1996) cite “in Hirsch’s (1977) terms, this perspective emphasizes differences in organizational roles, internal structure, goals, technology, and markets. It is believed by industrial economists that elements of “market structure” form the economic environment of organizations and induce these organizations to behave in certain ways.<sup>56</sup>

Many studies have been focused on the issues of localism and competition by concentrating on the overall ownership structure of media industries (Nixon & Ward, 1961; Watermann, 1991) and the link between ownership and media content (Entman & Wildman, 1992). Most studies, at the structural level, have cataloged the growing level of ownership concentration within specific industries such as television (Howard, 1998), radio (Drushel, 1998), and newspapers (Lacy & Davenport, 1994). What has been indicated through their evidence is that fewer owners are controlling more properties at the national and local level.

Lin and Jeffres studied similarities and distinctions of 422 websites associated with local newspapers, radio stations, and television stations in twenty-five of the largest metro markets in the U.S. Their results showed that each medium has a relatively distinctive content emphasis, while each attempts to utilize its website to maximize institutional goals. They found that market size was relatively unimportant, but that the specific type of media helped to explain how the websites were differentiated.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Shoemaker, Pamela J. and Reese, Stephen D. “Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content, Second Edition,” 1996, Longman Publishers USA.

<sup>56</sup> Caves, R. (1982). “American industry: structure, conduct, performance”. 5<sup>th</sup> ed: (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982).

<sup>57</sup> Lin, Carolyn A. & Jeffres, Leo W. (2001). Comparing distinctions and similarities across websites of newspapers, radio stations, and television stations. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 78, (3), October, 2001.

Chan-Olmstead and Park (2000) found ownership is related to content of TV stations' Web sites.<sup>58</sup> They reported that stations with different network affiliations may opt for different Web structures and content. They concluded that to a certain degree, a TV station that has acquired a competitive audience share and/or is owned by a larger station group is well positioned to take advantage of the strategic value of the Internet as the results of the study indicated a relationship between such market characteristics and provision of local information, electronic commerce, communications mechanisms, and data collection systems.

In a report on media competition and consolidation, Schwartzman (2000) argued that the combined Viacom-CBS operation would delete diversity from news reporting and discourage competition. In this report Schwartzman claimed that small entrepreneurs are particularly threatened by the way in which broadcasters have restructured advertising markets by cross-selling, "format squeezes," tie-ins, and similar arrangements. The CBS family mergers include Infinity, Westwood One, Westinghouse, Mutual News, and then each of those media organizations has subsidiaries. Westwood One owns Metro Traffic which was a combination of Shadow Traffic and Metro Traffic. The trail leads on and on, and the assumption is that in time all of the news will come eventually from the same voice or very few. This means that organizational influence could affect the news distribution and content more likely if there are cross-media ownerships that converge their information and sources of distribution. This study aims to show the current status of these cross-media partnerships and ownerships and their current status on online newspaper Web sites.

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<sup>58</sup> Chan-Olmstead, Sylvia & Park, Juk Suk. (2000). From on-air to online world: Examining the content and structures of broadcast TV stations' Web sites. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 77, (2), Summer. 2000.

In a study on radio consolidation, Leeper (2000) reported that the Telecommunications Act of 1996 eliminated nationwide radio ownership restrictions and liberalized local ownership caps. As a result of this deregulation, the radio industry experienced mass consolidation. Faced with an unprecedented number of proposed mergers, the federal antitrust enforcement agencies played an increasingly important role in the outcome of media mergers. At the time of her research, Leeper claimed it was too early to know the full effects of deregulation, concluding that consolidation and organizational influence may indeed influence content.

In July 1996, the top 5 radio station groups reached roughly a quarter of the U.S. population; by the spring of 2002, that figure had grown to a third.<sup>59</sup> Clear Channel Communications has 1,225 radio stations alone in the United States.<sup>60</sup> With fewer owners in the market there becomes fewer sources of news available. It is assumed that larger corporations and media conglomerations will have greater power and economic benefits in the market because of better bargaining power, shared group equipment and more resources.<sup>61</sup> Cross ownership of media has rapidly created huge conglomerates that control a number of different types of media in a number of different markets. Small family owned businesses are bought up quickly by these giant companies. The goal typically is market dominance and increased revenue (Shoemaker & Reese 1996). What results is a decrease in share of voice among the markets. If these sites are hosted by cross-media partnerships or have a common parent owner, it is likely that the content will include more cross-media and more convergence in content.

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<sup>59</sup> <http://www.journalism.org/resources/research/reports/ownership/columbiacomment.asp>

<sup>60</sup> Clear Channel/ 2002

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.journalism.org/resources/research/reports/>

## **Cross-Media Ownership/ Partnerships and their Effect on News Content**

For the purposes of this study, cross-media ownership/ partnership is defined as a form of media alliance in which a company owns one type of media such as newspaper, forms the alliance through purchasing a company of a difference type of media such as television. Studies have focused on the impact of ownership type and the amount of content diversity in terms of television news content (Besen & Johnson, 1985; Busterna, 1988), editorial content in newspapers (Hale, 1988; Lacy 1988, 1989) and radio news (Lacy & Riffe, 1994). Many of these studies tested differences in the amounts and types of news content between local and non-local/ corporate owners. Studies have shown that the parent owner can and does have an effect on news content.

Project for Excellence in Journalism conducted a study to examine the tendencies of ownership structures. Its study showed a definite effect on the news when it comes to the cross-media ownership and the parent company's power over content. The findings -- an analysis of 172 distinct news programs, some 23,000 stories, over five years -- suggest that ownership type did make a difference in content.<sup>62</sup> Results showed that each program did more stories about its own parent company products than about any other single company. According to the same PEJ study, a significant increase resulted in the use of purchased wire stories and syndicated material, presumably for use by all media outlets owned by the same company.

Newspaper size has been studied and may be a possible factor in the way news content is affected on the Web. Schulz (1999) found newspaper size is a clear predictor

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<sup>62</sup> <http://www.journalism.org/resources/research/reports/ownership/>

of interactive options and use of technological advancements on Internet newspapers.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, Garneau (1996) stated that the cost of developing a new media product made it highly unlikely for a small, independent newspaper to compete with the larger newspaper organizations.<sup>64</sup> It may be assumed that newspaper circulation size may play a role in how advanced a newspaper Web site is in its utilization of technological tools like streaming audio, video and Flash technology, or other key quality factors of a Web site.

Pritchard (2001) studied the news reports of three different newspaper/ broadcast duopolies on the same issues to see if their parent company took the same viewpoint on each issue. Pritchard found that they had very diverse viewpoints when reporting on the same issues, dispelling the idea behind the FCC's 1975 ruling prohibiting ownership of both a newspaper and a television station in the same market.<sup>65</sup> What this study found was that cross-media may produce different content or influence the content in a different way. What it did not address is, at the high technological level, to what degree will cross-media affect content.

Throughout the history of the Federal Communications Commission's rulings, studies have been conducted to examine the effects on corporate ownership. Effects on content and pricing appear to be the most examined issues. In 1975, Sterling examined fifty-year ownership trends involving radio and newspapers within the top one hundred markets and Howard analyzed both television group ownership and cross-media ownership in a 1989 study as well. The findings overwhelmingly saw a reduction in

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<sup>63</sup> Schultz, T. (1999). "Interactive Options in Online Journalism: A Content Analysis of 100 U.S. newspapers." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 5(1), September, 1999.

<sup>64</sup> Garneau, G. (1996). "Selling family jewels." *Editor & Publisher*, April 27, 1996, v129, n17, p20(3).

<sup>65</sup> Pritchard, David, (2001). A tale of three cities: "Diverse and antagonistic" information in situations of local newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership. *Federal Communications Law Journal*; Los Angeles; Vol. 54, No. 1, Dec., 2001.

owners and more mergers throughout the years as the policy changed. Critics of media consolidation, such as Ben Bagdikian, cite three reoccurring and compelling rationales for their fears of media consolidation and megacorporate journalism: financial pressures, stifling of free discourse, and news content manipulation. Compaine's (1982) book provides a compilation of statistics on media ownership in the early 1980's. Bagdikian expresses grave concern about the concentration of ownership of the fifty largest media corporations and their ties to corporate conglomerates. A study of television ownership (Howard, 1995) was done against a background of industry turbulence and likely regulatory change to provide new data on TV station multiple ownership and local newspaper-TV cross-media ownership. Results showed that 75% of all TV stations in the top one hundred markets were licensed to multiple owners, with 22.5% affiliated with newspaper publishers.<sup>66</sup> Local newspaper-TV ownership had become rare with only 19 of 734 stations in the top one hundred markets sharing ownership with a co-located newspaper. Of the 210 TV groups, about 10 were mega corporations.<sup>67</sup>

In another study on media consolidation, after the Telecommunications act of 1996, Ekelund, Ford and Koutsky (2000) found that their results do not support a strong relationship between increases in concentration and the profitability of radio stations, although group ownership was found to increase efficiency.<sup>68</sup> This efficiency could result from the sharing of news across the different companies, creating more convergence. Another study on pricing effects of cross ownership on media was

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<sup>66</sup> Howard, H., (1995). TV Station Group and Cross Ownership: A 1995 Update. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, Columbia; Summer 1995; Vol. 72, (2); pg. 390-402.

<sup>67</sup> Howard, H., (1995). TV Station Group and Cross Ownership: A 1995 Update. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, Columbia; Summer 1995; Vol. 72, (2); pg. 390-402.

<sup>68</sup> Ekelund, R., Ford, G., Koutsky, T., (2000). Market power in radio markets: An empirical analysis of local and national concentration *Journal of Law and Economics*; Chicago; 45(1), 28.

conducted when Wirth and Allen (1980) did a study to assess how cross-media ownership of a newspaper and television station in the same market affects the prices charged for advertising services.<sup>69</sup>

Limited empirical research is available on how cross ownership affects the level of convergence on the Internet. The importance of this researcher's study is to present the current status of cross-media ownership and partnerships on newspaper Web sites, and to see if these sites have a higher level of convergence than those of independently owned, non-partnership sites.

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<sup>69</sup> Wirth, M. O., Allen, B., (1980). "Crossmedia Ownership, Regulatory Scrutiny, and Pricing Behavior", *Journal of Economics and Business*, 33 (1980): p 28-42.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

In light of the previous discussion, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the current status of cross-media partnerships on online newspaper sites?

This question explores the idea of different media outlets partnering on one Web site. Two different aspects to be explored will be if and how both of their messages come across on the site promotionally, as well as how the news content is affected because of the partnership, and if the partnering media outlet has content delivery on the site whether it be audio or video.

RQ2: Is there a difference in the level of use of advanced technological devices among the newspapers of different sizes?

This question explores the idea that smaller circulation newspapers will have a lower level of technological device usage on their sites, while larger circulated newspapers will have more.

H1: The newspaper Web sites with cross-media partnerships will have a higher level of convergence than those that do not have partnerships with any other media outlet.

H2: The more advanced in technology that an online newspaper Web site is, the higher level of content updatedness the site will have.

## CHAPTER 5

### METHOD

To answer the research questions outlined above, the researcher conducted a content analysis of 100 U.S. online newspapers in April 2003. Kerlinger's definition of content analysis is a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring the variables.<sup>70</sup> A content analysis approach was chosen because this method frequently is used for all types of media, and it provides an efficient way to investigate media content.<sup>71</sup>

### Population

The population for this study was the top 100 newspapers in the United States according to circulation (Appendix III). These ranged in circulation size from the smallest, *The Times* in Washington, D.C. with 103,505 to the largest, *USA Today* with a circulation of 2,149,933. Other newspapers included, for example, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Houston Chronicle*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The Arizona Republic*. This information was obtained from *Editor & Publisher Yearbook*. The researcher chose to focus on larger circulation newspapers to study the cross-media partnership effects on news content and the current status of technological convergence on larger newspapers. The reason the population is according to circulation size is that the developments of Internet newspapers in different states are not actually balanced.<sup>72</sup> Larger markets tend to

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<sup>70</sup> Wimmer, Roger D. & Joseph R. Dominick (1987). Mass Media Research: An Introduction. (5th ed.). CA: Wadsworth, Inc

<sup>71</sup> Wimmer, Roger D. & Joseph R. Dominick (1987). Mass Media Research: An Introduction. (5th ed.). CA: Wadsworth, Inc

<sup>72</sup> Everett, Virginia. (1994). Satus report: U.S. newspapers online. Database, 17 (5), 14.

have more media conglomeration than smaller markets.<sup>73</sup> The newspaper sites were looked up on the NewsLink Web site. NewsLink was chosen because it is the most reliable and has the most up-to-date links of online newspapers.<sup>74</sup>

### **Key Variables and Operational Definitions**

The author defines key concepts and operational definitions as follows:

- Online newspaper: In this study, the researcher focused on daily Internet newspapers. According to the *American Journalism Review*<sup>75</sup>, online daily newspapers with full services are defined as general circulation, mass-market newspapers that publish a full range of regularly updated general news content online and are in print at least four days a week. For the purposes of this study the researcher, used the 100 U.S. newspapers with the highest circulations.
- Level of convergence: The level to which an online newspaper utilizes certain features of advanced technology that represent the current status of technology convergence, specifically streaming audio, streaming video, and Flash photos.
- Updatedness: The degree to which the content of a site is refreshed with the latest information. This is typically exemplified by a note at the top of the front page of the Web site which states, "Site last updated at" and gives a specific date and time; or when a note is made at the top of a specific article that states when the article was last updated. The researcher seeks to find out to what extent the newspaper site is updated.

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<sup>73</sup> Chambers, Todd. (2003). Structural Changes in Small Media Markets. *Journal of Media Economics*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. p. 41-59.

<sup>74</sup> Schulz, T. (1999)/ Interactive Options in Online Journalism: A Content Analysis of 100 U.S. Newspapers. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 5, (1), 1999, September, February, 2000.

<sup>75</sup> <http://ajr.newslink.org/>

- Cross-media ownership/ partnership: Defined as a form of media alliance in which a company owns one type of medium such as newspaper, and forms the alliance through purchasing a company of a difference type of medium such as television.
- Circulation: The circulation, which is the number of traditional newspapers sold or distributed during a specific period of time was taken from an average of the weekly Monday through Friday figures. These figures were obtained from *Editor & Publisher Yearbook* which is published each year with updated circulation figures for all U.S. daily newspapers.

## **Measurement**

### **Measurement Validity**

Measurement validity can be achieved only when a measuring device accurately measures what it purports to measure.<sup>76</sup> There are four types of validity – face validity, content validity, criteria validity, and construct validity. Content validity refers to whether a measurement instrument accurately measures competency as it is defined conceptually,<sup>77</sup> and therefore this study employs content validity. To measure each variable’s content validity, a number of aspects were taken into consideration.

Newspaper size is measured using the weekly circulation numbers from the *Editor and Publisher’s Yearbook*. It was then converted to four circulation groups

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<sup>76</sup> Wimmer, Roger D. & Joseph R. Dominick (1987). Mass Media Research: An Introduction. (5th ed.). CA: Wadsworth, Inc

<sup>77</sup> Wimmer, Roger D. & Joseph R. Dominick (1987). Mass Media Research: An Introduction. (5th ed.). CA: Wadsworth, Inc

including: less than 200,000; 200,000 – 499,999; 500,000 – 999,999; more than 1,000,000.

Updatedness is measured by coding the level of recency the sites have been refreshed. The five levels to which they are coded are: on an hourly, 5-hour, 12-hour, 24-hour and more than 24-hour basis. The coder picks one of these five levels. It was not required to read through all of the editorial text. If updatedness was not at first evident from the first story, however, at least five stories were examined to investigate whether updatedness and or convergence of some sort was part of the story.

Partnership is measured by examining the Web site to find any sort of cross-media partnership, whether it was a logo of an affiliated television, radio, or newspaper partner, or actual news content that was shared from this other media organization. This could be two subsidiary media organizations owned by one parent company or it could be a local media entity that had a relationship with the local newspaper and both parties have reached an agreement to cross-promote each other. To determine if an online newspaper Web site is a product of cross-media partnership, there will most likely be a number of factors that may be available to inform the reader that the site is in fact a partnership between the newspaper and another media outlet. The top of the site could state, “This site is produced by:” and list the two different media organizations. Links or logos could promote separate media organizations. This could include downloading a local television story from a local affiliate, or downloading streaming video or audio from a separate television or radio station. First the partner’s message was measured by choosing yes, no, or no partner. Second, the media partner’s content was measured by coding yes, there

is content on the site from the partner, no, there is no content from the partner, or no partner.

Partnership origination is measured by examining the Web site to see if the partnership appeared to be a local, national, unknown, or, again, no partnership.

Partnership content format delivery is measured by coding to decipher whether it is a television, radio or print news content partner that is being delivered through the newspapers' Web sites.

Technological convergence is measured by examining the three parts of the newspaper: front page; local/ metro page, and "special sections" page to see if radio, television, Flash Photo, or none of these were available on each of these pages. To further explore the level of convergence, both the front page and "special features section" of each Web site will also be examined to see if there are any acts of technological convergence. A site that has technological convergence throughout more areas of the site would be considered to have a higher level of convergence overall. The different sections of the Web sites were given different weights in comparison to their importance in level of convergence on the site. The Front Page section was calculated using a 1.0 for any of the different technological features on the site. The Local/ Metro section of the Web site was calculated with the weight of .5 for level of convergence. And the "Special Features" section was calculated with a weight of .75 level of convergence.

### **Intercoder Reliability**

Intercoder reliability refers to levels of agreement among independent coders who code the same content using the same coding instrument. Pretesting is the best way to

discover whether a research instrument is adequately designed.<sup>78</sup> Intercoder reliability can be calculated by several methods. In this study, two people performed the coding procedure. An intercoder reliability test for the quantitative variables was conducted with ten percent of the total number of newspapers/ units of recording. The number of Web sites in the population was 100, ten were necessary for coding; therefore, it was decided to take every tenth newspaper from the population to create a balanced intercoder reliability test.

Holsti (1969) reported a formula for determining the reliability of nominal data in terms of percentage of agreement.<sup>79</sup> The author used Holsti's R formula to test the intercoder reliability (Appendix IV):

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2M}{N_1 + N_2}$$

In this formula,  $M$  is the number of coding decisions on which two coders agree, and  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  refer to the total number of coding decisions by the first and second coder, respectively. The results ranged from .9 to 1.0. The average was .97 overall. This signified that the two coders were in agreement 97% (Appendix IV).

### **Content Coding**

The content was examined, using the coding sheet and coding each online newspaper, collecting the data from each site. The total number of newspapers coded was 100.

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<sup>78</sup> Wimmer, Roger D. & Joseph R. Dominick (1987). Mass Media Research: An Introduction. (5th ed.). CA: Wadsworth, Inc

<sup>79</sup> Holsti, O. (1969). *Content Analysis for the social sciences and humanities*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley. Retrieved via Wimmer, Roger D. & Joseph R. Dominick (1987). Mass Media Research: An Introduction. (5th ed.). CA: Wadsworth, Inc

The Unit of Analysis is the newspaper Web site published on the day the content is examined. The content was measured using a 17" monitor, Internet Explorer browser. The front page of each site, the local or metro news section, as well as the "special section" of each site was examined. Each Web site was coded once. The individual variables were coded to decipher newspaper size, updatedness, Flash, streaming audio, streaming video, and if there was a sign of some sort of cross-media partnership or cross-media ownership, both promotionally through its message and content driven as well. After the Intercoder Reliability test was done by two people, the coding was done solely by the researcher. Each site took at a minimum five minutes to code, and most did not take longer than fifteen minutes each.

### **Data Analysis**

After the data were collected, they was entered into an excel sheet. The researcher then imported that information into SPSS, a statistical software program that enabled the researcher to examine the data with different statistical reports. The variables input into the SPSS software included the following: Updatedness, Partner's message on site, Partner's content on site, Partnership local, Partnership national, No Partner, Partner television, Partner radio, Partner print, No partner, Front page radio, Front page television, Front page flash photo, Local page radio, Local page television, Local page flash photo, Special sections radio, Special sections television, Special sections flash photo

Each variable was properly defined in SPSS. Proper statistics were used according to measurement level for data analysis. Statistical reports were generated to find answers to the Research Questions and results of Hypotheses test.

## CHAPTER 6

### FINDINGS

Research Question 1 set out to find the current status is of cross-media partnerships on online newspaper Web sites. Frequency and Crosstab reports were utilized to explore Research Question 1; to show from which region the partnership originated, whether it was local or national, as well as which type of media content delivery the partnership utilized, whether it was television, radio or print. Print included both partnering newspapers as well as partnering web sites. Of the 100 online newspaper sites, 86% had a partnership. Of the newspaper Web sites that did have a partnership, the Frequency Report showed that 67% of those had a local partner of some type. National partnerships were found in 53% of the cross-media partnership Web sites.

The diversity in news content became apparent when examining these newspaper Web sites. When looking to find the print format's version of the story, many times there was also a version from a local television affiliate available. This story was complete with audio and video, and looked as though it was directly linked from the television station's content. It was evident that this content was not from the original newspaper, creating greater diversity in content from which to read or view.

The Frequency Report showed that within the newspaper Web sites that did have a cross-media partnership or ownership (86%), 49% had a partnership with a television organization, network or affiliate. Only 20% of the cross-media partnering newspaper Web sites had a partnership with a radio network or local radio station. Cross-media partnership newspaper Web sites that had a partnership with some form of a print organization were found to be the highest at 79%. This could have included a parent

print organization such as Gannett or Knight Ridder, or a partnering Web site or national Web network. (See Table 1)

Research Question 2 set out to determine if there was a difference in the level of use of advanced technological devices among the newspapers of different circulation (See Table 2).

**Table 1: Cross-Media Partnership of Newspaper Web Sites by Media Type**

<i>Media</i>	<i>percentage</i>
TV	49
Radio	20
Print	79

To explore Research Question 2, a One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to find the means of each group of newspapers based on circulation and the relationship between newspaper size and level of technology use. The result showed there is no difference in updatedness among the four different levels of newspaper circulation. F was equal to 1.39, The Degree of Freedom (df) was found to be 96, and P was greater than .05, showing that the result was not statistically significant. (see Table 3)

H1 was found to be supported. H1 stated that newspaper Web sites with cross-media partnership and/or cross ownership had a higher level of convergence than the online newspaper Web sites that did not have partnerships. An independent sample T-Test was used to compare the mean difference in the level of convergence of the two groups, those with cross-media partnership and those without cross-media partnership.

**Table 2: Newspaper Circulation Size and Frequency of Technological Items**

<i>Circulation Group</i>	<i>Audio</i>	<i>Video</i>	<i>Flash Photo</i>	<i>Level of Conv.</i>
Less than 200,000	5.54	5.20	5.42	1.86
200,000-499,999	5.20	4.64	5.26	2.59
500,000-999,999	5.00	4.62	5.38	2.75
Greater than 1,000,000	6.33	6.00	7.00	1.42

**Table 3: ANOVA of Level of Convergence by Media Size**

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between Groups	16.13	3	5.37	1.39	.24
Within Groups	369.98	96	3.85		
Total	386.12	96			

The independent Sample T-Test showed that equal variances were assumed.  $F = 4.40$ , the degree of freedom was 98, and  $P$  was less than .05. The Mean level of convergence on newspaper Web sites that had a partnership was 2.40, and the Mean level of convergence on newspaper Web sites that had no partnerships was .91. The mean difference was 1.49. The  $T$  value was 2.718. which was statistically significant at the 95% level. (See Table 4)

**Table 4: Level of Convergence**

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
Partner	86	2.40	1.97	.21
No Partner	14	.91	1.45	.38

The researcher found that H2, the more advanced in technology that an online newspaper Web site is, the higher level of content updatedness the site will have, was not supported in this study. A Spearman's rho correlation was done to test the relationship between the Independent variable (Convergence) and the Dependent variable (Updatedness). The correlation coefficient for convergence was 1.000, and the correlation coefficient for updatedness was .133. P was greater than .05 which means the significance level was not 95%, signifying that the result may have been because of chance or error, and did not support hypothesis 2, that the more advanced in technology an online newspaper Web site is, the higher level of content upatedness the site will have. One limitation of this hypothesis is that the population included the top 100 circulated dailies in the country. This meant that even the smallest of these newspapers was of significant circulation. The results may have turned out quite differently if a different population was chosen for this study.

## CHAPTER 7

### DISCUSSION

What this study intended to show was the current status of online newspaper Web sites; the current level of convergence on newspaper Web sites, and the percentage of cross-media ownerships/ partnerships among the 100 newspapers with the largest circulations in the country. It was also hoped that the results would show a clear significance to those newspapers of larger circulation size as having a higher level of updatedness over those that were in smaller circulation groups.

What we see from these findings is that no longer is news content on electronic versions simply verbatim from the print version. Convergence of technology has taken its place in the industry, and has shown a large presence with newspapers that have cross-media partnerships. Support of H1 confirms that those newspapers with cross-media partnerships have a higher level of convergence than those that are owned and presented online independently.

Of the 100 newspapers examined, 86 percent had partnerships. This figure is significant in comparison with earlier studies which stated that the electronic version was simply an identical version of its print counterpart (Zingarelli 2000, Shepherd, Duffy, Watters & Gugle, 2001). With the number of partnerships and high level of convergence, we see that earlier studies show very different results; like that of Chan and Park (2000) that found that news related content played an important role, and interactivity and personalization were not readily observed on these Web sites. They found that Broadcast TV stations seemed to be following a safer route of expansion into this new medium by reassembling and re-proposing their distinctive existing products for

online delivery. We can now see that these newspaper Web sites are taking advantage of technology and using it to the betterment of their own product.

The different types of media partnerships involved means significant changes have occurred and continue as more partnerships and parent ownerships take their place in the online world. The results showed that of the Web sites that had partnerships, 79% of those were partnered with another print organization, whether it be a parent company such as Gannett or Knight Ridder, or whether it be with a partnering local Web site, or national Web network. With newspaper organizations owning so many newspapers around the country (like Gannett and Knight Ridder), it may be assumed that the print partnerships would be at a higher level than the other two forms of media, radio or television. Television partnerships were 49% of the partnering Web sites, and radio was just 20%. With the relaxed regulations brought down by the FCC earlier in June 2003, this may lead the numbers of partnerships among the different media to change, as well as the entire media landscape to change. When Ben Bagdikian wrote "The Media Monopoly" in 1983, about fifty media conglomerates controlled more than half of all broadcast media, newspapers, magazines, video, radio, music, publishing, and film in this country. By 1986, that number had shrunk from fifty to twenty-nine. By his latest edition in 2000, Bagdikian stated it had shrunk even further, to just six.

It was hoped that H2, the more advanced in technology that an online newspaper Web site is, the higher level of content updatedness the site will have, would have been evident in the results. Referencing Schulz (1999), who found newspaper size is a clear predictor of interactive options, and use of technological advancements on Internet

newspapers,<sup>80</sup> and similarly, Garneau (1996) who stated that the cost of developing a new media product made it highly unlikely for a small, independent newspaper to compete with the larger newspaper organizations, it was hoped that the evidence would be clear that smaller newspapers did not have the capabilities or did not utilize their resources to update their Web sites. However that did not come through in the results. This could mean that updatedness is now a common practice with newspaper organizations. It also could mean that the population chosen was not a fair representation to show such results.

Overall the findings show a great level of convergence among these newspaper Web sites (86%), technological devices such as streaming audio, streaming video and Flash photography are being used at a high level, and more and more partnerships are developing on Internet newspaper Web sites. What this means is that the current Internet newspapers are not like those studied when the Internet was a new medium. They are no longer just a regurgitated form of their print counterpart. The previous studies and this one have shown significant differences on the newspaper Web sites in regard to their delivery, technological advancements, and partnerships. It appears that these newspaper organizations are taking advantage of the technological capabilities to expand on their news resources and to bring a more enriched multimedia product to the consumer.

This is significant to the industry, especially after the recent FCC ruling of relaxed media ownership regulations. This could mean significant mergers and / or partnerships resulting in further convergence and partnerships on the Internet among different media. It will be evident with time what the future holds for Internet newspapers and if the level of convergence advances even further. If the technology becomes even more advanced

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<sup>80</sup> Schultz, T. (1999). "Interactive Options in Online Journalism: A Content Analysis of 100 U.S. newspapers." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 5(1), September, 1999.

and there are yet more ways to increase convergence, will these newspapers take advantage of such technology? The possibilities are practically endless as the space the Internet allows is practically endless.

Limitations of this study included a population of the top 100 circulated dailies in the U.S., whereas examining a better geographical cross section of the U.S., with consideration of newspaper size, may have represented the results differently. The larger the paper, the more likely they are to have the technology available and affordable to implement on its Web site. If the smallest 100 circulated newspaper Web sites were examined, there would likely be a significant difference in the results of the study. Smaller markets usually have been characterized as very local, mom-and-pop owner with ties to the community. The larger markets are the ones dominated by the faceless corporate media owner with no ties to the community.<sup>81</sup> Therefore, future studies targeting papers of all magnitude, not just the top 100 circulated dailies may reveal that circulation shows a large difference in the level of convergence. Possibly a study on the smallest circulated newspapers may show this hypothesis valid with more solid evidence. With the government deregulation laws in the forefront of today's culture, smaller markets may begin to consolidate. The very nature of media competition at the local level has changed dramatically since the dawn of deregulation in the early 1980s. Markets once characterized by a large number of different owners using various content strategies to attract larger audiences have been transformed into a small group of similar

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<sup>81</sup> Chambers, Todd. (2003). Structural Changes in Small Media Markets, *Journal of Media Economics*, 16(1), 41-49.

owners using corporate programming strategies to maintain a large share of the audience, this is across all forms of media.<sup>82</sup>

Further research could be done on specific partnerships of these media entities, whether the majority of these newspaper Web sites are ownership/ parent company partnerships or just affiliation partnerships. Also, how many of these partnerships and affiliations each of these newspapers has should be researched further in order to more deeply understand the constant change of newspaper partnerships and how and if this will affect news content in the future. These questions and studies could reveal just how many different types of newer technologies an online newspaper Web site utilizes, and how.

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<sup>82</sup> Chambers, Todd. (2003). Structural Changes in Small Media Markets, *Journal of Media Economics*, 16(1), 41-49.

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**APPENDIX I**  
**CODING SHEET**

V01: Newspaper\_\_\_\_\_

V02: Circulation\_\_\_\_\_

V03: Updatedness of the newspaper Web site on the front page is within  
(Mark only 1):

1 hour\_\_\_\_\_ 5 hours\_\_\_\_\_ 12 hours\_\_\_\_\_  
24 hours\_\_\_\_\_ more than 24 hours\_\_\_\_\_

Partnership:

V04: Is the media partner's message on the newspaper's Web site? (Mark only 1)  
Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ No partner\_\_\_\_\_

V05: Does the media partner have news content available on the site? (Mark only 1)  
Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ No partner\_\_\_\_\_

V06: From which geographic region is the media partner from?: (Mark all that apply,  
or only "unknown" or only "no partner")  
Local\_\_\_\_\_ National\_\_\_\_\_ Unknown\_\_\_\_\_ No partner\_\_\_\_\_

V07: What is the media partner's content delivery format? (Mark all that apply, or only  
"no partner")  
Television\_\_\_\_\_ Radio\_\_\_\_\_ Print\_\_\_\_\_ No partner\_\_\_\_\_

Convergence:

V08: On the Front Page is there: (Mark just one for each form of technological  
convergence)

1) Radio Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_  
2) Television Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_  
3) Flash photo Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

V09: On the Local / Metro News page is there: (Mark just one for each form of  
technological convergence)

1) Radio Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ No local / metro page\_\_\_\_\_  
2) Television Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ No local / metro page\_\_\_\_\_  
3) Flash photo Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ No local / metro page\_\_\_\_\_

V10: On the Special Sections page is there: (Mark just one for each form of  
technological convergence)

1) Radio Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ No special sections page\_\_\_\_\_  
2) Television Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ No special sections page\_\_\_\_\_  
3) Flash photo Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ No special sections page\_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX II**

### **CODING GUIDELINES**

This content analysis looks for the status of media partnership and use of advanced technology within newspaper Web sites. It explores what type of advanced technology the paper employs, how frequent the news content is updated, and if there is a presence of cross-media partnership or cross-media ownership on the newspaper Web site. In general, each online newspaper site will be examined once. Both the front page, local/ metro news section, and “special section” of the site will be examined.

Browse the front page, local news page, and “special section” of each newspaper web site carefully. It is not necessary to read every article. Start the analysis at the newspaper site’s original homepage. The “special section” of each site could possibly termed “Special Features,” or “Special Projects.”

#### **Coding Sheet Variables**

V03: Look at the front page of the newspaper Web site. Check to see if the site has been updated. The sites are typically updated with a statement that lets readers know when exactly the site was updated. If the front page does not have an update statement, check the local news articles to see if they are updated. Many times there will be a section called “Breaking News.” This would be a good place to check to see if the site has been updated, and how recently. Mark the appropriate blank to signify when exactly the last time the site or articles were updated. Choices for updatedness are: 1 hour: if the story has been updated within the last hour; 5 hours: if the story has been updated within the last 5 hours; 12 hours: if the story has been updated within the last 12 hours; 24 hours: if the story has been updated within the past 24 hours, or more than 24 hours: if a story has

not been updated in over 24 hours. For coding purposes “1” will be for 1 hour, “2” for 5 hours, “3” for 12 hours, “4” for 24 hours, and “5” for more than 24 hours. Only one answer may be marked.

V04: If the newspaper Web site is partnered up with another media outlet, note whether or not the partnering media outlet’s promotional message is on the site. A newspaper Web site could be partnered up with a local or national television network, local or national radio network, another newspaper, magazine, or simply a local or national Web site in which the parent company owns, or is in partnership with. This should be evident by either a statement on the front page claiming that the site is “partnered by” or “our affiliates are” and both or many partners’ names and/ or logos will be present. If there is high promotion of a separate media outlet; this could include promotion of a television program schedule, or radio programming guide. A cross-media partnership will most likely have the two partners on the top of the page or bottom of the page with banners promoting each of the organizations, with the ability to click onto that specific link and go directly to the partnering media outlet’s Web site. Cross-media ownership may also be evident on the site, and will therefore be counted as a partnership as well. If there is no media partner visible, then mark “no partner.” For coding purposes, “1” will signify yes, “2” will signify no message, and “3” will signify no media partnership. Only one answer may be marked.

V05: This question refers to whether the news stories contain the content from a media partner that is linked in the story and could be downloaded. There may be a link in a

news article or a symbol of a video camera or audio speaker next to the headline. This could signify that a video file from another media outlet is available. If such link or symbol of video or audio is identified, mark down Yes, otherwise, No. If there is no evidence of a media partnership or ownership on the site, then mark “No partner.” For coding purposes, “1” will signify yes, there is news content from another media outlet on the site. “2” will signify no, there is not news content from the partnering media outlet, and “3” will signify that there is no media partnership. Only one answer may be marked.

V06: Note which geographic region the partnering media is from. Before clicking on the link or symbol to get the television or radio feed there will possibly be a claim similar to “courtesy of” and the name of a national or local television or radio network. Note whether it is of national or local origination. If there is no indication that a media partner could be identified, click on the link, and identify the geographical region from the content. If geographical region could not be found from the content, mark “unknown.” If there is not a media partner on the site, mark “No partner.” For coding purposes, “1” will signify that there is a presence of that particular geographic region on the Web site. “2” will signify that there is “not” a geographical presence by the media partner on the Web site. Check all that apply; if there are both a local and a national presence for news content delivery, than both local and national will be checked and counted as “1”s on the data entry sheet. If “unknown” or “no partner” is marked, then they each will be the only thing marked.

V07: Select television if only a television feed from the media partner is used in the news stories; select radio if only radio from the partner media is used in the news stories. Select print if the media partner's content delivery is from another publication whether it is another newspaper or a magazine. If television, radio and print are all utilized from the different media outlets, mark down all three choices. For coding purposes, "1" will signify that there is content delivery of that particular format on the newspaper site, "2" will signify that there is not a presence of that content delivery media format from the media partner. Any and all of the media delivery formats can be checked, however, if "no partner" is marked, it will be the only thing marked.

V08: Browse the front page of the newspaper Web site and note if there is availability to see television, radio or Flash photos. Flash photo refers to any sort of animated photo session or group of photos. Typically these will be in a category on the site titled Photo Gallery or Slide Show. Characteristically if a downloadable file is clicked on and it is a Flash file, the cursor will have a small note that says, "Flash" next to it. Note yes or no for each of these different technologies. There may be an icon of a camera, video camera, or speaker to signify television and radio used on the Web site. Multimedia may also be another key word on the front page which will indicate that television, radio, or Flash photos are available through that link. For coding purposes, each form of technological convergence will be coded separately; "1" will constitute that there is a presence of that format on that section of the Web site, and "2" will signify that there is not a presence of that form of technology on the Web site. Only 1 can be marked for each form of technology under that section.

V09: Browse the local / metro news section of the newspaper Web site and note if there is availability to see audio, video, or flash photos. Note yes or no for each of these different technologies. There may be an icon of a camera, video camera, or speaker to signify video and audio used within that section. If there are no icons, click on at least five of the story headlines to check and see if once in the story there is the availability to get television, radio, or Flash photos. Note yes or no to each of the different technologies. For coding purposes, each form of technological convergence will be coded separately; “1” will constitute that there is a presence of that format on that section of the Web site, and “2” will signify that there is not a presence of that form of technology on the Web site. “3” will signify that there was no local/ metro news page on this particular site. Only 1 can be marked for each form of technology under that section.

V10: Browse the “special section” of the newspaper Web site and note if there is availability to see television, radio, or Flash photos. Note yes or no for each of these different technologies. Again, there may be an icon of a camera, video camera, or speaker to signify television and radio are used within that section. If there are no icons, click on at least five of the story headlines to check and see if once in the story there is the availability to get television, radio, or Flash photos. Note yes or no to each of the different technologies. For coding purposes, each form of technological convergence will be coded separately; “1” will constitute that there is a presence of that format on that section of the Web site, and “2” will signify that there is not a presence of that form of technology on the Web site. “3” will signify that there was no local/ metro news page on

this particular site. Only 1 can be marked for each form of technology under that section.

**APPENDIX III**

**TOP 100 U.S. ONLINE NEWSPAPERS BY CIRCULATION**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Circulation</b>
1.	<i>USA Today</i> (Arlington, Va.)	2,149,933
2.	<i>Wall Street Journal</i> (New York, N.Y.)	1,780,605
3.	<i>Times</i> (New York, N.Y.)	1,109,371
4.	<i>Times</i> (Los Angeles)	944,303
5.	<i>Post</i> (Washington, D.C.)	759,864
6.	<i>Daily News</i> (New York, N.Y.)	734,473
7.	<i>Tribune</i> (Chicago)	675,847
8.	<i>Newsday</i> (Long Island, N.Y.)	577,354
9.	<i>Chronicle</i> (Houston)	551,854
10.	<i>Post</i> (New York, N.Y.)	533,860
11.	<i>Chronicle</i> (San Francisco)	512,042
12.	<i>Morning News</i> (Dallas)	494,890
13.	<i>Sun-Times</i> (Chicago)	480,920
14.	<i>Globe</i> (Boston)	471,199
15.	<i>Arizona Republic</i> (Phoenix)	451,288
16.	<i>Star-Ledger</i> (Newark, N.J.)	410,547

17.	<i>Journal-Constitution</i> (Atlanta)	396,464
18.	<i>Free Press</i> (Detroit)	371,261
19.	<i>Inquirer</i> (Philadelphia)	365,154
20.	<i>Plain Dealer</i> (Cleveland)	359,978
21.	<i>Union-Tribune</i> (San Diego)	351,762
22.	<i>Oregonian</i> (Portland)	351,303
23.	<i>Star Tribune</i> (Minneapolis)	340,445
24.	<i>Times</i> (St. Petersburg, Fla.)	331,903
25.	<i>Register</i> (Orange County, Calif.)	324,056
26.	<i>Herald</i> (Miami)	317,690
27.	<i>Rocky Mountain News</i> (Denver)	309,938
28.	<i>Sun</i> (Baltimore)	306,341
29.	<i>Post</i> (Denver)	305,929
30.	<i>Post-Dispatch</i> (St. Louis)	290,615
31.	<i>Bee</i> (Sacramento, Calif.)	285,863
32.	<i>Investor's Business Daily</i> (Los Angeles)	281,173
33.	<i>Mercury News</i> (San Jose, Calif.)	268,621
34.	<i>Star</i> (Kansas City, Mo.)	259,612
35.	<i>Herald</i> (Boston)	259,228
36.	<i>Journal Sentinel</i> (Milwaukee)	255,098

37.	<i>Sentinel</i> (Orlando, Fla.)	254,956
38.	<i>Times-Picayune</i> (New Orleans)	254,897
39.	<i>Star</i> (Indianapolis)	252,349
40.	<i>Sun-Sentinel</i> (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.)	251,886
41.	<i>Dispatch</i> (Columbus, Ohio)	244,204
42.	<i>News</i> (Detroit)	242,855
43.	<i>Post-Gazette</i> (Pittsburgh, Pa.)	242,141
44.	<i>Observer</i> (Charlotte, N.C.)	235,375
45.	<i>Courier-Journal</i> (Louisville, Ky.)	222,332
46.	<i>Times</i> (Seattle)	219,241
47.	<i>News</i> (Buffalo, N.Y.)	218,781
48.	<i>Star-Telegram</i> (Fort Worth, Tex.)	213,781
49.	<i>Tribune</i> (Tampa, Fla.)	212,983
50.	<i>Express-News</i> (San Antonio, Tex.)	208,951
51.	<i>Courant</i> (Hartford, Conn.)	198,651
52.	<i>World-Herald</i> (Omaha, Neb.)	196,326
53.	<i>Virginian-Pilot</i> (Norfolk, Va.)	195,583
54.	<i>Daily Oklahoman</i> (Oklahoma City)	195,454
55.	<i>Pioneer Press</i> (St. Paul, Minn.)	195,042
56.	<i>Times-Dispatch</i> (Richmond, Va.)	190,509

57.	<i>Enquirer</i> (Cincinnati)	188,173
58.	<i>American-Statesman</i> (Austin, Tex.)	183,873
59.	<i>Tennessean</i> (Nashville)	183,406
60.	<i>Contra Costa Times</i> (Walnut Creek, Calif.)	182,727
61.	<i>Democrat-Gazette</i> (Little Rock, Ark.)	182,609
62.	<i>Daily News</i> (Los Angeles)	178,156
63.	<i>Record</i> (Bergen County, N.J.)	178,029
64.	<i>Democrat and Chronicle</i> (Rochester, N.Y.)	176,040
65.	<i>Times-Union</i> (Jacksonville, Fla.)	172,239
66.	<i>Post</i> (W. Palm Beach, Fla.)	171,572
67.	<i>Asbury Park Press</i> (Neptune, N.J.)	170,229
68.	<i>Post-Intelligencer</i> (Seattle)	169,105
69.	<i>Press-Enterprise</i> (Riverside, Calif.)	168,765
70.	<i>Journal</i> (Providence, R.I.)	165,880
71.	<i>Review-Journal</i> (Las Vegas)	165,754
72.	<i>News &amp; Observer</i> (Raleigh, N.C.)	162,869
73.	<i>Bee</i> (Fresno, Calif.)	157,820
74.	<i>Commercial Appeal</i> (Memphis)	155,196
75.	<i>Daily News</i> (Philadelphia)	152,435
76.	<i>Register</i> (Des Moines, Iowa)	152,402

77.	<i>Advertiser</i> (Honolulu)	152,098
78.	<i>Daily Herald</i> (Arlington Heights, Ill.)	148,375
79.	<i>News</i> (Birmingham, Ala.)	145,760
80.	<i>Journal News</i> (White Plains, N.Y.)	144,439
81.	<i>Beacon Journal</i> (Akron, Ohio)	141,073
82.	<i>Blade</i> (Toledo, Ohio)	140,406
83.	<i>Press</i> (Grand Rapids, Mich.)	139,800
84.	<i>World</i> (Tulsa, Okla.)	139,383
85.	<i>Daily News</i> (Dayton, Ohio)	135,818
86.	<i>Tribune</i> (Salt Lake City)	134,712
87.	<i>Morning Call</i> (Allentown, Pa.)	128,204
88.	<i>News Tribune</i> (Tacoma, Wash.)	127,786
89.	<i>La Opinion</i> (Los Angeles, Calif.)	127,576
90.	<i>Post-Standard</i> (Syracuse, N.Y.)	126,761
91.	<i>Tribune-Review</i> (Greensburg, Pa.)	124,851
92.	<i>News Journal</i> (Wilmington, Del.)	121,480
93.	<i>State</i> (Columbia, S.C.)	117,423
94.	<i>News-Sentinel</i> (Knoxville, Tenn.)	114,989
95.	<i>Journal</i> (Albuquerque)	108,668
96.	<i>Herald-Leader</i> (Lexington, Ky.)	107,670

97.	<i>Herald-Tribune</i> (Sarasota, Fla.)	106,077
98.	<i>Spokesman-Review</i> (Spokane, Wash.)	105,911
99.	<i>Telegram &amp; Gazette</i> (Worcester, Mass.)	103,565
100.	<i>Times</i> (Washington, D.C.)	103,505

NOTE: By circulation, as of November, 2001.

Source: *Editor & Publisher International Year Book 2002*. Web: [www.editorandpublisher.com](http://www.editorandpublisher.com).

## APPENDIX IV

### INTERCODER RELIABILITY RESULTS

The Intercoder Reliability testing done for each of the variables in the study were calculated using Holsti's R Formula. The results for each of the variables were as follows:

V03:	Updatedness	1.0
V04:	Partner's message on site	1.0
V05:	Partner's content on site	1.0
V06A:	Partnership local	1.0
V06B:	Partnership national	0.9
V06C:	No Partner	1.0
V07A:	Partner television	1.0
V07B:	Partner radio	1.0
V07C:	Partner print	1.0
V07D:	No partner	1.0
V08A:	Front page radio	1.0
V08B:	Front page television	1.0
V08C:	Front page flash photo	.95
V09A:	Local page radio	.95
V09B:	Local page television	.95
V09C:	Local page flash photo	.95
V10A:	Special sections radio	.90
V10B:	Special sections television	.95
V10C:	Special sections flash photo	.95

## VITA

Ren e duPlessis, a native of New Orleans, Louisiana, was born December 21, 1971. She attended The University of Arizona, graduating with a bachelor of fine arts degree in 1994. In 1997, after a summer internship with CBS News in New York, she was hired on full time on the CBS News Foreign Desk. It was there that her interest for news escalated. She took what knowledge she had gained as a Teacher's Assistant in Visual Communications and her graduate classes at Louisiana State University and combined it with her interest in news to research the two together. She is now currently a Media Planner/ Buyer for an advertising agency in Phoenix, Arizona where she has worked for the last four years. She does strategic marketing and media planning and buying for various accounts throughout the United States. She will be awarded the degree of Master of Mass Communication from Louisiana State University in August, 2003.