

## Conference Paper

# Convergence Trends in the Television Media Industry – A Case Study on the Implementation of Media Convergence in Metro TV, Jakarta

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## Abstract

This study aims to determine the trend of convergence in the television media industry, specifically the implementation of media convergence in Metro TV. Data for the case study were gathered from observations and interviews with journalists. The results showed that the media industry in Indonesia, especially Metro TV has expanded its coverage broadcast, characterized by the use of streaming technology and distributed through online sites. But until now in the Indonesian media industry, especially Metro TV, media convergence has not implemented an effective system. Media industries affiliated with a group (Media Group) operate independently of each other with little coordination. Broadcast media industry in Indonesia is still reluctant to switch to digital broadcasting due to the high costs of replacing the analog broadcasting.

**Keywords:** Convergence Metro TV, Convergence Trends, Digital Media, Media Technology

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## 1. Background

The broadcast media industry, especially television, develops very rapidly and inversely proportional to the printed media industry. A number of print media slowly goes bankrupt because they were unable to compete with other media. This is because people, especially among the youths, get the necessary information only by reading online site through the gadget or smart phone. Overall, media consumption in cities both in Java and outside Java shows that television is still the main medium used by the people of Indonesia (95%), followed by internet (33%), radio (20%), newspapers (12%), tabloid (6%) and magazines (5%). However, there is a difference of media consumption patterns in the cities in Java and those in the cities outside Java. Consumption of television media is higher outside of Java (97%), followed by radio (37%), Internet (32%), newspapers (26%), cinema (11%), tabloid (9%) and magazines (5%).

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Meanwhile, in Java Island, only the consumption of internet was slightly higher (34%). Especially on the Internet, the use of media is experiencing the highest growth in the last four years, reaching twice both in Java and outside Java. The free-to-air national television broadcasting media still exists because advertising remains. The television media business is starting to decline or stagnate, according to Senior Vice President Director Media Group Henry Sitanggang. Television revenues tend to decline as many media are used by advertisers to market their products. Television today is no longer the only advertising medium for marketing the product (Interview Henry Sitanggang, Thursday, September 15, 2016).

Social media, such as YouTube or Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others are now increasingly prevalent and becoming more popular. Therefore, the national television media relying on advertising for the only source of income should look for other alternatives in order to survive and to compete with other media industries.

Competition in the television industry is very promising. With ten national private television channels, we already can see how they compete for advertising. Therefore, it is not excessive that they are required to create and to broadcast high-quality programs to attract the public's attention so they get a piece of advertising (Central Indonesian Broadcasting Commission Team, 2013: 122).

Besides presentation and program quality, implementing media convergence is the way to stay ahead of the competition in the television media industry. Negroponte said that the combination of traditional media industry and the computer industry will create a new type of communication. To identify what was happening in the media industry, Negroponte developed two models showing the position of the media industry in 1978, and projected his vision for the industry in 2000 ([2]: 232). Media convergence phenomenon, according to (cite7: 2), presents a variety of media incorporating new communication technologies into traditional communication technologies. Convergence also occurs in the terms of communication, information, and media. Convergence of media can be perceived from the proliferation of media information and communication that has a variety of features in a single platform. Other examples related to media convergence are happening right now among online televisions. Online television is the one transmitted through the internet where this technology is the integration of television and the Internet. People can now watch television over the internet. Examples of online television are that of Metro TV that [www.metrotvnews.com](http://www.metrotvnews.com), and SCTV is [www.liputan6.com](http://www.liputan6.com).

In his book, *Understanding Media Convergence: The State of the Field*, Grant and Wilkinson explains that the convergence of media covers five major dimensions: technological convergence, multimedia content, ownership, collaboration, and coordination ([4]: 3-15). However, [4] states that these five dimensions cannot be regarded as static and exclusive, because the core of real convergence is a change.

Collaboration emphasizes on cooperation by the media that are in the different possession or platforms. The ways of doing so are, for example, sharing content, promotion cooperation (cross-promotion), or coordination between media [4]. From an operational perspective, media workers are required to multitask as a result of the news coverage contained in various types of media making it more efficient.

Media convergence provides audiences with more choices of diverse content anyway [4]. Not only related production and consumption, but media convergence is also a marker of changes in various elements of communication including media, culture, audience, technology, and industry. Convergence of media also has implications to the structural changes the media industry is likely to lead to cross-ownership or cooperative ownership.

The shift of industrial structure is caused by the demand for the production of multimedia content to be distributed in a variety of media platforms, whether print, broadcast, or online. The convergence of media ownership plays an important role in determining the consolidation among the players in the media industry because of production-oriented economies of scale, meaning the products of the media potentially converging into mass production [4].

The transition from printed media to digital media would result in a change in the production of news content platform, given the differences in presenting the news. For that reason, the mass media need to do convergence. Convergence is a necessity for the mass media, especially newspapers and magazines if they want to switch to digital form. Because, all media organizations will move to a level which makes all of the news production process ranging from text, audio, video, graphics, and so forth integrated. Integration also touches the patterns of marketing, promotion, sale, redistribution, and interaction with the community.

Tim Harrower in his book entitled *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism* mentions that convergence takes three forms: changes Newsroom Convergence, News gathering Convergence and Convergence Content. It is explained as follows:

### 1.1. Newsroom Convergence

In the newsroom convergence, journalists from different media (TV, radio, newspapers, online) share the same workspace rather than do the work in a different building.

### 1.2. Newsgathering Convergence

Reporters, editors and photographers collaborated to produce the news. In the simplest format, they can share the helicopter for the news crew to fly over the flood. A TV host

can borrow one chart created by a newspaper. To cover the event for broadcast, TV reporter then wrote a longer format on the website. With training, printed reporter can learn to make the television news; photo journalists take photographs, video and interviewing. In other words, journalists do multi tasking multimedia. Is that the story done by a team consisting of staff / reporter TV, printed / paper and online - or the reporter to prepare a wide variety of news for several different media?

### 1.3. Content Convergence

News is presented in the form of multimedia combining text, images, audio, video, blogs, podcasts, slideshows, the options continue to grow. Nowadays, content convergence is still very young and just starting out, but you can peek at the future through innovative website.

Based on these descriptions, the problem statement of this study is: to what extent is convergence being implemented in Metro TV. Metro TV was selected for this case study because it is the first television station in Indonesia to present a news program in three formats: written material, video streaming, and live streaming.

## 2. Method

Since its establishment, Metro TV was oriented to be number one media in Indonesia for its news. Since November 25, 2000, Metro TV is the only and first 24-hour television news station in Indonesia. Metro TV is one of the subsidiaries of the Media Group owned by Surya Paloh. Metro TV aims to disseminate news and information throughout Indonesia. In addition to news content, Metro TV also broadcast a variety of information programs concerning the progress of technology, health, general knowledge, art and culture, and others to educate the nation. Metro TV is composed of 70% of news (news), aired in three languages: Indonesian, English, and Mandarin, plus 30% of non-news program (non-news) that is instructive.

This case study used a qualitative approach to examine the trend of convergence at Metro TV. Data were collected from interviews with journalists, the crew and managing editor at Metro TV and observations of the station's operations. Data were also collected from the Metro TV website. To validate the data, triangulation was used, creating a rich and dense description, clarifying researcher bias that may have crept into the study [3]. Analysis was directed to answer the question leading to the conclusion of how media convergence was implemented in Metro TV.

### 3. Finding and Discussion

Metro TV brings. One of them is done by forming Metro TV online news sites and live streaming on the website: [www.metrotvnews.com](http://www.metrotvnews.com).

Media Group's CEO, Henry Sitanggang said that Metro TV as a part of Media Group's business had converged its operations, which is nothing more than just bringing the activities in the media industry such as computing, communication, and content together. Meanwhile, individual elements are separated, from both management and institutional structures.

Whereas, it is a convergence of media, according to Henry Sitanggang, that is the incorporation or integration of existing media to be used and directed into a destination point (Interview with Henry Sitanggang, Thursday, September 15, 2016). Convergence is two or more objects meeting and uniting in a point.

Metro TV as a part of a business Media Group has its own management. Media Indonesia newspaper which is also under Media Group is a business separate from Metro TV. Meanwhile, radio media has been owned by the Media Group until now.

Metro TV called for convergence of media when the media industries under Media Group joined the business and institution. Thus, an increase in productivity and efficiency in all areas in enterprises engaged in the media industry belongs to Media Group (Interview with Henry Sitanggang, Thursday, September 15, 2016).

According to Henry Sitanggang, there has been no media convergence in Indonesia until today. But it is not more than simply utilizing the Internet media to expand its media network. Because the Internet has the power to send a quick and comprehensive the coverage, this new media type becomes popular among the public. As a part of technology, the Internet leads to the growth of communication world, as text, audio, and visual can be accessed concurrently and simultaneously. Internet and computers play a major role in the convergence of media.

#### 3.1. The Application of Convergence Can Optimize the Performance of Metro TV

Industry broadcast media, especially television media has long been recognized as an industry that is labor-intensive and capital-intensive. Investments in any television media industry are relatively high. Gains derived by the owner of the television media was unnecessarily to be achieved within one or two years. It took more than five years to earn a profit or break even. This means that over a period of many years, the media owners will continue to allocate funds to finance the survival of the relevant television media to be able to make a profit.

The question is, whether the application of convergence can optimize the performance of Metro TV? The results of this study concluded that the application of the convergence in the media industry will greatly optimize the performance of a media industry, including Metro TV. For media industries, television, newspapers and radio stations will be combined into a single institution.

For example, journalists will serve as a supplier to the three-news media at a television, newspapers and radio. Thus, there will be efficiencies and cost savings compared to earlier, when the reporter only in charge of supplying news to each of the media institutions for which they work.

In the terms of technology, media industry can also make efficiency because the technology used to expand the broadcast network is the internet relatively cheap compared to renting a satellite. Reaching power became more widespread. Internet seemed to justify McLuhan's opinion about the concept of global village. The world community connects to each other without any restrictions.

## 4. Conclusions

1. The media industry in Indonesia, including Metro TV has begun to expand the coverage broadcast using internet communication technology. It is characterized by the use of streaming technology as well as making the news spread through online sites.
2. The media industries in Indonesia, including Metro TV up to now have not implemented a system of media convergence as a whole.
3. Most of the broadcast media industries in Indonesia still reluctantly switch to digital broadcasting, because the need for replacing the broadcasting devices from analog to digital systems requiring considerable investment cost.

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