Multiple Media, Convergent Processes, and Divergent Products: Organizational Innovation in Digital Media Production at a European Firm

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This article addresses the intersection of two underexplored themes in studies of cultural production in traditional and digital media: the role of technology in news work and the processes that shape media convergence. The authors analyze organizational innovation in digital media production at GMS, a European firm that operates print and broadcast outlets in several specialized news markets. Between 1994 and 2003, GMS went from a phase of digital media experimentation undertaken by teams located within each existing newsroom, to the creation of a separate unit handling the online content of all print and broadcast newsrooms, to the ongoing integration of news production into a single newsroom per specialized market that generates different products for the various outlets in each market. This analysis illuminates how adopting online technologies has involved shifts in the locus of content creation in a path of increasing convergence in production processes but continued divergence of media products.

Keywords: cultural production; news production; new media; digital media; newspapers; media industry

This article addresses the intersection of two underexplored themes in studies of cultural production in traditional and digital media: the role of technology in news work and the processes that shape media convergence. On one hand, research about print and broadcast media has demonstrated that understanding media products requires paying attention to the organization of their production processes. However, work in this domain of inquiry has largely

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neglected the role of technology in these processes. On the other hand, analyses of new media have suggested that the digitization of information has led to erasing the boundaries that separate print, television, radio, and online technologies. Accounts of this phenomenon, however, have mostly focused on the products of media convergence—analyzing their symbolic forms and cultural and policy implications—with less attention devoted to the processes that shape the creation of these products. To explore both themes and their relationships, this article adopts traditional media scholarship's focus on the production process to look at digital media and digital media scholarship's emphasis on technology to examine production dynamics. It sheds new light on these themes by analyzing organizational innovation in digital media production at GMS, a European firm that operates print and broadcast outlets in several specialized news markets. Between 1994 and 2003, the firm went from a phase of digital media experimentation undertaken by teams located within each existing newsroom, to the creation of a separate unit handling the online content of all print and broadcast newsrooms, to the ongoing integration of content production into a single newsroom per specialized market that generates different products for the various outlets in each market.

The analysis challenges two tenets of scholarship about cultural production in traditional and digital media: the implicit "one newsroom–one medium" assumption of most sociology of news production and the dominant idea of product homogenization in the discourse of media convergence. First, the analysis elicits the dynamics of situations in which multiple newsrooms collaborated to produce content for their respective media and others in which one newsroom produced content for multiple media, thus turning the one newsroom–one medium assumption into an alternative whose existence has to be explained instead of assumed. Second, organizational factors partly account for a trend toward a convergence in production processes at GMS that was coupled with sustained divergence in the resulting products, thus underscoring the need to examine the organization of production to understand the shape of convergent media products at different times and places. Finally, the various combinations of newsrooms and media, and pro-

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online news organizations, he recently began studying issues of information intermediation and professional work through an examination of the transformations in librarianship that have taken place in relation to libraries' construction and use of new media technologies.

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cesses and products, were often associated with decisions affecting not a single publication, Web site, television or radio station, but GMS as a whole or several of its units simultaneously, thus highlighting the explanatory power of a level of analysis—that of the multimedia firm—that has not received much attention in studies of cultural production in traditional and digital media.

Cultural Production in Print and Broadcast Media

Scholars who have "gone inside" print and broadcast media have shed light on the role of interpersonal, institutional, moral, and political factors shaping the news (Epstein 1973; Ettema and Glasser 1998; Gans 1980; Kaniss 1991; Roshco 1975; Tuchman 1978). A fundamental contribution of this tradition of inquiry has been that understanding the organization of production is critical to making sense of the news as a cultural product. In Gieber's (1964, 180) celebrated phrase, "News is what newspaper men make it." A similar spirit permeates Gitlin's (1994, 13) study of organizational decision making in prime-time television: "I could not hope to understand why network television was what it was unless I understood who put the images on the small screen and for what reasons."

Despite the many important contributions of this tradition of inquiry, it has had two limitations that have become particularly salient to making sense of the contemporary media landscape. The first one is a pervasive, though often unstated, one newsroom–one medium assumption. That is, studies have usually focused on the operations of a single newsroom that produces content for a single medium such as a print newspaper or a radio station. Although this assumption was quite realistic up to three decades ago, the trends toward consolidation, diversification, and alliances that have marked the media industry in recent times (Bagdikian 1983; Compaine and Gomery 2000) have frequently meant that content produced by a single newsroom is delivered across multiple media or that personnel from more than one newsroom jointly produce content subsequently disseminated in multiple media. To maintain this assumption as a given runs the risk of proceeding with outdated images of the work involved in content production as well as preventing the creation of analytical resources suitable for dealing with the dynamics that characterize the situations of multiple newsrooms–multiple media or one newsroom–multiple media.

The second shortcoming has been the lack of attention given to the role of technology in news production: "media sociologies . . . have lagged the technical . . . evolution of the news worker's milieu" (Sumpter 2000, 335). This shortcoming has been particularly limiting when it comes to understanding the contemporary media landscape in light of the computerization of newsrooms since the 1970s (Marvin 1980; Picard and Brody 1997; Smith 1980; Weaver and Wilhoit 1986). According to Schudson (2000, 182), "There has been little academic attention to the concrete consequences of the technological transformation of news produc-

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tion." One exception has been a recent study by one of the current authors (Boczkowski 2004) about the development of online newspapers in the United States. Among other conclusions, this study has shown that understanding the technological dimension of news production is critical to making sense of editorial dynamics: "materiality matters in online newsrooms . . . technical considerations affect who gets to tell the story, what kinds of stories are told, how they are told, and to what public they are addressed" (Boczkowski 2004, 177).

Cultural Production in Digital Media

In contrast with studies of print and broadcast media, scholarship about digital media has stressed the role of technology in the production of culture. One of the most widely circulated ideas in this regard has been that of "media convergence": the notion that because of the capabilities of digital technologies, content and services previously offered through various media will in the future be conveyed to a single artifact, usually a networked computer. This notion gained currency in the 1990s, as it became the dominant idea to making sense of transformations in cultural practices and artifacts associated with the popularization of the Internet and the World Wide Web (Baldwin, McVoy, and Steinfield 1996; Chandler and Cortada 2000; Greenstein and Khanna 1997; Manovich 2001; Poster 2001). To Owen (1999, 16), "The prophecy of convergence is this: television sets, telephones, and computers—and the networks that bind them—are or will become the same. The internet will be all."

In light of its popularity, it is not surprising that convergence has also permeated discourse about print and broadcast media's appropriation of online technologies (Black 2001; Elberse 1998; Owen 1999; Schiller 1999). According to Hall (2001, 6), "Online journalism . . . is also the industry that is experiencing the full and unmediated impact of converging media forms." Scholars have analyzed the implications of convergence for both the production and consumption of news. Concerning production matters, Pavlik (2001, 108) has suggested that "converging computing and telecommunication technologies are rapidly rewriting the traditional assumptions of newsroom organization and structure." Regarding news consumption, Lin and Jeffries (1998, 350) have argued that "it will be crucial to assess audience-multimedia technology relationships in light of the audience's entire communication and media environment, including electronic and print media infrastructures."

Of particular relevance to the purpose of this article, two features that have marked most of such discourse are a focus on convergence as a product and an emphasis on how these digital products tend to erase the differences among analog media such as print and broadcast. Perhaps nobody has expressed the product focus—with the parallel black boxing of the production process—as forcefully as Negroponte (1996, 18): "When all media is digital . . . bits commingle effortlessly." Concerning the homogenization of convergent media products, Yoffie (1997, 2) has stressed that convergence means the "unification of functions—the coming

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together of previously distinct products that employ digital technologies"; and Seib (2001, 6) has suggested that "in journalism, [convergence] means a growing similarity in news presentation through various media."

One of the most widely circulated ideas . . . has been that of "media convergence": the notion that because of the capabilities of digital technologies, content and services previously offered through various media will in the future be conveyed to a single artifact, usually a networked computer.

Some studies have begun to shed light on the limitations of looking at convergence as an end state of media homogenization (Benkler 1998; Deuze 2004; Gordon 2003; Higgins 2000; Jenkins 2001; Preston and Kerr 2001; Zavoina and Reichert 2000). In his study of online newspapers, Boczkowski (2004, 17) has argued that these newspapers have unfolded "in an ongoing process in which different combinations of initial conditions and local contingencies have led to divergent trajectories." Thus, looking at product homogenization has made less visible the social contingencies that shape the process of producing convergent products—hence ignoring the main legacy of social studies of news making in print and broadcast media, and that these contingencies partly account for the variation that so far has existed in these products.

Site and Method

GMS[1] was born in January 1990 from the merger of five publishing and related companies controlled by the same owners in the same European country. It began as a print publisher and added broadcast and online media in the past ten years. GMS has never had a financial loss and is the leader in most of the markets in which it operates. In 2002 it had the following media:

- Sports information division: *Goal*, a daily with an average daily circulation of 490,000; Goal.com, with a monthly average of 154 million visitors; and Radio Goal.

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- Business information division: *Invertis*, a daily with an average daily circulation of 65,000; Invertis.com, with a monthly average of 18 million visitors; Invertis TV, available through a satellite service with 3 million subscribers; and *Business Report*, a weekly magazine with an average weekly circulation of 30,000.
- "Others" information division: *Dona*, a women's monthly magazine with an average monthly circulation of 159,000; Beautylady.com, with a monthly average of 4 million visitors; *Doctors Daily*, a free medical newspaper with an average daily circulation of 50,000; Doctors Daily.com, with a monthly average of 2 million visitors; and *Studio*, a free weekly educational magazine with an average weekly circulation of 75,000.

The second author visited GMS in the summer of 2003. Among other data collection strategies, he conducted thirty-five open-ended, hour-long interviews. These interviews—together with follow-up exchanges with key actors by phone and electronic mail conducted during the second half of 2003—constitute the main source of data for this article. Approximately half of the interviewees were editorial personnel, some working for the online media and some for the traditional media, and proportionally distributed according to the weight of the various information divisions: eight journalists from the Sports division, six from the Business division, and four from the Others division. The approximately other half of interviewees included GMS-wide personnel in areas of top management, advertising, and information systems support. The overall sample provided an array of views and experiences about organizational innovation in relation to digital media at GMS between 1994 and 2003.

Organizational Innovation at GMS

In this section, we briefly describe the innovations in organizational strategies and structures for digital media production adopted at GMS between 1994 and 2003. In this ten-year period, digital media went from being a secondary function to becoming the primary strategic focus, to being integrated into the other media. Several organizational structures were created at these various stages.

The first steps and the creation of the Electronic Extensions Department, 1994-99

Most people at GMS first learned about the Internet and digital media upon reading stories about technological developments in the United States that appeared in the company's financial publications in the early 1990s. Maurice Moore, at that time editor of *Business Report* and with a long-time personal interest in new media technology, played a key part in this process by regularly assigning his reporters to write Internet-related stories and sending reporters to visit media organizations pursuing interesting digital media efforts. It is thus not surprising that when Moore was appointed president of GMS, reporting to the chief executive officer and the executive chairman in June 1995, he was also put in charge of online publishing initiatives:

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> The top executives and the founders of GMS had no idea in 1995 of what the Internet was about. They knew that behind the Internet there might be something interesting for the company, and they were smart enough to let me do what I really thought was good for the company. (Maurice Moore, personal communication, June 6, 2003)

At the end of 1995, the Electronic Extensions Department was created to centralize developments in the broadly defined area of digital media. This included tasks such as analysis of initiatives pursued by competitors; design and implementation of technical solutions for GMS online publications; and production of CD-ROMs with information, mainly company rankings, prepared by GMS's print newspapers. The new department's name indicates that it was seen as a secondary function, an "extension" to the core print business. Despite this secondary role, the creation of the department meant a growing trend toward the allocation of financial, human, and symbolic resources to digital media at GMS.

To lead the Electronic Extensions Department, Moore appointed Stan Krueger, a rising-star journalist at *Business Report*, where he had also been Moore's deputy for a few years. Because of his good reputation at GMS, Krueger's appointment was a signal of the importance that Moore assigned to digital media. To staff the department, Moore initially asked the editors of print publications to relieve one or two members of their newsrooms of some of their regular duties and make them responsible for producing the online editions of their respective publications. The personnel assigned to create and maintain online publications were located in the traditional newsrooms but reported to the head of the Electronic Extensions Department. In most cases, the defining criterion for choosing these initial online staffers was their possession of higher than average knowledge of computers. As time went by, new employees were hired for the Electronic Extensions Department. GMS has a long-established summer internship program for college students in journalism and communications majors, from which it recruits the top performers for full-time positions in the newsroom. The new hires for the Electronic Extensions Department came from this pool. The decision to assign a summer intern either to a traditional newsroom or to the Electronic Extensions Department resulted from asking a person whether they had some knowledge of the Internet, hypertext markup language, or computers. Those who answered yes were sent to the new department.

Being asked to work on an online edition was frequently not a highly regarded assignment by many in the print newsroom. To Mathew Johnson, who later became deputy director of the Digital Media Department, "Editors of the newspapers did not feel at that time that the Web pages were part of the newspapers" (personal communication, June 3, 2003). The Electronic Extensions personnel experienced a somewhat secondary status, relative to that of their traditional media counterparts, throughout this period. For instance, according to Krueger, "In 1997, only Moore paid attention to us; the rest of the top management ignored us. . . . The editors of the papers also ignored us, and many reporters thought the department members were computer experts with no idea of journalism" (personal communication, June 2, 2003).

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GMS publications launched their first Web pages in 1996. The main goal of these pages was to experiment with new technologies and to do something similar to what the world's leading publications were doing in the area of online publishing. There was no overall strategy for this experimentation or for how it might affect the print business. As with most early online newspapers, these first Web pages reproduced the print papers' content. They also increasingly added online-only features, however, such as the live written narration of a soccer match on Goal.com and the offering of interactive stock market charts on Invertis.com. As with the people who created them, the digital products were also seen as secondary to the print products, something that was evident, for instance, in the treatment of scoops. "It is absolutely clear that if Goal.com gets a good scoop, we will keep that information so as to be released by *Goal*, on the paper, not on Goal.com," states Adrian Spiegel, editor of *Goal* and former editor of Goal.com. "We may publish that scoop immediately on the Web only if we have enough evidence that the scoop may be obtained by other competitors," adds Spiegel (personal communication, June 3, 2003).

To summarize, during this period, digital media production was undertaken by specialized units located within the traditional newsrooms but reporting to the new Electronic Extensions Department and generated products that reproduced content originally created for the traditional publications while increasingly adding Internet-only information and services such as updates during the day and database applications. This resulted from a firmwide strategy and structure of innovation championed by a powerful actor without much involvement or interest from the rest of the top management and in which all things digital enjoyed a lower status than their print counterparts.

The rise of the Internet Department, 1999-2000

As the end of the 1990s approached, GMS executives were busy preparing to take the company public. In 1999, GMS retained the services of a management consulting firm to help formulate the company strategy in relation to this process. Among other things, this firm recommended the creation of an Internet department that "had to turn into a smaller company inside a larger company, and that the whole [GMS] had to orbit around the Internet department" (Stan Krueger, personal communication, June 6, 2003). As people at the company put it, 1999 was the year that digital media changed from an "ugly duck" to a "white swan." In light of the extraordinarily high valuation that Internet-related stocks had at the time, turning GMS into an Internet company was a notion appealing to its top executives. All of a sudden, the Internet became the icon of digital media and the center of attention: "In 1997 or 1998, nobody gave a dime for the Internet, while in 1999 and 2000 all the dimes in GMS were ready to be invested in the Internet" (Maurice Moore, personal communication, June 6, 2003). In 1999, GMS created the Internet department and appointed Stan Krueger to lead it.

The creation of the Internet department took place at a time of feverish activity in the media industry. The Internet and the World Wide Web seemed poised to transform the media landscape, and traditional media companies such as GMS

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found themselves in a position to develop their own new ventures as well as partner with newly founded new media ventures. Andrea Verst was hired by *Invertis* as a summer intern in 1996, then joined its online newsroom and two years later moved to the Internet Department with the task of developing new business opportunities. She comments on this experience in the following terms: "In 1999 and 2000 there were several general portals and Web pages of different industries that wanted content. . . . We were the best positioned to offer content, and many companies approached us. I had to deal with hundreds of them" (personal communication, June 4, 2003).

This burst of activity changed the tone and routines even at a mature and traditional company such as GMS. For example, the Internet Department operated without any budget during its entire lifecycle, a practice previously unimaginable at GMS. According to Maurice Moore, "It was impossible to have [a budget] because the circumstances and the pace changed so quickly that it was physically impossible to have a reliable budget. We worked under these circumstances during a year and a half" (personal communication, June 6, 2003).

The Internet Department was charged with the mission of overseeing all the content of its online publications; developing and implementing new tools to support these publications; pursuing new opportunities in nonprint businesses; and, in general, infusing the whole company with a new media ethos. To this end, the department was staffed with one professional for every function—that is, an advertising sales manager with his or her team, a controller, a marketing vice president, and so on. In addition, it also placed one person in each one of GMS's other departments whose main duty was to "inoculate the Internet virus into the traditional organization or department" (Stan Krueger, personal communication, June 2, 2003).

In addition to these new functions, the Internet Department centralized the online newsrooms of traditional publications and placed these newsrooms in a new building, together with the rest of the new department's employees. This physical separation was quite controversial, increased the disdain of many experienced journalists toward online publishing, and triggered conflict across the "traditional media/digital media" border. At that time, says Krueger, "I was responsible for both the content and the management of everything displayed on Web pages, and many editors did not like to see me managing 'their' content" (personal communication, June 2, 2003).

The creation of the Internet Department, with its broad and ambitious goal, meant the development of many new positions at GMS. In the case of new positions in the online newsrooms, the hiring criteria adopted to fill them continued to privilege technical over editorial competence, which deepened the differences between traditional and digital media personnel. For instance, Phil Mastrein, an experienced financial journalist who had worked many years for *Invertis* and was appointed editor of Invertis.com in December 1999, recalls that

> there were four newly hired people for Invertis.com and in two months one of them had already quit because he thought that the job was too demanding. The truth was that he was

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> annoyed by the fact that I called him at home at 10:00 in the evening and asked him to go to a press conference the following morning, something quite normal in a newspaper. He had no passion for journalism, but he had sent his resume by e-mail and knew a lot of Dreamweaver programming. (Personal communication, June 10, 2003)

The Internet Department generated online publications that drew from content originally created for their traditional media counterparts but continued adding increasing amounts of information and services that took advantage of the technological capabilities of the World Wide Web. For instance, journalists at *Goal* have often complained about the little space they have to write stories in light of the importance that pictures have in a sports newspaper. As time went by, several of them began writing a shorter story for the print publication and a longer version for its online counterpart. According to Adrian Spiegel, "Many journalists realized that the Internet was an endless medium in which their texts could be displayed with no limits, allowing them to give longer versions of their stories to the readers" (personal communication, June 3, 2003). Also, the archival and search capabilities of digital technologies led to the development of publicly available digital repositories of information at GMS's online publications. Jason Mortimer, editor of *Doctors Daily* since its launch in 1992, argues that on DoctorsDaily.com, users can find "papers published by the best medical magazines on every type of disease or human organ . . . [as well as] the medical legislation that has recently been passed. We are like a doctors' library of medical and legal texts" (personal communication, June 4, 2003).

In sum, the Internet Department emerged as an outcome of a GMS-wide strategy partly related to the diffusion and popularization of digital media in society but also to the preexisting decision to take the company public. This strategy raised the status of digital media at GMS, but differences between "old" and "new" media personnel remained. The Internet Department further centralized the process of digital media production than had its predecessor, and the resulting products continued drawing from content originally created for traditional media while adding a growing quantity of online-only information and services.

The Digital Media Department and the beginning of newsroom integration, 2000-2003

In March 2000, with the Nasdaq stock market falling dramatically and many Internet companies going out of business, people at GMS began to question the "new economy" thinking behind the role assigned to the Internet Department in the previous year. At that time, GMS was continuing to prepare for its debut in the stock market, and its top executives decided to retain the services of another management consulting firm to reanalyze the strategy and structure of the company. The outcome of this new analysis was a decision to reorient the company's strategic focus toward its core content areas and to restructure the editorial units accordingly. That is, the main idea was to reorient GMS from a media company—defined either by its print publications, as in the 1994 to 1999 period, or its Web sites, as in

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the 1999 to 2000 period—to a content company. According to Moore, "We know how to produce information, that's our core business. If a customer wants information through the Internet, we will send it via Internet; but our core business is providing content, not technology" (personal communication, June 6, 2003). This strategic reorientation also dovetailed with a slow process of asset diversification that had begun in the late 1990s, when top executives at the company realized that *Invertis* and *Goal* were well-positioned brands that could be extended to other media such as TV and radio, as happened with the launch of Invertis TV in 1998 and Radio Goal in 2001.

Being asked to work on an online edition [of a GMS newspaper] was frequently not a highly regarded assignment by many in the print newsroom.

A new structure was put in place when the company went public in October 2000. It grouped all GMS's editorial units in three information divisions: Sports, Business, and Others. Maurice Moore was appointed executive member of the GMS board of directors, with direct responsibilities related to corporate development and the editorial content of the company's media. The executive vice presidents of the three information divisions reported to him, together with other business units of the company.

As part of this company-wide reorientation and restructuring, the Internet Department was renamed the Digital Media Department—Stan Krueger remained as its head—and various changes affected its daily operations. To begin, the online newsrooms went back to each traditional media newsroom, and the traditional newsroom editors were put back in charge of their online contents. Another change was the suppression of the role of the Internet leader in the traditional departments. For instance, the traditional marketing department eliminated the role of the Internet leader, but GMS Digital Media continued to have its traditional new media marketing leader. Furthermore, the era of "no budget, let us invest without constraints" was over, and the company resumed investing selectively according to "old economy" criteria.

After that restructuring, the Digital Media Department became a unit supporting GMS online publications through the creation and implementation of new tools and developing new business opportunities to sell content and services linking GMS core capabilities with platforms including not only the Web but also cellu-

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lar phones and portable digital assistants. For instance, in 2003, GMS Digital Media launched new services such as the display of pictures initially taken for *Goal* on consumers' cellular phones and the transmission of breaking news alarms to computers, cellular phones, and portable digital assistants. In addition, the online publications expanded the array of Internet-only offerings, which made sensible the launch of a fee-based Premium Service on Invertis.com in April 2002. It gave subscribers access to the full version of every story published in *Invertis* plus updates during the day, stock and mutual funds quotes and charts, and access to searchable archives of past stories, among other things. The presentation of the information on the Web site also differed from that in the print paper. According to Phil Mastrein,

> We saw that the Invertis.com audience wanted to see at a glance—as soon as they opened our page—the performance of the stocks and market indexes that they are interested in. So we readapted our Web page to offer these features. We also saw that the comments of one of the stock markets analysts had to be put on the first page. . . . Time and trial and error have given us knowledge in how to deal with this newborn medium [the World Wide Web]. (Personal communication, June 11, 2003)

The period between the end of 2000 and 2002 was a difficult financial time for GMS and the media industry in general, not only because of the downturn in the stock markets, but also because of the dramatic fall in advertisement spending. *Invertis* saw a decline in sales and advertisement, and GMS as a whole had layoffs for the first time in its history. Partly because of the overstaffing of online newsrooms in the then-recent era of no budgetary restrictions, and partly because of the deflated expectations about the short-term commercial future of online publishing, the layoffs affected digital media personnel more than their peers on the print side. For instance, the number of people working in the newsroom of Invertis.com in mid-2003 was less than half of those in mid-2000. According to Moore,

> At the end of 2002, we went through a process of self-criticism as a result of the situation of *Invertis*. We wondered about the way we were doing things, about the past results, and especially about the lack of predisposition to cooperate among the business media that we have. (Personal communication, June 6, 2003)

What resulted from this process of self-examination was a major structural change, bound to strongly influence the content production process: the integration of the newsrooms of different media in the same content areas. The idea is that a given reporter, who may be specialized in track and field, for instance, may find a story and transmit it at noon through the radio, write one version for Goal.com during the afternoon, and then rewrite that story, from another perspective, for the following day's newspaper. On top of that, all these versions of the same story may be available on Goal.com, which may also work as a content repository. Online newsrooms as separate entities cease to exist as an outcome of this latest restructuring because all newsrooms within an information division converge into a single entity divided by beats and areas of specialization. For example, if there are two reporters

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specialized in real estate at *Invertis*, and one in each of the other newsrooms of the business information division—Invertis.com, Invertis TV, and *Business Report*—all these five reporters will be working together for the four business information media. Therefore, a reporter who was just reporting for the online version begins to also report in front of a camera for Invertis TV and writing both for *Invertis* and for *Business Report*.

As data for this study were collected, the process of newsroom integration was only starting. But signs of organizational transformation were already under way. For a while, the editors of *Goal*, Goal.com, and Radio Goal have had lunch every Monday to talk about joint projects and other developments that may be beneficial for the *Goal* brand as a whole, no matter if they affect the newspaper, the Web, or the radio. According to Adrian Spiegel, editor of *Goal*, "We see what we can do in the paper to increase the audience of the radio and of the Web page, while they do the same to increase the newspaper's circulation. We are all in the same boat" (personal communication, June 11, 2003). Furthermore, the newsrooms of *Invertis*, Invertis.com, Invertis TV, and *Business Report* were relocated together in the same floor in September 2003. Previously, only *Invertis* and Invertis.com shared the same floor. In the new location, editors and heads of the departments sit next to each other, while reporters are grouped according to the area of their specialization.

To sum up, negative financial conditions affecting the stock market in general and the media industry in particular triggered a strategic reorientation around content areas and structural innovations such as the creation of the Digital Media Department and the integration of newsrooms. The production process of digital and traditional media showed signs of convergence, with a single newsroom per information division in charge of the content provided by the multiple media operated within each division. This convergence in production processes was associated with a divergence in the resulting products, as was evident in the continued growth of distinctive digital content and services, among other indicators.

Discussion

The story of organizational innovation in digital media production at GMS challenges two pervasive notions of traditional and digital media scholarship: the one newsroom–one medium assumption and the trend toward product homogenization in media convergence. Because the relationships between newsrooms and media, and processes and products, were tied to dynamics that either pertained to GMS as a whole or crossed the boundaries of several of its units, this study makes a third analytical contribution by showing the explanatory value of focusing on the level of analysis of the multimedia firm—often overlooked in studies of cultural production in traditional and digital media.

Most studies of cultural production in traditional media have focused on the workings of a single newsroom and looked at their output for a single medium. Even the studies that have adopted a comparative approach, such as Gans's (1980)

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classic *Deciding What's News*, have implicitly held the notion of one newsroom–one medium. A notable exception is Klinenberg's (2000) study of production processes at a large, multimedia American news organization. Although not explicitly conceptualizing the one newsroom–one medium assumption, Klinenberg's contribution is important because it portrays internewsroom, intracompany dynamics that have become critical in contemporary settings. Our analysis of GMS builds upon this contribution to begin conceptualizing the limitations of this assumption.

During the ten-year period examined in this article, the organizational structure changed from a publication's single newsroom with distinct units producing content for traditional and digital media, to a separate digital newsroom producing content for all the traditional media, to a single newsroom per information division producing content for multiple media. Throughout this period, the production processes, and resulting products, of one newsroom were partly shaped by dynamics of other newsrooms or units. For instance, the work and output of online staffers was partly affected by what their traditional counterparts published. Although less frequent, the case of scoops generated by print personnel, but that ended up being broken on the online publication first and then rewritten for the print publication the following day, illustrates traditional newsroom dynamics influenced by those of the online newsroom. The recently launched process of newsroom integration promises to question even more the one newsroom–one medium assumption, because in this case, a single newsroom will produce different content for multiple media. This analysis does not suggest that we should abandon the notion that we can focus on a single newsroom to account for its production in one medium but that it should turn from a given into an option in the analysis of cultural production in media organizations. It also suggests the need to update our images of cultural production in the technically intensive and organizationally complex contemporary media settings and to develop conceptual resources able to make sense of dynamics that mark technical and cross-boundary practices in such settings.

Studies of cultural production in digital media have often emphasized the product homogenization that results, or will result, from media convergence. However, the story of GMS's adoption of digital media also presents a more complicated picture in this regard. In the ten years examined for this article, digital media at GMS moved from being a secondary endeavor at the periphery of the company's content production process, to turning into the very axis around which this production should rotate, to becoming integrated with the print and broadcast units into a single system of production. The trend seems to be toward a normalization of digital media and a convergence of production processes across all media. But this trend has been accompanied by a divergence in the products of traditional and digital media, as can be seen mostly in the format of these products—data limitations have prevented us from undertaking a systematic content analysis of these products over this ten-year period. This divergence results from technical and organizational practices that have shaped the process of producing the various media products. First, actors have taken advantage of the distinctive technological capabilities of digital media to create information and services different from those of the print

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publications, such as writing longer versions of stories, providing updates during the day, developing interactive applications, and offering access to archived material. Second, the differences in background, expertise, and orientation between the personnel in traditional and digital units have contributed to product divergence because joint work has not been a straightforward enterprise and because traditional staffers have been more interested in editorial matters whereas their digital counterparts have been more focused on technological issues. Whether there will be a shift toward product homogenization in the future remains to be seen. This study, however, underscores the need to reconsider technology-driven ideas such as product homogenization in media convergence and the value of examining the organization of production to make sense of the resulting products.

Finally, this study illustrates the explanatory power of extending the level of analysis of scholarship about production dynamics in media organizations. The most common approach of this scholarship has been to focus on the production processes of a single medium such as a newspaper, a radio station, or a Web site. In the case of Web sites that have traditional counterparts, scholars have sometimes looked at the relationships between the two. What has been much less common is a focus on the multimedia firm level of analysis and its relationships to the production dynamics of specific units and the resulting products. Building upon the insights provided by some recent exceptions such as Gilbert (2002) and Klinenberg (2000), the case presented in this article shows that there is much to be gained by exploring dynamics that cross these levels of analysis: for instance, factors such as the decision to take GMS public and the financial performance of *Invertis* directly affected the resources, orientation, and structure of the work undertaken by the digital media personnel. We do not have any systematic evidence indicating that this type of factors is common to other media organizations. The growth of ownership concentration in the media industry in past decades, however, suggests that looking at these dynamics that cross levels of analysis should be part of the agenda of researchers studying contemporary settings that are not independent or do not significantly depend on interorganizational alliances. In this sense, we hope that this article constitutes a useful step toward broadening the analytical scope of studies of cultural production in media organizations in this age of digital media.

Note

1. The names of the company, media, and interviewees quoted in this article have been changed.

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