

Preface

When I started working at the University of Münster my idea of what my research topic would be was quite different from what is presented here. After looking into different topics in the broader realm of innovation management two main aspects have triggered my excitement about the anticipation of converging industries. First, the research devoted to different forms of forecasting/foresight and distilling information from the vast amount of publicly available data, most notably scientific publications and patent documents. With a natural sciences background this quantitative data appealed to me more than the more qualitative, psychological aspects of innovation management. Second, with a specific interest in the pharmaceutical industry and its related industries I came across some strategic maneuvers that did not seem to make sense within the traditional, narrower boundaries of their industry. A feasible explanation I found was the few works on ‘convergence’ and immanent principles that largely concentrated on the ICT (information technologies, consumer electronics, and telecommunication) industry. In consequence, this yielded my hypothesis that anticipating such convergence on the basis of publicly available data would be possible.

The present book was written as the result of my doctoral research project at the Institute of Business Administration at the Department of chemistry and pharmacy, University of Münster. However important an initial spark may have been, there would be no book if not for the overwhelming support I have experienced from so many people. Consequently, it is an honor and my great pleasure to extend my heartfelt thanks to them.

First, I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis supervisor Prof. Dr. Jens Leker, who has provided me with one of the most important ingredients in my endeavor—the freedom to operate—whilst at the same time being supportive of my stream of research and open to new approaches and methods. Second, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Hans-Ulrich Humpf for serving as the co-advisor.

Third, I am indebted to Dr. Walter Buckel and his colleagues at FIZ Karlsruhe/STN International for their support with and access to STN AnaVist and the respective databases. Fourth, I owe special thanks to Prof. Dr. Stefanie Bröring for infecting me with the ‘convergence virus’ and for several collaborative papers. Fifth, such a project is always considerably influenced by feedback from editors, reviewers, and conference participants, even if the individual contribution is

impossible to specify. Thank you for your open-minded and yet critical discussion of several aspects of my research.

As much as a Doctorate on the one hand needs to be a ‘lonesome, entrepreneurial’ task, as much is it on the other hand, dependent on one’s environment. In my case I consider myself extremely lucky to have been able to conduct my research at the Institute of Business Administration. A diverse team of colleagues with various educational backgrounds in natural sciences as well as economics has always led to inspiring discussions and a lot of fun—be it the weekly football session or the occasional campus coffee. Thank you all! Specifically, I am grateful to Anne Große Daldrup, who is the heart and soul of the institute. Furthermore, thanks to Gudrun Maria John and Nina Preschitschek for conducting some of the patent searches and for co-authoring papers with me. Nina, to you also, special thanks for some very fruitful last-minute discussions.

Dr. Verena Thiemann (nee Holtorf) and Dr. Benjamin Niedergassel deserve my thank you for constituting a great team on ‘the third level of the institute’ as well as on our several conference trips. Additionally, to Ben I want to direct very special thanks. He was not only a great colleague in many projects, publications, and teaching assignments, but also a perfect co-inhabitant of our common office and a very thorough and dedicated proof reader of my manuscript. His input, thoughts, and our endless hours of discussion had a major impact on this research project. Moreover, he was a great friend challenging me when I was too tempted to take short-cuts as well as when I was overly skeptic about the meaning of my results.

Finally, I am greatly indebted to my family and friends who have always been supportive and provided me with many a much needed distraction from my academic task. Most importantly, this book would never have been possible if not for the incredible love, patience, encouragement, and unlimited support of my wife Anna. To you and to our two wonderful children, Liam James and Nell Barbara, I dedicate this book.

<http://www.springer.com/978-1-4471-5169-2>

The Anticipation of Converging Industries
A Concept Applied to Nutraceuticals and Functional
Foods

Curran, C.-S.

2013, XI, 255 p. 45 illus., 11 illus. in color., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-1-4471-5169-2