
Preface

We are very happy to present our edited book covering the thematic area of convergence from a cross-disciplinary viewpoint. The edited book constitutes an attempt to investigate several aspects of convergence such as the strategic, technological, consumer driven, and application-oriented convergence. As these aspects of convergence are interrelated, the book shall shed light into the complexity of the topic and act as reference book and educational resource in the field. Convergence is very often discussed at a rhetorical and political level, without practical convergence process issues or concerns about potential divergence effects being part of the discourse. Today media managers are faced with the need to satisfy users' expectations and at the same time undertake convergence as an industrial strategy to achieve economies of scope and scale. Media technology developers are faced with rapidly emerging new technologies and information systems to quickly develop additional media services. Media scholars are bound to understand technological developments and industry convergence processes in order for their research to be relevant. With this book, we thus attempt to give answers to media managers, media scholars, students, researchers, as well as to technology developers and help them get a clearer understanding of this thematic area.

When we launched our edited book initiative, our primary goal was to investigate potential interest in this thematic area through a call for abstracts. We were overwhelmed when we received 87 abstracts, which have been evaluated by us as editors. 73 abstracts were invited to contribute a full book chapter, while 15 abstracts were rejected and not invited for a final manuscript version. To ensure high scientific standards, we implemented a strict blind peer review process for each book chapter. After this first review, we accepted the chapters for which review statements supported the publication. The final version of all chapters has been reviewed one more time in order to check that all review comments were adequately integrated. We ended up with 39 accepted book chapters, including 2 chapters contributed by us as editors which provide a red line through the book. Thus, the acceptance rate was 45 % with respect to the submitted abstracts and 54 % with respect to the invited abstracts. The chapters were divided between two book volumes: the first volume includes 19 chapters on journalism, broadcasting, and social media aspects of convergence, while the second volume presents 20 chapters covering firm and user perspectives on convergence. Most of the

thematic areas that we wanted to include in the book (see Fig. 1) as well as many different media genres are represented within the contributions (see Fig. 2).

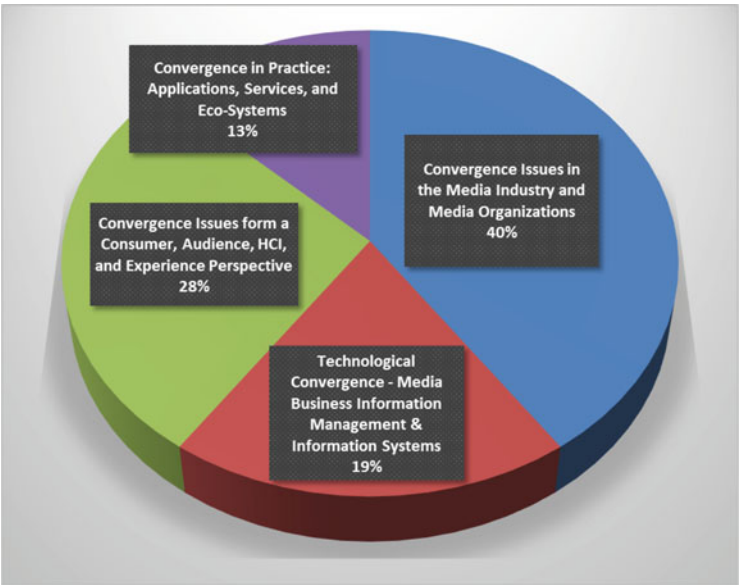


Fig. 1 Contributions to the thematic areas

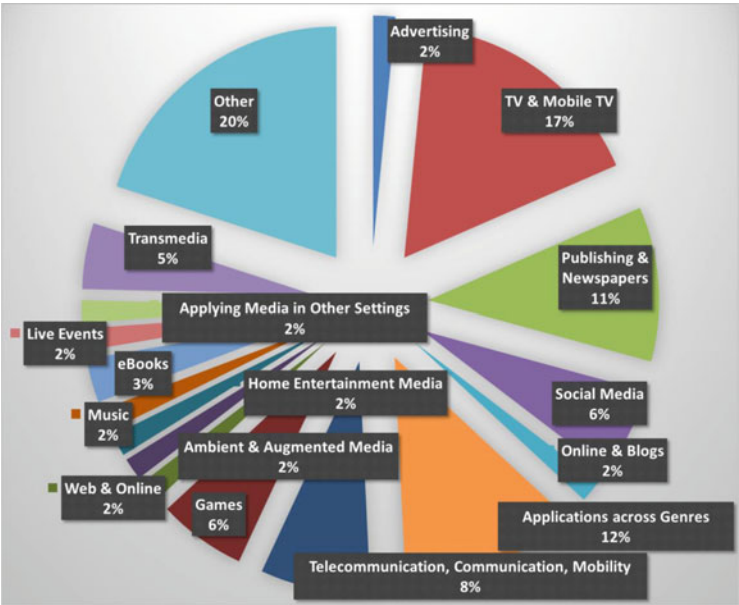


Fig. 2 Overview of the media genres that have been covered by contributions to this edited book



Fig. 3 Tag cloud of contributions

We started to work on the media convergence idea back in 2011, with a common contribution to the European Media Management Conference (EMMA) (Dal Zotto, Galichet, & Lugmayr, 2011). In 2013, we compiled another conference paper about this thematic area (Lugmayr & Dal Zotto, 2013). On both occasions, the audience was rather fascinated by our cross-disciplinary viewpoint on convergence. After many discussions, and in particular in acknowledgement to Prof. Greg Lowe, we started to work on this book project. By the end of 2012, we collected the extensive set of book abstracts which was rather surprising for us as editors. To cope with the high amount of submissions across a wide and thematic area (see Fig. 3 for a tag cloud of the chapters' keywords), Springer-Verlag gave us permission to divide the book into two volumes.

In particular, we would like to give our greatest appreciation to and warmly thank Prof. Dr. Greg Lowe, who supported our idea and initially helped us in setting up the book project. He gave us clarifying insights on convergence and very useful hints in which thematic area to develop the book project. We also would like to thank Springer-Verlag and in particular Barbara Fess who was extremely helpful, patient, and helped us through the book editing process with many questions. Last but not least, we definitely would like to thank all numerous reviewers of the book chapters. Without their hard work, we would have not been able to complete this extensive book. The first editor, Prof. Dr. Artur Lugmayr, would especially like to thank the Akerlund Foundation for funding his scientific activities and his professorship.

We would like to make you also aware about our Web site, which shall act as a collaborative platform for people interested in the thematic area. You can find our group email address, Facebook group, as well as other resources online on:

<http://www.ambientmediaassociation.org/convergence>. Further, we would like to pinpoint to other activities that we are currently conducting within the Association for Information Systems (AIS) in the Special Interest Group (SIG) eMedia: <http://aisnet.org/group/SIG-eMedia> or within the International Ambient Media Association (iAMEA): <http://www.ambientmediaassociation.org>. And finally, we wish you as reader of the book that you will have some useful and clarifying insights into such a complex thematic area as media convergence and gain a deeper understanding into this exciting topic.

We also would like to refer to our book website, which contains additional information, email lists, errata, and most importantly course and lecture slides: www.artur-lugmayr.com.

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