Panel 2: Total Symbiosis or the End of Serious Journalism? The Multi-Channel-Cross-Media-Newsroom

Newsroom convergence in Germany
basic parameters – case studies – consequences

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Newsroom convergence in Germany

1. Some basic parameters: media landscape and newsroom organization
2. Case studies (examples)
3. Consequences
Newsroom convergence in Germany
some basic parameters

**Newspaper market:**
- 118 regional daily newspapers (subscription) [206]*
- 10 national quality daily papers (subscription) [23]* + BILD [47]*
- no free daily paper (!)
- three problems of newspapers:
  - decline of circulation and readership (2000 to 2007 –15%)
  - decline of advertising revenue (2000 to 2007 –31%)
  - in keen competition with the internet

* copies sold per 1000 inhabitants (over 14)

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**TV and radio market:**
- strong public service: ARD + ZDF 40% market share TV; 50 radio programmes
- private commercial: TV successful nationwide – radio regional
- limitation of online activity of ARD and ZDF (0.75% of budget)

**legal limitation of cross-ownership**
cross-ownership of both a television or radio station and a newspaper in the same market is prohibited (only small shares are possible)

- cross media strategies of publishers focus on Internet and mobile (as well as “WebTV”)
Newsroom convergence in Germany
basic parameters: reach of newspaper and internet

Sources: BDZV and ARD/ZDF-Online-Studien

Internet penetration
2007
Germany 63 %
14-19 years 96 %
20-29 years 94 %

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basic parameters: “intensive readers”

Source: Kolo/Meyer-Lucht 2007: 527 (data from ACTA and AWA)
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basic parameters: advertising revenue

![Graph showing annual growth or decline versus previous year for newspapers, TV, and Internet from 2000 to 2006.]

- newspapers
- TV
- Internet

annual growth or decline versus previous year

2006
newspapers: 4.5 bn €
TV: 4.1 bn €
Internet: 0.5 bn €

Source: ZAW 2007

Newsroom convergence in Germany

basic parameters: newsroom organization

**the Anglo-American model**
- strong division of labour: editors and reporters/writers
- large, open newsrooms
  - process-oriented

**the traditional German model**
- holistic understanding of journalistic work
- small offices (each for one section)
- many strongly separated departments/sections with powerful heads (national politics, international politics, business, arts, science, sports, entertainment, lifestyle, media and so forth)
  - department-oriented
Newsroom convergence in Germany
basic parameters: newsroom organization

barriers in the Anglo-American newsroom
• barriers across traditional job profiles (for instance between editors and reporters)
• barriers between the platforms/media

barriers in the German newsroom
• organizational, spatial and mental barriers between the departments
• barriers between the platforms/media
Newsroom convergence in Germany
basic parameters: newsroom organization

cross-platform thinking and acting

newsroom innovations: changing mindsets
- bridge the traditional barriers
- thinking and acting in teams across platforms and departments
- newsrooms without walls and mentally tearing down walls

two periods of different strategies in German newspaper newsrooms:
- ca. 1998 till 2006: focus on bridging departments (sometimes also cost-cutting)
- 2006 up to now (and the future): focus on bridging platforms (integrated newsrooms with some investment)
Newsroom convergence in Germany
basic parameters: newsroom innovations

Expressions unknown until recently to the German language, such as “Newsdesk” und “Newsoom” have quickly become accepted jargon of the daily editorial routine.

Approx. 50 % of the German newspaper newsrooms now have a so called “Newsdesk”: a central desk for decision making, topic planning, production, platform management.

12 years ago: no “Newsdesk” in Germany.

Rheinische Post, Düsseldorf, 7/2006

Newsroom convergence in Germany
case study: Welt/Morgenpost-group Berlin

Berlin, 11/06:
integrated newsroom for three dailies: Welt, Welt kompakt, Morgenpost,
one Sunday paper: Welt am Sonntag
online: welt.de, morgenpost.de, WeltonlineTV
400 sqm. for 56 editors
“online first”
Berlin, 11/06:
integrated newsroom for
three dailies: Welt, Welt kompakt, Morgenpost,
one Sunday paper: Welt am Sonntag
online: welt.de, morgenpost.de, WeltonlineTV
400 sqm. for 56 editors

30% “vertikalists”
70% “horizontalists”
Newsroom convergence in Germany
case study: HNA Kassel

Hessische/Niedersächsische Allgemeine, Kassel
process toward cross media organization since 2002
"online first"
video commitment on the web
web 2.0-activities like a regional wiki or reader-blog
daily TV-news for a regional open channel

Newsroom convergence in Germany
case studies: Berlin + Kassel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>+/-</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Die Welt/Welt kompakt (sold copies)</td>
<td>251.000</td>
<td>276.000</td>
<td>+10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berliner Morgenpost (sold copies)</td>
<td>149.000</td>
<td>149.000</td>
<td>±0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welt am Sonntag (sold copies)</td>
<td>403.000</td>
<td>409.000</td>
<td>+1,5%</td>
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<td>welt.de (unique users per month)</td>
<td>1,21 m</td>
<td>1,68 m</td>
<td>+38,8%</td>
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<td>Welt online (page impressions p.m.)</td>
<td>20,6 m</td>
<td>102 m</td>
<td>+ 495%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morgenpost.de (unique users p.m.)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0,49 m</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morgenpost.de (page impressions p.m.)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>10,0 m</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>HNA (sold copies)</td>
<td>242.000</td>
<td>234.000</td>
<td>-3,3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>HNA.de (unique users p.m.)</td>
<td>0,09 m</td>
<td>0,15 m</td>
<td>+66,7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>HNA.de (page impressions p.m.)</td>
<td>1,8 m</td>
<td>4,1 m</td>
<td>+128%</td>
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<td>Daily newspapers in Germany (sold circulation)</td>
<td>21,7 m</td>
<td>20,8 m</td>
<td>- 4,1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online users in Germany</td>
<td>37,5 m</td>
<td>41,3 m</td>
<td>+ 10,1%</td>
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IVW 4/05 (12/05) and 4/07 (12/07); AGOF internet facts 2005-III and 2007-III
Newsroom convergence in Germany

case study: Saarländischer Rundfunk (ARD)

since 12/2006: joint Newsroom for radio (SR 1, SR 2, SR 3), television (SR Fernsehen) and Internet (SR-Online). Planners and managing editors coordinate and organize the current news casts for all channels (space for about 20 journalists).

Fritz Raff, director (Intendant):

“The times have gone, in which singular radio and TV programmes gathered and researched their news on their own. Our listeners, viewers and users benefit from joint planning, continuous exchange and the virtual networking of all our editorial departments.”

Newsroom convergence in Germany

Consequences

enthusiasts:
• cross media boost the reach of the editorial department
• more fun by diverse activities (for euphoric journalists)
• higher journalistic quality through new editorial structures and topic-oriented multiple-platform-thinking

sceptics:
• pressure on journalists is (again) growing
• personal freedoms are becoming scarcer
• lower quality due to multiple-working
• loss of news diversity (e.g. in regional markets)
Newsroom convergence in Germany

Consequences

some lessons learned:

• paradigm shift from old production-oriented working for deadlines towards processing news around the clock
• convergence is an organisational challenge: topics have to be planned well ahead
• “scoops online first”? – don’t worry about cannibalization the print product
• “user-generated content” can be used for all platforms.
• training and coaching primarily has two aspects:
  ➜ thinking and planning for different platforms (“changing mindsets”)
  ➜ new techniques: video, audio – and the “sprit” of the internet
• training and coaching: possibilities include editor rotation and job-shadowing
• “try out and experiment”

➢ Term “convergence”/“Konvergenz” is not in use in German newsrooms (but:
  “cross media activity” or “collaboration for different platforms/channels”)