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# Convergence in Journalism: implications for the higher education of journalism students

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**Convergence in journalism:  
implications for the higher education of journalism students**

by

**Francisco Flores**

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE

Major: Journalism and Mass Communication

Program of Study Committee:

Dennis Chamberlin

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Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2010

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**Abstract**

Modern technologies have given mass communication media the ability to adopt new forms of publication never explored before. At the present time newspapers have the opportunity to include audio and video on their web publications. Broadcast stations now have the opportunity to include text on their web publications. This approach to new types of unexplored formats is what we call media convergence. Media convergence relies on the fact that the members of a given and particular media will have the capacity to work with different formats.

At the present time newspapers are exploring new opportunities in publishing content in different formats. If you go to any newspaper webpage, you will find not only the traditional photos and text, but also video, audio, and animation. The same people that worked at newspapers are creating all this information. But how these different tasks will be distributed through the newspaper staff? This is a critical question. This study looks at the effects that media convergence is having on the newspapers and its implications for the way that journalism should be taught at universities.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction and Statement of the Problem

We like to train our students not just to write a story but also to mount that story on Photoshop or InDesign and be able to readily go to print. We like our students not only to write for television- we want them to be trained in how to work with cameras, use the switcher, the soundboard, and work with the Deko computer to produce their own graphics- Prof. Mary Jo Vizcarrondo (2003).

In issuing this statement, Vizcarrondo, director of the Communications Department at the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, joins a battery of administrators who oversee journalism and mass communications program in many parts of the world. This growing number of academic executives, in effect, aims to heighten awareness about a phenomenon that is currently sweeping the journalism and mass communication profession and those who train students for the communications jobs in the future. They are putting people on notice that today's students should be prepared to work on many media platforms- print, broadcast and online. For example, those who report the news should also be able to take photographs and videos that will supplement their stories. This is a call for a different philosophy; one that says students should be equipped with different skills to be more responsive to the demands of the profession.

### Convergence Defined

This move toward media integration is now commonly known as "media convergence" which has been defined in several ways. John Carrey of Fordham University, explains that, simply put, this refers to the notion that once separated media

are now together (as cited in Hartley, 1998). Also viewing it from another standpoint Denis McQuail has an interesting definition of convergence. He expresses that convergence is often related to technological advances and in some case has become an excuse for deregulation of the media. This is because there is not a complete definition of what regulations can be applied from the old media to the new one. (2005, p.551)

Another perspective of looking at convergence is from the point of view of those responsible for building the new structure. As Thomas F. Baldwin et. al. says: "The process of creating broadband systems closely allies elements of all these industries, hence the term convergence."(1996, p.4)

The convergence phenomenon is most obvious in the newspaper industry. According to Cortada (2006), "The major activities of the newspaper can be summarized quickly. In the physical production of the newspaper, reporters gather and write up information, reporting on the events of the day or on more general topics. The editorial staff picks what stories to run, clean up the writing style, and decide how much emphasis to give a story by deciding where it is placed in the newspaper, the paper is composed, and the production unit sets up pages and prints the newspaper" (p. 314).

In recent years, however, newspapers have launched their online versions, creating new questions regarding the format those newspapers should take. "With the availability of dial-up services in the 1980s and then the Internet in the 1990s, the

newspaper industry now faces new kinds of issues book publishers encountered regarding the online editions of their publications. Their questions were the same: How could they make money on the internet? How could they protect copyright? What format works best for what types of audiences? Should stories appearing in the print edition be the same in length and style as those published on the Internet?" (Cortada, 2006, p.324).

Cortada is not alone in posing these questions. Arthur Sulzberger Jr., for one, lays out his vision for the New York Times Co. of the future. In it, the New York Times and its siblings.

"...will have transcended their old ink-on-paper platforms, appearing as well in text and video via the Web, mobile phones, appearing as well in text and video via the Web, mobile phones, Blackberries, and other digital services. A cluster of Internet sites have cropped up around them, some far removed from newsgathering but offering readers accessible information about topics as varied as weight loss tools... I see video on the Web as another area with major growth and potential. It's searching for easier ways to share video across the company's business units as the newsroom increase their output" (as cited in Smolking, 2008, p.18).

Vivian Schiller, general manager of the *NY Times.com*, says that such activities will be a major focus of her company over the next year as the *Times* step up the training of print journalists in the use of video cameras (Smolking, 2008).

In another case, media mogul Robert Albitron hired Kim Kingley who spent the last several years helping to get the *Washington Post* correspondents on radio and TV.



“She’ll be instrument in building the Politico’s Street creed by getting stories and reports noticed in the more established media”, said Robert Albitron. (Kiely, 2008, p.10)

### **What Employers Want: Industry Demand for Convergence**

Job opportunities that seek individuals with “converged” skills are fast inundating the market. Examples of these are many, but the case of a job description for a photographer for the *Emporia Gazette* in Kansas is a case in the point. The *Gazette’s*, job description reads: “Although experience is helpful, this position is perfect for new or recent college graduates. Knowledge in Photoshop is required. Experience with Photo Mechanic and Portfolio as well as video, Internet and new media is a plus” (JournalismJobs.com, 2009). Another example is an opening position for a new blog editor for the *Hill* newspaper in Washington DC. “The successful applicant will be an enthusiast for multi-media journalism willing to work long and irregular hours” (JournailsJobs.com, 2009). Both job descriptions, it is clear, demand expertise in more than the traditional skill areas and beyond the print medium for each position.

Are there more instances of these in the way newspapers and other media outlets are hiring employees? This study examines the current newspaper demand for journalism skills and expertise. Are employers seeking more and more people who can work as journalists in the traditional sense or those who can also produce content across media?

Critics warn, however, that assigning employees to a wide range of tasks has important pitfalls. First and foremost, this practice may have an adverse impact on product quality. The tenets of scientific management developed in 1910 by Frederick Williamson Taylor, for one, propose that dividing the product process into chunks of tasks on a production line, done by different people, considerably increases efficiency (Wilson, 2005). In the case of newspapers, will differently trained people in different areas accomplish the task of producing quality journalism?

Others who see a different view echo this concern. Asked what he is seeking in recruits or new hires for this newspaper/internet/broadcast operation, Harris Jones does not mention software skills or camera-ready presence. Instead he says he wants a “certain mind set” (Kiely, 2008, p.10) To him, what is more critical are people who have the flair for news.

### **Challenge to Educators**

The convergence philosophy and the critics of that philosophy bring into question how academic communication units should design and deliver their curricula. The demands for a new mix of talents and adeptness at multiple skills poses several important questions. Is it better to train journalists who will be “specialist” (i.e., those who will exclusively write and report) or “generalist” (those equipped to produce all possible outputs across media)? The answer to this question poses a challenge to those who are preparing the next generation of mass communications practitioners.

What will be the impact of these trends on the curriculum of universities that offer programs in mass communication?

In Puerto Rico, the Interamerican University is one of the first to enunciate the need to integrate different majors or areas of expertise encompassed by mass communication. Most programs, such as that of the University of the Sacred Heart, still offer programs structured based on distinct areas of specialization following what is now called the “traditional” mode. Will the drive toward convergence make “dinosaurs” out of programs that decide to continue with the traditional approach?

### **Purpose of the Study**

Before newspaper journalists were expected to be good reporters. The advent of new communication technologies that enable the integration of different modalities of presenting information in a single medium is challenging this perspective. This is especially true of the traditional print media that now have new options of delivering content to audiences. More often than not, their online editions are now considered the “frontline” news source because of their ability to convey breaking news almost instantaneously. To what extent are newspapers in search for employees able to write, produce photographs and moving images? How many newspaper employers are now looking for new hires with the ability to re-package or repurpose their stories for the broadcast and the online media as well? How many say they are in need of reporters who know how to shoot photographs and also layout pages?

This study aims to determine the extent to which the newspapers of Puerto Rico are demanding the convergence of skills in their employees. The findings of this study are expected to provide insights to institutions of higher education who wish to train journalists who are at the vanguard of what is happening in the communication industry today.

A professional and journalistic video interview to the newspaper staff will be performed to gather data for this study. The results are will provide information to communication academics units who are now faced with the task of determining how to better prepare their students for this industry that is undergoing a rapid transformation.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### Media Convergence

Scholars have studied media convergence since the introduction of satellite communications in the 1970's (Carrey, 2009). Different authors have defined the term in different ways.

Since the inception of convergence, media practitioners, media owners, journalism educators, student of mass communication, and members of the information consuming public have had mixed feelings about it. People have used a number of metaphors to describe the phenomenon. Of these, perhaps the most captivating is the way Jim Carroll (2002) likened media convergence to teenage sex. He list six reasons why this was the case:

1. No one knows what it is but thinks it must be great
2. Everyone thinks that everyone else is doing it
3. Those who say they are doing it are probably lying.
4. The few who are doing it aren't doing it well
5. Once they start doing it, they realize that it's going to take them a long time to do it right
6. They'll also soon start realizing that there is no "right" way to do it (as cited in Poynterextra, 2002)

## Driving Forces Behind Convergence

One of the main reasons for convergence is the transition of virtually all media from analog to digital technology. August Grant explains:

The physical world is an “analog” world in which our senses perceive the environment by receiving and interpreting waves of sound and light. Accordingly the first electronic media were designed to capture, record, transmit, receive, and amplify these waves. The different wavelengths for sound and light, along with the different bandwidths needed for light versus sound led to the creation of technologies that dealt with the two in different ways. A microphone could no more pick up images than a radio could display them... The advent of computer and digital technology yielded a common format for transmission and manipulation of media content. All computers are based upon binary technology, where all messages and instructions are encoded as a series of zeroes and ones (as cited in Grant and Wilkinson, 2009, p.5)

The advent of the digital revolution, therefore, meant that all platforms of communication could be narrowed down to a single format. This is why traditional forms of media are converging toward the Web: “Convergence is most notable on the Web where a news site may have stories in multiple formats, along with readers forums, blogs, polling, interactive maps and direct links to shopping sites” (Carey, 2009).

Scholars argue that media convergence is also fueled by people’s constant search for the “perfect gadget” one that can perform different functions in people’s everyday lives (Loviglio, 2007). Indeed, the need for the gadget that responds to people’s major needs, the importance of consumers’ mass media habits, and their philosophy toward technology are major driving forces behind the convergence surge.

First, according to Loviglio (2007), we now operate in a trans-media entertainment society. That is, people, now have the option to peruse different materials (from different media) about a single topic. For example, people generally who have seen a movie may have also read a book about the movie, and may have also seen the comic version of the same movie. Second, we are a society with a collective intelligence. That is, most people know something that others do not, and their collective knowledge becomes a powerful force. Third we now have a participatory culture. In the world of communication, this means that people no longer have to be just consumers or audiences of publications and other media; they can also participate in publishing. Fourth the ownership of brand is up for grabs. In other words, people can access others works and can also post their own on the Web.

Skiff (1970) poses three arguments regarding the relationship between people and new technologies. The first argument is that people “create technologies to extend their control over the environment”. The second is that “technologies change the environment”. The third is that people’s “adaptive behaviors change the way they relate to their experiences” (p. 9). In other words, people make their machines, and these machines make them.

One manifestation of this is how people are consuming today’s “new” media.

Carey (2009) explains:

Convergence requires a new mindset for journalists. They must think multimedia and plan ahead for repurposing content across different platforms. Many old journalistic instincts are wrong in the new media environment. For example, in a newspaper or television news context, the goal is to attract and keep the reader or viewer. In the Web environment, readers jump around and expect the reporter to be an expert who will not only convey valuable information, but will provide links that send the reader to additional sources of information.”

In the United States, another compelling reason for convergence is the legal and legislative impetus given to the concentration of media ownership as exemplified in the provisions of the 1996 Telecommunications Act. According to Carrey (2009), the Act

“...weakened restrictions on conglomerate ownership of media properties. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) policies in the decade that followed also weakened restrictions on ownership of multiple media in a single market. In television, this led to a disappearance of many independent stations; in radio it led to the elimination of news operations at many local stations that were owned and operated by conglomerates in other markets”

In short, the Act allowed companies to own different types of media, and different companies to merge. This is the reason why multimedia giants like Time Warner- own several television networks, newspapers, book publishing houses, and movie studios. The ownership of enterprises that create different products for the same industry is called horizontal integration.

Carrey (2009) explains the impact of ownership consolidation on convergence:

One impact of business consolidation has been that companies seek efficiencies in operations across their media properties. This may involve a reporter at a newspaper writing stories for the company’s Web sites and TV news operation. A variation of this process is for a story written specifically for one medium to be adapted or ‘repurposed’ for another medium. On the business of the organization, a sales person may sell advertising for the company’s newspaper



and Web sites. Often, facilities are consolidated, so the staff of a newspaper may work side by side with the staffs of a TV station and the company's Web site personnel. With modern telecommunications links such as fiber optics, it is possible to create a virtual staff consolidation in which people at different locations can communicate and share resources as if they were in the same space. Business consolidation can occur through partnerships. For example, the *New York Times'* print stories are carried on CNBC's Web site; CNBC video stories are carried on the *New York Times'* Web site"

Media ownership consolidation can now be observed in Puerto Rico. Specifically, companies under the same ownership are also combining and sharing resources. For example, Puerto Rico's major newspaper, *El Nuevo Dia*, (The New Day), also owns another newspaper, *Primera Hora* (First Hour). *Primera Hora* is printed at the facilities of *El Nuevo Dia*. Es-Television, which produces shows for the TV station Univision PR, makes use of network's facilities and equipment

In the United States, however, cross ownership, especially of newspapers and television stations, is still being debated in court. Dupagne and Garrison (2009) explain:

In June 2004, the US Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit affirmed in part and remanded in part the FCC's revised ownership rules (Prometheus Radio Project v. F.C.C., 2004) It ruled that the new cross- ownership rules including the newspaper broadcast combination rule, were not unconstitutional per se, but also held that cross-media limits were insufficiently justified. Therefore, the court instructed the commission to rewrite the rules. In January 2005, the US Department of Justice declined to seek review of the case before the US Supreme Court. But broadcast groups such as Fox, NBC Universal, and Viacom, petitioned the high court for review of the appellate decision. In June 2005, the US Supreme Court denied this petition. The old cross-ownership rules remain in effect while the FCC reevaluates and rewrites the rules based on the Third Circuit ruling" (p.182).

## Reactions to Media Convergence

Convergence, as can be expected, has been met with mixed reactions. Some reporters feel that media convergence is just a scheme to get fewer people to do more things.

More than not, journalists distrust convergence. They view it as a marketing ploy, a way to promote news as a “product” emphasizing the business rather than the journalism in the news industry. They also view it as a management ploy, a way to get fewer journalists to do more work with fewer resources” (Grant and Wilkinson, 2009, p.34).

McManus (1994) echoes the same concern:

The News is a “product”, the circulation or signal area is now a “market” As business logic begins to permeate the newsroom and journalism is crafted to serve the “market”, will it provide a clearer picture of the world upon which we can act? Or as news become more explicitly a commodity, will it lose informational value? (p.1)

Baldwin et al. (1996) also caution against the thoughtless foray toward convergence.

At the risk of understanding the excitement that should rightfully be associated with the new communication services, we will be cautious not to feed the fire that is already somewhat out of control. A systematic, objective and circumspect view of the current state of art is vital to understanding to communication future (p.2)

Another way to see this is how the media is reacting to convergence. There have been several cases of media convergence. Susan Keith and William Silock (2009) studied one of them. They decided to see how the newspaper, *The Tampa Tribune* was dealing with convergence. They sought to “determine whether journalists experienced the sort of language-based confusion” among employees on the newspaper that had to interact with TV producers. (Grant and Wilkinson, 2009, p.222) What they determined is that in both parts the newspaper employees and the television

employees needed to re-learn some of the basic concepts from each medium.

Therefore in this case we can see the importance of not only the teaching of concepts from one media but from all of them.

### **Convergence Impact on Curricula**

In light of the convergence trend, how should mass communication educators train their students? Dupagne and Garrison (2009) offer insights after conducting their qualitative study of a converged newsroom in Tampa Florida:

The challenge for faculty and school administrators will be to decide how to adapt their curricula to the new convergence expectations while taking into account the fluctuating economics of higher education. Given the continuous importance of journalism education fundamentals, which was confirmed in this study, adjusting existing curricula rather than designing new ones could be the preferred route of many administrators (p. 198).

In the case of Puerto Rico we can see various examples on how convergence is affecting the curricula of major universities. Some universities provide a overall coursework on different areas in mass communications. There are two examples of this. As mentioned on the first chapter, the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico is practicing convergence in a very interesting way. The overall courses required in the bachelor's degree have a special focus on the production for radio, print and Television media. (Universidad Interamericana, 2007). On the other hand, there are universities that had implemented convergence from another point of view. In other words, they had decided to give the opportunity for students to decide whether to concentrate on a given

type of medium or to combine different types of media. For example, the University of the Sacred Heart has several programs in mass communications. One of them covers the general media and the others specialize in several types of media; whether it is production for radio, public relations, or television among others. (Universidad del Sagrado Corazon, 2007 p.197)

### **Research Questions and Hypothesis**

Considering the foregoing literature, this study asks the following research questions and poses the following hypothesis:

**RQ1: To what extent are newspapers restructuring themselves in repurposing print newspaper content for other media platforms such as broadcast online?**

**H1: Newspaper companies will have an undefined determination on the structure of their work. It will be unclear if everyone should do the same thing, applying converged skills, or the separation of different task for different products.**

**RQ2. What are the implications of the industry's convergence demands on the training of journalism and mass communication students?**

**H1: According to the articles on the American Journalism Review, we will see that the newspapers in Puerto Rico will be demanding more employees with converged skills thus having an impact on the training of journalism students.**

### Chapter 3

#### Methodology

Since Puerto Rico became a self-governing unincorporated territory of the United States in the 1900's, the exchange of cultural and social influences between the two nations have been enhanced. This vibrant exchange is mostly visible in the media industry where many practitioners receive training in the United States and practice their professions there. Data was collected by conducting official interviews with newspaper personnel. More specifically interviews with the managers and/or supervisors in charge of the organization's multimedia division and their staff. To enhance the credibility of this work a short video documentary was created to accompany this thesis.

One of the crucial implications for this research is the applicability of the information received to Journalism Schools in the United States. Although one can establish that there are some cultural differences between Puerto Rico and the United States, there are many similarities that cannot be overlooked. These similarities come from a cross-cultural relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. There are many people that receive their education in journalism here at the United States and that are working on the media in Puerto Rico. The same thing is happening vice-versa. Furthermore, you will be able to see that most of the textbooks used in Puerto Rico's universities are from the United States. Therefore we can see that there is a cross

influence on the way that journalism is taught and practiced between the United States and Puerto Rico. We don't have only to rely on the fact that Puerto Rico and the United States have many similarities. There is one special aspect about the media and journalism schools in Puerto Rico. Most people that work on the media in Puerto Rico had training with an institution that is very influenced by United States education. In other words when you go to an University in Puerto Rico, you will find that most of the textbooks used on journalism classes comes from the United States. Some of them are not even translated. Therefore we can say that there are almost no boundaries between the way that the media works in Puerto Rico and the way that they work here at the United States.

### **The Newspapers**

This study analyzes the four major newspapers of Puerto Rico. The first, *El Nuevo Dia* (The New Day), is the most widely circulated in the island. It publishes a magazine supplement and appeals to mature audiences. *Primera Hora* (First Hour) a special project from *El Nuevo Dia*, caters to a younger audience, 25 to 35 years old. *El Vocero* (The Voice) is well known for its ability to deliver bad news although it wants to shed such a reputation by the changes it has implemented in the past few years. The *Todo Bayamón* is a local newspaper for the town of Bayamón. This newspaper has had an increasing acceptance in the community during the past few years.

## **Video Interviews**

The first research question asks: To what extent are newspapers restructuring themselves in repurposing newspaper content for other media platforms such as broadcast online? To answer this question a formal on-the-record interview was conducted with one person on each of the newspapers mentioned earlier. The objective of this interview was to get a general feel on how newspapers are dealing with the new options that they have in formats. These video interviews were recorded in Spanish, giving the opportunity to the newspaper staff in Puerto Rico to express themselves better. The interviews were edited on Final Cut Pro, finding key points in the discussion that the newspaper staff presented. English subtitles were included on the video, provided by the researcher. Therefore we can get a direct account on how they are practicing media convergence. A copy of this video may be found at the Greenlee School of Journalism and Mass Communication in Iowa State University.

## **Operational Definitions of Variables**

The following is a list of the variables studied in this research. These definitions will give a clear understanding of what is meant on this thesis. Furthermore, they are key points to observe on the video.



Newspaper:

Operational Definition: One of four newspapers in Puerto Rico (i.e., *El Nuevo Día*, *Primera Hora*, *El Vocero*, *Todo Bayamón*).

Video:

Operational definition: Audiovisual material presented on the websites of the four newspapers to be analyzed.

Newspaper Staff:

Operational Definition: Any staff member of the newspapers studies that works with multimedia content (i.e. photographers, reporter, designer and videographers)

These interviews are fairly simple, because they just seek how newspapers are dealing with the new options that they have in publishing content in different formats. Also since the researcher will be working directly with the personnel of the newspapers, it was recommended that the researcher deal with the data gathering and the content analysis. Several key points were taken from the video interviews. These key points included the process of newsgathering and the people involved in it. These interviews were concentrated by asking who are the staff members who work on specific areas that are new options of publishing for the newspaper.

The first hypothesis posits that these newspapers will have an undefined structure regarding who will be creating multimedia work. These of course depended on the technological state that we found the newspaper. Some of them just recently had acquired these new options of publishing content for the web.

The participation of newspaper supervisors and those who work on the online version of the newspaper was solicited to get information about the skills they look for in new hires. This method aims to elicit information to answer the study's second research question, which asks: To what extent are newspapers in search of new hires skilled in repurposing print newspaper content for other media platforms such as broadcast or online?

Since four newspapers were analyzed in this research four staff members were interviewed; one from each publication. One particular characteristic of people that work in the media is that almost all the time are facing deadlines and the amount of time that they have available is in some ways limited. Therefore, the questions in this interview are as direct questions. However the interviews were conducted with a more journalistic approach. The researcher had in mind the basic questions and topic that he wanted to talk about. Nevertheless, if something interesting was mentioned in the interview that needed more attention the researcher then pursued it. Each interview lasted about 25 minutes. Also contact information was kept just in case the researcher needed to follow up with other questions.

## Appendix A:

### Interview Questions

**Interviewee:**

**Position:**

**Newspaper:**

1. What is your name? What is your position in the newspaper?
2. What is the process of newsgathering on this newspaper?
3. What skills are required for people presently working at the newspaper?
4. Do you think your newspaper practices convergence? If yes, in what ways do you see your newspaper is practicing convergence?
5. What are the tasks that each staff member is performing on the newspaper and why it is structured that way?
6. What recommendations do you have for mass communication students who want to work in the industry?

## Appendix B: Informed Consent Forms

**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board  
Office for Responsible Research  
Vice President for Research  
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Ames, Iowa 50011-2207  
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FAX 515 294-4267

**Date:** 5/17/2010

**To:** Francisco Flores  
110G University Village, Ames, IA 50010

**CC:** Dr. Dennis Chamberlain  
151 Hamilton Hall

**From:** Office for Responsible Research

**Title:** Convergence in Journalism: Implications for Higher Education Journalism Students

**IRB Num:** 10-055

**Approval Date:** 5/12/2010

**Continuing Review Date:** 5/5/2011

**Submission Type:** New

**Review Type:** Expedited

The project referenced above has received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Iowa State University. Please refer to the IRB ID number shown above in all correspondence regarding this study.

Your study has been approved according to the dates shown above. To ensure compliance with federal regulations (45 CFR 46 & 21 CFR 56), please be sure to:

- **Use only the approved study materials** in your research, including the recruitment materials and informed consent documents that have the IRB approval stamp.
- **Obtain IRB approval prior to implementing any changes** to the study by submitting the "Continuing Review and/or Modification" form.
- **Immediately inform the IRB of (1) all serious and/or unexpected adverse experiences** involving risks to subjects or others; and (2) **any other unanticipated problems** involving risks to subjects or others.
- **Stop all research activity if IRB approval lapses**, unless continuation is necessary to prevent harm to research participants. Research activity can resume once IRB approval is reestablished.
- **Complete a new continuing review form** at least three to four weeks prior to the **date for continuing review** as noted above to provide sufficient time for the IRB to review and approve continuation of the study. We will send a courtesy reminder as this date approaches.

Research investigators are expected to comply with the principles of the Belmont Report, and state and federal regulations regarding the involvement of humans in research. These documents are located on the Office for Responsible Research website <http://www.compliance.iastate.edu/irb/forms/> or available by calling (515) 294-4566.

Upon completion of the project, please submit a Project Closure Form to the Office for Responsible Research, 1138 Pearson Hall, to officially close the project.

## INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

### **Title of Study: Convergence in Journalism: Implications for Higher Education in Journalism**

**Investigators:** Francisco Flores.

This is a research study. Please take your time in deciding if you would like to participate. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this study is to understand more about how newspapers are dialing with media convergence. Being more specific in how newspapers are dealing with the opportunities that they have in distributing information in different formats. Furthermore, we see how this affects the skills that one should have to work in journalism. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are currently working on are very well known newspaper in Puerto Rico. And also your newspaper has publications in different formats like video, and photo slideshows.

### **DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES**

I plan to shoot a video of my interview with you, and then will edit and produce a video documentary that will identify you and others by name and title. It is my expectation that multiple copies of my video will be made available to journalism educators and mass media professionals. By signing this informed consent, you are indicating your willingness to participate in the interview, and your approval of the use of your video interview material for educational purposes reading to my thesis. No other uses may be made of your video without your express written consent. Your participation will last for 30 minutes. This will be just a short conversational interview. During all the procedure you will be looking at the researcher answering the questions as best as you can.

### **RISKS**

There are no foreseeable risks at this time from participating in this study.

### **BENEFITS**

If you decide to participate in this study there will be no direct benefit to you. *However* It is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit Journalism educational institutions by giving empirical information on how journalism is being worked at the present within the issue of media convergence

### **COSTS AND COMPENSATION**

You will not have any costs from participating in this study .You will not be compensated for participating in this study.

## **PARTICIPANT RIGHTS**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or leave the study at any time. If you decide to not participate in the study or leave the study early, it will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

In order for this research to have validity you will be identified on a short video documentary that will be prepared for the Greenlee School of Journalism and Mass Communications. This work will not be published on the web. However a copy will be available at the Greenlee School of Journalism and Mass Communication, and also in Park Library at Iowa State University. The only information that we will need for this research is your name, position at the newspaper and contact information. The later one, won't be used on the video documentary, it will only be used in case that we needed to re-contact you. Your contact information will be safeguarded on a locked cabinet

## **QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS**

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study.

- For further information about the study contact Francisco Flores at [fflores1482@hotmail.com](mailto:fflores1482@hotmail.com) or [fflores7@iastate.edu](mailto:fflores7@iastate.edu). You can also contact the resarcher at 786-683-3538.
- If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, [IRB@iastate.edu](mailto:IRB@iastate.edu), or Director, (515) 294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

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## **PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE**

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document, and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Participant's Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Participant's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## **Informe de Consentimiento**

Título del estudio: Convergencia en periodismo: Las implicaciones para las Universidades de Periodismo

### **Investigador: Francisco Flores**

Esto es un estudio investigativo. Por favor tome su tiempo en decidir si desea participar. Cualquier duda nos las puedes hacer saber en cualquier momento.

### **Introducción**

El propósito de este estudio es entender como los periódicos están trabajando con la convergencia de los medios. Siendo mas específico, en como los periódicos están teniendo oportunidad de distribuir información en diferentes formatos. Además, vemos como esto afecta las destrezas necesarias para poder ser periodista. Te estamos extendiendo esta invitación porque usted trabaja en un periódico muy conocido en Puerto Rico. En adición a esto, el periódico para el cual usted trabaja tiene publicaciones en diferentes formatos por el web.

### **Procedimientos**

Estoy planificando grabar en video una entrevista con usted. Luego entonces editaré esa entrevista para producir un documental el cual lo identificará a usted por nombre y posición en el periódico. Tengo la expectativa de que este documental estará disponible para educadores de periodismo y comunicaciones. Al firmar esta nota, me estas indicando tu disponibilidad en participar en la entrevista, y de yo poder usar este video para el corto documental. Ningún otro uso se hará de esta entrevista sin previo escrito consentimiento de parte de usted. Su participación solo le tomará 30 minutos. Esta será solamente una entrevista conversacional. Durante la misma, usted estará mirando hacia el investigador y contestando las preguntas de la mejor forma que pueda.

### **Riesgos**

No existen posibles riesgos de participar en la entrevista.

### **Beneficios**

## **Informe de Consentimiento**

Título del estudio: Convergencia en periodismo: Las implicaciones para las Universidades de Periodismo

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### **Procedimientos**

Estoy planificando grabar video de usted mientras trabaja. Estas tomas serán para acompañar visualmente una entrevista que grabaré de uno de sus compañeros. Tengo la expectativa de que este documental estará disponible para educadores de periodismo y comunicaciones. Al firmar esta nota, me estas indicando tu disponibilidad en participar en estas tomas, y de yo poder usar este video para el corto documental. Ningún otro uso se hará de esta entrevista sin previo escrito consentimiento de parte de usted. Su participación no tomará mas de 30 minutos. Durante la misma usted solo necesita trabajar como de costumbre en el área de trabajo

### **Riesgos**

No existen posibles riesgos de participar en la entrevista.

### **Beneficios**

Si decide participar en la entrevista no habrá directo beneficio hacia usted. No obstante, se espera que la información obtenida en este estudio valla a beneficiar a las universidades que enseñan periodismo. Esto es dando información empírica de como se está trabajando con periodismo en el presente.



## **Costos y Compensación**

Usted no tendrá que incurrir en ningún costo con su participación. Tampoco recibirá estipendio por participar.

## **Derechos del Participante**

Su participación es completamente voluntaria, y puede decidir terminar o no participar en el estudio en cualquier momento. Si decidiera no participar, no habrá ninguna penalidad.

## **Confidencialidad**

Este documental no será publicado por el Internet. No obstante una copia estará disponible en la escuela antes mencionada y en la biblioteca de Iowa State University. La única información que nos interesa de parte de usted es su nombre, posición en el periódico e información de contacto como e-mail. Ninguna información de contacto aparecerá en el producto final. Su información de contacto será guardada con seguridad.

## **Dudas o Situaciones**

Puedes hacer cualquier pregunta acerca del estudio.

-Para mas información acerca de este estudio puedes contactarme a cualquiera de mis correos electrónicos [fflores1482@hormail.co](mailto:fflores1482@hormail.co) o al [fflores7@iastate.edu](mailto:fflores7@iastate.edu). Además puedes contactarme al 786-683-3538

-Si tuvieras cualquier duda acerca de los derechos de las personas a entrevistar en el estudio puedes contactar al 515-294-4566 o enviar un correo electrónico al [irb@iastate.edu](mailto:irb@iastate.edu).

-Personal de Facultad, Dennis Chamberlin  
Email: [dennisch@iastate.edu](mailto:dennisch@iastate.edu)

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### **Firma del Participante**

Su firma indica de su voluntad en participar en el estudio. El mismo ha sido explicado detalladamente a usted. Usted recibirá este informe antes de participar en el estudio..

Nombre del participante: \_\_\_\_\_

Correo electrónico: \_\_\_\_\_

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 4

### Data

Before diving into the comments presented in the video documentary produced for this research it is important to present the status of how the newspapers were selected. This will give a better idea on the reasoning behind the statements made by some of the interviewed people on the video piece. Some of the content is off-the-record and includes observations made by the researcher.

***El Nuevo Día*** (<http://www.elnuevodia.com/>)

This Newspaper was first founded on the city of Ponce, which is located at the southwest coast of the island of Puerto Rico. Then later moved to the Puerto Rico's capital, San Juan. This newspaper is directed toward a more traditional public. At the present time this newspaper has been able to develop several interest points. In other words, within the production of the newspaper it has been able to produce, magazines, and other newspapers. One clear example of this is the another major newspaper in Puerto Rico, Primera Hora

At the time of the interview, this newspaper was passing through a process of moving to new facilities in another location. It was almost impossible for the researcher to obtain interviews from this newspaper. But it was very important for this research to have an interview coming from this newspaper since it is the one that has the most influence in Puerto Rico. In this newspaper the researcher was firstly introduced to the

new concept of transmitting video live from a cell phone. The interview was made with Yamileth Otero. She is the sub director of the multimedia department at El Nuevo Día. Therefore she was really great in making observations on how the newspaper staff reacted to the new skills required for publishing content on the web. To be more specific, how the photographers and reporters reacted to this.

**Primera Hora** (<http://www.primerahora.com/>)

From a surprisingly increasing number in young readers, the owners of the Newspaper *El Nuevo Día* decided to create a new version that called more to their attention. This newspaper tends to be lighter in content appealing to a less traditional audience. This newspapers tends also to be more colorful and eye appealing.

From all the newspapers seen in this research this was the most modernized one. The complete structure of the newsroom was changed in order to deal with the new formats that they are offering for the public. The researcher had the opportunity to see the staff meeting just before doing the formal interview. At one time the researcher had the opportunity to see the old facilities of the newspaper during his undergraduate studies. Comparing between the two of them this newspaper has an area that accommodated better to the multimedia platform used. The senior editor of the newspaper, Pablo Badilla, offered to be interviewed at the newspaper. And during a conversation before the interview, he mentioned that the newspaper is converting itself in this multiple format news factory. For him it was very important for all the newspaper

staff to have constant communication. Therefore each desk is designed to be open and offer the opportunity for the staff to communicate freely. He understood very well that newspaper staff is still just composed of journalists. In other words, for him no matter how technology moves journalism will be the same.

***El Vocero*** (<http://www.vocero.com/>)

This Newspaper is one of the oldest in Puerto Rico. Any person that has known this newspaper in Puerto Rico will mention to you that it has passed through a transitional process in the style of presenting the News. *El Vocero* is widely known for presenting the news with a very crude angle. This is one newspaper that used to have only bad news. It had a style of yellow press. At the present this newspaper covers stories mainly for text format. You will find on their website that the newspaper does not cover any news in video at the moment. One interesting point the interview made for this research is that the staff of the newspaper is very influenced by their labor Union. “We are in the process of negotiating with the Union in order to expand the functions of the staff photographers”, said Milly Méndez sub director of the newspaper *El Vocero*. When seeing this through history one can understand the purpose behind this from the Unions. This can be even traced back to Greek civilization when Hippocrates was developing what is known now as modern medicine. After he died they developed the Hippocratic oath where there is a compromise between to parties, those who practice surgery and those who practiced medicine. The agreement was that they would not

interfere by doing the same job as the other. (Friedman, 1980) Up to some point this is understandable. But technology is changing and we need to be open to the possibilities that we can have with them. It is not about making people do more work. It is about giving the opportunity to expand in the functions that technology offers to us. But since Milly Méndez came from broadcast production. This gave her a clear idea on how to later on implement the new formats of publication in this newspaper.

***Todo Bayamón*** (<http://www.periodicoeltodo.com/>)

This is a weekly newspaper that has coverage in one of the largest cities in Puerto Rico, Bayamón. This newspaper is a short weekly newspaper. It was founded in the 1970s to cover mostly community news from Bayamón. At the present time is managed by a religious group. However this seems to have no interference with the news covered. A reporter was interviewed on the video. Marializa Cabrera was a student under the department of Communications of the Interamerican University. Mentioned in chapter one, Mary Jo Vizcarrondo was the department director at the time. Marializa has had thorough training on different formats of publication for the media. These abilities later gave her the opportunity to develop in different areas that the newspaper has had in projection to implement in the next couple of years. This newspaper at the time of the research didn't have a system of video production. The senior editor, Benjamin Rodríguez, mentioned in an interview with the researcher that they have that their future plans include video production. The bachelor's degree that

Marializa completed covers production of content for any format. Therefore she feels very confident to be able to work if they implement video production to this newspaper.

The video produced for this thesis was made following an intense discussion between all the newspaper staff interviewed. In this ten-minute documentary you will find that media convergence for the newspaper does not necessarily mean for everyone to do everything. We are starting to see a process in which we can define the tasks of each of the newspaper staff. Both Spanish and English transcripts are included at the end of this chapter.

This production starts with the discussion on how newspapers define media convergence for them. This means that they are adding other possibilities of publication for the newspaper. Then it is followed with the discussion on how are they training the employees. And finally, how they are structuring the tasks that each person is performing at the newspaper. It is interesting to find that the photographers are mostly commissioned to do video work and that the writers are mostly commissioned to make updates on the stories for the web on a minute-by-minute basis. This is because newspapers now have the possibility to be an instant source of news like radio or television.

## Appendix C

### Video Transcript (Spanish Version)

Pablo Badilla:

Porque muchas veces uno dice, ah, convergencia, periodismo, convergencia, videos. ¡No! Es sumarle a tus posibilidades de narración otros medios que no utilizabas; los videos, los sonidos. Antes sólo utilizábamos el texto y las imágenes, foto y texto. Hoy tenemos otras posibilidades de enriquecer nuestras narraciones periodísticas.

Yamileth Otero:

Y ahora con la tendencia del auge en la web en lo que son los periódicos digitales, los periódicos cibernéticos, ya el usuario, antes lector y ahora usuario, busca más información. O sea, está, tiene, está hambriento de información. No solamente lo que puedas escribirles, sino todo lo que le puedas mostrar.

Pablo Badilla:

Para satisfacer esa demanda de contenido. eh, multimedios en Internet hemos tenido que cambiar nuestra forma de trabajar. Y en general ha impactado a todos. Porque los diseñadores también tienen ahora diseño web. Porque los fotógrafos



también tienen ahora la obligación de hacer material audiovisual, de hacer videos. Porque los periodistas también tienen que durante el día, no solamente preparar lo que tienen para la edición impresa, sino que también hacer adelantos para la edición en Internet.

Milly Méndez:

Y uno de los foros que nosotros hicimos fue cómo el periodista puede reinventarse. Eh, cómo se tiene que adaptar a los cambios que están surgiendo ahora mismo en los medios de comunicación. Cómo podemos utilizar la tecnología a nuestro favor. ¿Sabes? No correr de ella, sino acoplarla a nuestro día a día. ¿Sabes? ¿Cómo utilizamos la web a nuestro favor? Ejemplo...tenemos aquí compañeros pues que... usualmente tú redactas tu noticia para el día siguiente. Pues no, ya los periódicos están cambiando. Tienes que redactar tu noticia para el momento. O tienes que coger el teléfono y tienes que dictar la noticia a tus compañeros que están trabajando la página web. Para eso mismo, para mantenernos actualizados; para ser inmediatos. Ya el periódico es un medio que puede ser inmediato, a través de su página web.

Marializa Cabrera:

Es que hay muchas personas que se especializan nada más como que en la redacción de una noticia. Pero no saben tirar una foto. No saben buscar ese ángulo, verdad, periodístico de cómo tomar una foto. O lo mismo pasa como para tomar video.

Pablo Badilla:

Yo soy optimista. En general en esta, en estos momentos como de incertidumbre, de preocupación a nivel de medios. Los medios están preocupados. Las empresas periodísticas están preocupadas porque el escenario ha cambiado mucho. Eh, y nadie sabe hacia dónde va a llevar todo este, esta revolución tecnológica. Porque todos los cambios son por la revolución de la tecnología. La tecnología ha cambiado el escenario de difusión de contenido. Lo que antes era bastante tradicional en prensa escrita, eh, en radio y en televisión, hoy no está nada de claro. Y hay posibilidades absolutamente híbridas que te pueden juntar estos dos medios que antes, eh, se emitían por separado, o trabajaban por separado. Entonces, el momento es bien especial y exige nuevas habilidades.

Yamileth Otero:

No solamente tenemos información textual, lo que es el artículo, la historia. Sino que tenemos también imágenes audiovisuales para tener la información completa. O sea, nosotros documentamos videográficamente a través de entrevistas o a través de imágenes y a través del ambiente de qué es lo que está sucediendo en el momento de la noticia para poderle dar al usuario la experiencia completa. De que además de leer la información de qué es lo que está ocurriendo, que puedan verla, que puedan escucharla.

Pablo Badilla:

Pero quisimos que todos en algún momento se expusieran a un pequeño entrenamiento, porque no fue tan intenso, pero si un pequeño entrenamiento, una pequeña introducción, una...Un acercamiento al uso de video, al uso de audio, al uso de programas de video, de edición de video, de edición de fotografía, el Photoshop, el Adobe Premiere, el Final Cut. Programas de edición sencillos pero que todos los conocieran.

Yamileth Otero:

Ha sido un proceso llevadero por parte de ellos. Ellos han tenido la disposición de aprender. Aquí se les dieron las herramientas, se les dieron los equipos, y los adiestramientos para que pudieran hacerlo. Cada uno estuvo varias semanas de práctica. Lo que...aquí somos, tenemos un total de doce (12) fotoperiodistas. Así que lo que se hizo fue, que se hizo a través de sesiones, para que unos estuvieran semanas de adiestramiento intensivo que no confligieran con asignaciones. Por esas semanas, pues, este grupos de reporteros que se dividió en sesiones, de fotoperiodistas (perdón), que se dividió en sesiones, solamente tuvieron esos adiestramientos intensivos, cosa de que pudieran dedicar esas ocho (8) horas diarias por dos (2) semanas trabajando y estudiando intensamente lo que es, este, video.

Marializa Cabrera:

Yo tuve la oportunidad de hacer la práctica en el canal seis (6). Y cuando estaba allí, ese fue el primer canal que se convirtió en, verdad que llegó con la televisión digital. Yo estuve haciendo la práctica y estaba aprendiendo un poquito de edición de todos los videos que hacían y para preparar, para montar y preparar el reportaje que traía el reportero. Cuando llegó ese momento estaban, este, dándole un training (entrenamiento) a los editores, pero también estaban dándole el training (entrenamiento) a los reporteros. Entonces lo que estábamos diciendo es, si el reportero tiene la capacidad de editar su propio reportaje para qué entonces va a necesitar al editor. Entonces le está limitando o lo está sacando indirectamente del campo. Sabes, porque ya entonces ese reportero toma, él ya sabe más o menos que es lo que parte del video es lo que quiere. Y llegaba, lo podía montar, y él mismo lo tenía que hacer, no necesitaba a nadie más para hacerlo.

Milly Méndez:

La Unión aquí le limita al fotógrafo que solamente puede tomar fotografías. O sea, que no puede redactar y en otros momentos, pues, no puedes tomar video. Y eso es algo que se está negociando. La empresa está negociando con la Unión para ver cómo podemos, verdad, ampliar las funciones de los fotógrafos y poder (mas, eh) actualizarnos con lo que es los medios hoy en día, multimedia.

Pablo Badilla:

A todos les dimos la posibilidad de acercarse a estas nuevas posibilidades de entregar contenido. Pero, eh, después hemos ido estructurando el aporte de cada uno y efectivamente los fotoperiodistas, los fotógrafos, están haciendo video y lo están editando. Entonces tienen, eh, responsabilidades directas sobre eso. Se le asignan temas que durante el día que tienen que tener un video. Que nosotros creemos que enriquecen la oferta informativa si van acompañadas de un video.

Yamileth Otero:

Fue para ellos retante, porque ellos estaban acostumbrados hacer fotos nada más. Y ahora, pues tienen, tuvieron al principio, que hacer una, revisar más bien, cómo ellos planificar su tiempo. Ellos tenían que planificar mejor su tiempo. De que, ok, voy a estar tomando fotos, pero también después de las fotos voy a esta tomando video. Y también viene para ellos un ejercicio de tomar decisiones. Porque en ocasiones tenían que decidir, ok, tengo esta asignación. ¿Voy? ¿Le doy prioridad al video o le doy prioridad a la foto?

Marializa Cabrera:

A lo mejor está pasando algo mientras tú estás entrevistando. Entonces, tú no puedes tomar la foto. En esa parte, es verdad, es una ventaja tener a otra persona que

esté contigo. Pero, al momento de él tirar la foto, a lo mejor no tiene la misma visión de qué es lo que tú estás viendo.

Milly Méndez:

Yo entiendo que mientras más tu sepas, eres mejor, o sea, te completas como periodista. Definitivamente, si eres productor... Yo cuando comencé, yo no sabía cómo utilizar una cámara. Yo no sabía como editar. Y me propuse aprender porque a la medida que tú entiendas el trabajo de otros, o conozcas un poquito de tu medio, te hace mejor profesional.

Pablo Badilla:

No creo que los periodistas tengamos la obligación de saber de programación, conocimiento muy técnico de software. No. Quizás saber las posibilidades que eso nos permite para armar equipos de trabajo que junten estos dos mundos. El mundo de la tecnología, por así decirlo, y el mundo de nosotros los periodistas que somos manejadores de información. Que somos buenos editores de información.

Yamileth Otero:

Y es, además, un enriquecimiento para el reportero, para el periodista. Mientras más pueda conocer cómo presentar la información y cómo publicarla mejor.

## Appendix D

### Video Transcript (English Version)

Pablo Badilla:

Because many time one can say: ah convergence, journalism, convergence, videos. No! It is adding to your narration possibilities, other media that you were not used to, the videos and audio. We used only text and images, photos and text. Today we have other possibilities to enrich our journalistic narrations.

Yamileth Otero:

And now, with the tendency of the sprouting on the web of the digital newspapers, the cybernetic newspapers, the user, before reader and now user, looks for more information. In other words, it is hungrier for more information. Not only for what you can write to them, but also for everything that you can show them.

Pablo Badilla:

To satisfy that demand in content, multimedia on the Internet, we had to change how we worked. And it has impacted everyone in general. Because, designers have also now web-design. Because, the photographers have also now obligations of preparing audiovisual material, of making videos. Because reporters also have to, during the day, not only prepare what they have for the printed edition, but also make updates for the Internet edition.

Milly Méndez:

And one of the forums that we held was in how the journalists can reinvent themselves. How can they adapt to the changes that are happening right now on the communication media. How can we use technology in our favor? You know. Not running from it, but to adapt it to our day by day. You know. How do we use the web in our favor? For example, we have here colleagues that... Usually you write your story for the next day. Well no, the newspapers are changing. You have to write your story for the moment. Or you may have to get the phone and dictate the story to your colleagues that are working with the web page. For the purpose of being updated, to be immediate. The newspaper is now a media that can be immediate through its webpage.

Marializa Cabrera:

It is that they are many people that focus only on the writing of a story. But they don't know how to take photo. They don't know how to look for that angle, you know, journalistic of how to take a picture. Or the same thing happens for taking video.

Pablo Badilla:

I am optimist. In general in this, in these moments of uncertainty, of worry at the media level. The media is concern. Journalism companies are worried because the scene has changed a lot. And no one knows where this is going to end... all this, this technological revolution. All the changes are because of the



technological revolution. Technology has changed the scene in the diffusion of content. What was before very traditional on written press, on radio and television, today it is not clear. And there are possibilities absolutely hybrids that can join two media that before where transmitted separately or worked separately. Therefore, the moment is very special and demands new abilities.

Yamileth Otero:

We do not only have textual information, what is known as the article, the story. But we also have audiovisual images to have the complete information. In other words we document videographically through an interview or by images and by ambient of what is happening in the moment of the story to give the user the complete experience. So that in addition to reading the information, of what is happening, they can see it and hear it.

Pablo Badilla:

But we wanted everyone at a certain time to be exposed to a small training, because it wasn't too intensive, but indeed a small training, a small introduction, one... one approach to the use of video, to the use of audio, the use of video software, of editing video, of editing photo, the Photoshop, the Adobe Premiere, the Final Cut. It is simple editing software, but for everyone to approach them.

Yamileth Otero:

It has been a process well taken by them. They all had the disposition to learn. Here we gave them the tools; we gave them the equipment and the training so they could perform their work. Everyone had several weeks of practice. We are... we have here a total of twelve (12) sessions, so that some of them had weeks of intensive training, that wouldn't conflict with assignments. On those weeks these groups of reporters were divided in sessions, of photographers, sorry, was divided in sessions, only had intensive training. So that they could dedicate those daily eight (8) hours by two (2) weeks working and studying intensively what is video.

Marializa Cabrera

I had the opportunity to do my internship on channel six (6). And when I was there, that was the first channel that changed in, you know, that arrived with digital television. I was on my internship and was learning a little about editing all the videos that they did and to prepare, to mount and prepare the stories that the reporter brought. When that time arrived they were giving a training to the editors. But they were also giving the training to the reporters. Therefore, we were saying that if the reporter has the ability to edit his own story what is the need of an editor. So they are limiting or excluding them indirectly from the media. You know. Because of what that reporter gets, he already knows the part that he needs from the video. And he arrived, he could mount it, and he had to do it, without the need of someone else.

Milly Méndez:

Here the Union limits the photographer to only take pictures. In other words, he cannot write and in other moments he cannot take video. And that is something that is now in negotiation. The company is negotiating with the Union to see how we can, you know, extend the functions of the photographers. So we can be more actualized with what is known today as multimedia.

Pablo Badilla:

We gave everyone the possibility to approach these new possibilities of diffusing content. But, later we were structuring the contribution of everyone and in effect the photojournalist, the photographers are doing videos and they are editing them. Therefore, they have direct responsibility on this matter. We give them assignments that they need to have during the day a video. That we believe that information is enriched if they are accompanied with video.

Yamileth Otero:

It was challenging for them because they were used to take pictures only. And now then they had, at the beginning, to revise better how they plan their time. They had to manage better their time. So that, "Ok, I am going to be taking pictures but later on, after taking pictures, I will be taking video". And for them also there is a decision-making

exercise. Because in some occasions they have to decide, “Ok, I have this assignment. Do I give priority to the video or do I give priority to the pictures?”

Marializa Cabrera:

Maybe something is happening while you are doing an interview. Then you cannot take the photos. On this part it is true, it is an advantage to have someone else with you. But, at the moment of taking the picture, maybe he doesn't have your same vision of what you are focusing on.

Milly Méndez

I understand that the more you know, the better you are. In other words you are more complete as a journalist. Definitely, if you are producer... When I began, I didn't know how to use a camera. I didn't know how to edit. I proposed to myself to learn because when you understand the job of others, or know a little bit about your media, it makes you a better professional.

Pablo Badilla:

I don't think that we as journalist have the obligation to know programming, or extreme technical knowledge of software. No. Maybe knowing the possibilities that we have in joining these two areas; the area of technology and the area of journalism, so to speak. Technology and journalism, that we are better information managers; we are good information editors.

Yamileth Otero:

And it is also enrichment for the reporter, for the journalist. The more ways he knows to present the information and how to make it public, the better.

## Chapter 5

### Assessment and Future Studies

Many people make the connection between media convergence and the production of videos. However this is not the case. In this research convergence means adding to your publication other unexplored formats as mentioned by Pablo Badilla. In adding all these other possibilities newspapers face the challenge of requiring new abilities from their staff. Up to some point it is un-defined which abilities are the most essential to be a good journalist today.

The Newspapers that are beginning to publish video content on the web offered all staff the experience opportunity to learn how to develop for this medium. However after some time, they acknowledged that not every reporter at the newspaper should be doing the same thing. Nevertheless they widely recommend for new journalists to increase their knowledge in different formats of publication. We are starting to see a new trend in the areas of work at the newspaper. Usually photographers are assigned to work on videos and writer to update stories on the web. This was strongly mentioned by Pablo Badilla.

Therefore this is a key point for the purpose behind this thesis. This research does not just examine how newspapers are working, but asks how that will influence the skills taught in journalism schools. In the case of newspapers we are seeing a trend of having the photographers working with video content for the online version of the

newspapers. Reporters are also updating the online written stories for the web. And designers are also thinking about graphics for the online version. These are skills that are very similar in their nature.

All the people interviewed in this project concluded that there are still some essential skills of the journalist that never change. These skills include the ability to find the story and being able to report and publish it. A good journalist should be a person that has curiosity and asks questions, said Milly Méndez. He should be also a person that has for desire of exposing the truth the way it is. Finding a good story is a skill that requires a very simple task. It requires knowing to who ask questions and how to ask them. Therefore we see various traits that never change in journalism.

This project deals only with newspaper staffs. It is recommended in the future to observe other media like broadcast television and radio. We can explore more how media convergence affects them. It is possible to find the same conclusion. The media has the possibility of publishing on all audiovisual formats. Nevertheless this does not mean that every person in the media will be doing exactly the same thing as mentioned earlier.

### **Analysis of research Questions**

Our first research question dealt with how newspapers are restructuring themselves in order to be able to publish on different formats on the Internet. After

seeing the video our hypothesis is not confirmed since the newspapers studied are structuring themselves in a way that will make them able to publish on different formats. As mentioned earlier, photographers are producing videos, writers are writing for the web, and designers are designing for the web. This might give us a clue on the emphasis that should be given to the classes in journalism. We can say that photographers should know about videography, that writers should know about blogging or web publishing, and that designers should also know about designing for the web.

It is important to mention something. This observation from the newspapers is still something that is relatively new. Therefore it is a little premature to say that the skills mentioned above should be standardized for journalism courses. The main purpose of this observation is to see how the future might turn for journalism from the changes in the newspapers studied. Every newspaper recommended that every student have as many skills on different forms of publication as possible.

This leads us right in to our second research question. What are the implications of media convergence on the training of journalism students? Yamilett Otero from *El Nuevo Día* mentioned that every journalist should have knowledge of any audiovisual production. Nevertheless this has a limit. “We don’t expect journalists to have extreme knowledge in all the technical aspect of the software”, said Pablo Badilla. He meant that if there is something very technical needed he could hire engineers that are more expert in technical issues. What newspapers want from journalists is to know the possibilities



that they have of publication from these different formats. You don't need to know every aspect of Final Cut pro to produce a good video story for the newspaper website. To this point we cannot either prove or disprove our hypothesis. Newspapers widely recommend for new incoming journalists to be prepared with all the different skills but that is not meant to say that they will be working as a person who publishes on all the formats.

## **Conclusion**

Mass media convergence as defined on this research has changed dramatically the way newspapers approach journalism. Newspapers have the possibility of publishing on many different formats. These formats require different skills in different areas. The areas most commonly seen are videography, writing and web design. Newspapers are recommending that students have converged skills in all this areas. They are structuring themselves in a way that makes them able to publish on all formats without everyone doing the same job. Therefore I can conclude that the best recommendation is for each student to have experience with every format, nevertheless to concentrate with the one that they like most.

In this aspect we need to address the purpose behind this study. We cannot leave you only with the information on how newspapers, in this case Puerto Rico's Newspapers are doing regarding to media convergence. A clear analogy can be made with what is occurring now on the media and what will happen on the next year. If you

look far to the horizon when something is approaching, you might be able to describe some of the aspects of that object. You cannot objectively give clear details of how that object looks, but you get some sort of idea of what it is. Furthermore, if you use any device like binocular you might be able to see more details. This research pretended to do exactly this with media convergence. We are seeing media convergence approaching more and more to journalism, and we are able to describe up to some point how media convergence is and will shape journalism.

Pablo Badilla said on the interview that everyone had the opportunity at the newspaper to approach all these new ways of publishing information. In other words, writers, photographers and reporters were given the opportunity to learn about digital media, more specifically video. Nevertheless after a process of evaluating the contribution of everyone, they noticed that it is better to assign new media work to those with a similar task. For example, it was logic for them to have the photographers do also video instead of the writer. It was also logic for them for writers to write updates on the web, and designers do design for the web. In simple terms, this seems not to be something where everyone will finish up doing everything. Or at least this looks like that. Seems like each newspaper will have different clusters of people doing similar tasks. However the structure on each newspaper will depend greatly on their circumstances.

Therefore we can make here a clear recommendation to any journalism school. Every student should have the opportunity to work with every way of publishing

information. This way of publishing information can be seen as, doing video, photography, audio and web design. This can be described as a two-step process. Everyone in journalism school should be required to take basic course that deals with publishing on different formats. Then after every student had the opportunity to experience developing for any format, they should be given the opportunity of taking course that deals more in depth with the type of media that they choose. By using this approach it is understandable that student will be able to compete better in the field. In other words they will be able to do a fine job publishing on any media that they choose to work on.

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