Webvergence in Practice: Comparing U.S. TV Stations' and Newspapers' Online Strategies at a Crucial Moment

Susan Keith, Rutgers University, USA

Leslie-Jean Thornton, Arizona State University, USA

Abstract

This article compares how U.S. news managers reported that television stations and newspapers approached online journalism during a crucial moment in the 21st century. Reports of how the two types of sites used online tools were largely similar, but newspaper respondents were more likely than those from TV stations to say their organizations prioritized online news production. Although both types of sites likely were affected by extramedia pressures—from a global recession and declining audiences—newspapers' perceived competitive need to reach news consumers instantly (something native to TV) may have helped newspapers overcome legacy routines and move more deeply into change.

During the first years of the 21st century, "convergence" became a buzzword in U.S. journalism. Daily newspapers and local television news operations—once competitors for the attention of news consumers—formed partnerships to share content and promote each others' products (Criado & Kraeplin, 2003; Duhé, Mortimer, & Chow, 2004). These arrangements— spawned by technological advances and print and broadcast managers' desire to attract each other's declining audiences—were hailed as the future of journalism (Convergence: The power of multimedia, 2012; Media mergers, 2000; Rolland, 2002). American university journalism departments and schools rushed to change their curricula to produce students who could report for multiple media platforms (Auman & Lillie, 2007; Hammand, Petersen, & Thomsen, 2000; Hipsman, 2004: Pryor, 2005), and scholars began to try to formulate models of good convergence practice (Borders, 2003). Soon, however, research and anecdotal reports noted that multiple print-broadcast partnerships in the United States and other countries— including some of the most famous—fell far short of full integration (Dailey, Demo, & Spillman, 2005; Dupagne & Garrison, 2006; Erdal, 2007; Lowrey, 2005) and were doing little to reverse declines in television news viewing and newspaper circulation (Silcock & Keith, 2006). Less than 10 years after the beginning of the convergence era, studies showed that significant numbers of U.S. news outlets had eliminated or reduced the intensity of television-newspaper convergence partnerships (Dailey, Demo, & Spillman, 2009) instead devoting more energy to their separate Websites—which competed for advertising revenues—a phenomenon that Thornton and Keith (2009) termed "Webvergence."

A few studies have examined news production in such internal cross-platform arrangements, noting that tensions exist, frequently focused on challenges to legacy media routines, a lack of trust between journalists for traditional and online journalists, and different norms about how online news is marketed and the relationship between editorial and business functions (Achtenhagen & Raviola, 2009; Huang & Heider, 2007; Singer, 2003). Little research, however, has looked at the external manifestations of "Webvergence," particularly whether there are differences in what newspaper and local television news websites are doing to attract viewers. This article uses survey data gathered at a key moment in the history of online journalism, the economic recession that began in the United States in 2008 (Borbely, 2009), to make that comparison. It draws, for a theoretical basis, on change theory from organizational communication (Lewin, 1951) and the Shoemaker and Reese (1996) framework of a hierarchy of influences on media content.

Literature Review

Newspaper Websites

Much of the literature on online news has focused on newspaper Websites, pointing out that newspapers were slow to fully embrace the Web (Walker, 2008), sometimes physically isolating online staffs (Lasica, 2008; Thurman & Lupton, 2008) and often failing to take full advantage of the Web's potential for interactivity (Carlson, 2005; Dimitrova, Connolly-Ahern, Williams, Kaid, & Reid, 2003; Gerpott & Wanke, 2004; Kenney, Gorelik, & Mwangi, 2000; Randall, Davenport, & Bossen, 2003; Rosenberry, 2005; Trench & Quinn, 2010) and an expanded geographical audience (Gasher, 2007). A number of studies have compared levels of interactivity among newspaper sites (Dibean & Garrison, 2001; Schultz, 2000) or attempted to explain why some are more interactive than others (Massey, 2000). Those studies have found associations between interactivity and such factors as circulation size (Qian & Li, 2003), online staff size (Massey & Levy, 1999), Web-operation maturity (Qian & Li, 2003), geographical location of the parent company (Hong, McClung, Park, 2008; Qian & Li, 2003), and community pluralism (Lowrey, 2003). As Kiousis (2002) has explained, however, such studies of media interactivity have displayed "a stunning lack of consistency in operationalizing the term," which has led to "great discrepancies in scholarly output" (p. 357).

The development of broadcast Websites

Also hampering understanding of whether there are differences in how newspapers and local television news operations approach the Web is the fact that there has been less convergence research focused primarily on broadcast news organizations (Erdal, 2007). Several of the studies that do exist, as well as reports in the trade press and journalism reviews, suggest that, like newspapers, local television station news operations have often failed to use the Web to its full potential (Bates, Chambers, Emery, Jones, McClung, & Park, 1997; Greer, 2005).

Early in the Internet era, research found that local U.S. TV station Websites were "not very sophisticated in … design of interactive structures" (Chan-Olmstead & Park, 2000, p. 332), with only about 37% of those assessed in 2000 even offering video (Pitts, 2003). Later, some local American stations took advantage of the spread of broadband access to launch multiple daily online newscasts (Palser, 2005; Silcock & Keith, 2006). By 2009, however, nearly half of the U.S. stations surveyed by Papper (2010) for the Radio-Television News Directors Association still said their staffs "had a long way to go" in being trained and interested in

producing news across platforms. When it came to keeping up with digital trends, he observed, "there are a lot of fingers crossed and winging it going on out there – especially in the smallest markets" (p. 9). In 2010, according to Papper's annual survey for Hofstra University and the Radio-Television Digital News Association, only slightly more than a third of stations were doing live (36%) or prerecorded (38%) Webcasts. Fewer than a third were providing streaming audio, and only about 10% offered podcasts (Papper, n.d.). Cleary and Bloom (2011) reported, meanwhile, that only about half the sites contained user-generated content. In 2008, some local television Websites were getting more traffic than newspaper Websites (Malone, 2008), but in 2010 only 35% of local TV Websites were making money (Papper, n.d.).

Comparing broadcast and print Websites

Little research has directly compared elements of TV and newspaper Websites, but the few studies that exist generally have given the advantage to TV news sites. In late 2004 and early 2005, the TV-owned sites in a group of 12 Scandinavian websites offered "a more user-oriented and innovative presentation format, being more hypertextually granulated and offering a higher degree of multimediality" (Engebretsen, 2006, p. 13) and were updated more often than newspaper Websites. Similarly, Huang (2007) found in late 2005 that local U.S. television news websites were significantly more likely than newspaper websites to use "rich media"—audio, video, and Flash. The difference disappeared when the websites of the 100 largest-circulation newspapers were compared with those of stations in the top 25 Designated Market Areas. Likewise, Brown and Collins (2009) found in a U.S. study that the online directors for local television news operations were significantly more likely than their newspaper counterparts to report that their Websites offered text alerts, e-mail alerts, video Webcasts, RSS feeds, weather radar, user-generated content, video for mobile web, radar for mobile web, and games. They concluded that "the 'legacy' attitudes of traditional media are carrying over into new media" (pp. 11-12) with broadcasters, who are "accustomed to using technology to push their information to viewers through live shots and breaking into programming" (p. 12) also proving more likely to use interactive online and mobile media tools. The Engebretsen study, however, examined only 12 Websites, and the Brown and Collins survey had a return rate of only 21 percent, suggesting that there remains room for research on the topic.

Theoretical Context

One useful way to conceptualize such research is through the lens of organizational change theory proposed by Lewin (1951). He believed that there were three steps to successful organizational change: "unfreezing" the existing condition, going through transition, and refreezing into a new condition. In his view, it took something drastic—more than just an unexpected loss of revenue or rise in competition, although those might be factors—to initially unfreeze the status quo and start deliberate change. This crucial first stage was later described by Ritchie (2006) as a "controlled crisis" that should motivate and guide. During the transition phase, forces for change have to be stronger than resistant forces if change was to progress to the third phase, "refreezing." In that final stage, new behaviors can become the norm—if the organization had made stabilization of those practices a part of its goal for change. Otherwise, an organization tends to revert to its original practices (Lewin, 2003; Cawsey & Deszca, 2007). Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, and Smith (1999) have noted that "sustaining any profound change process requires a fundamental shift in thinking" (p. 10), and Kotter (1995) has cautioned against loss of momentum during the transition stage when the "urgency level" (p. 66) might drop in intensity. Schein (2004), who shared Lewin's regard for the influence of culture on behavior, said that leaders, who "create cultures when they create groups and organizations" (p. 22), need to understand those cultures and manage their "evolution and change" or "the culture will manage them" (p. 23).

Hendry (1996) tied Lewin's stages to learning processes. In that view, unfreezing, motivated by crisis and cognitive dissonance, is characterized by challenges to existing cognitive structures, beliefs and values. The transition or change phase is a time of rational analysis and development of new skills. The third stage "can then be construed as reinforcing (or refreezing) the learning of new activities" (p. 625). Problems arise when insufficient attention is given, in the second stage, to developing skills and competencies needed to effect and sustain specific changes (Beer, Eisenstat, & Spector, 1990; Rothwell, 1984; Schein, 2004). Sustainability is ultimately dependent on what Buchanan et al. refer to as change's "perceived centrality to organizational performance" (Buchanan et al., 2005, p. 191) as seen in the provision of resources (Dawson, 1994, p. 29).

These views have both relevance for and a historic connection to mass communication. It was Lewin who came up with gates as a metaphor for how a product—in his case, food—moved
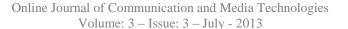
from discovery to consumption, past a series of arbiters or forces (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). David Manning White, who had been Lewin's research assistant, moved the metaphor into mass communication, conducting the first of several studies of newsworkers who were referred to as "Mr. Gates" (White, 1997)—or, later, "Ms. Gates" (Bleske, 1991)—on which the mass communication notion of gatekeeping is based (Reese & Ballinger, 2001; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). The concept of gatekeeping—which suggests that information must pass through a series of individuals, spaces, or processes where it can either move freely or be constrained—is, in turn, closely tied to Shoemaker and Reese's framework of a hierarchy of influences on media content. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) suggest that the major factors that help determine media content can be visualized as a series of concentric circles, with individual media workers in the center, surrounded by the ever-more-powerful levels of media routines, organizational influences, extra-organizational influences, and ideology (p. 64).

One of the most persuasive facets of this model is the emphasis it places on the way media routines can affect content. As Shoemaker and Reese (1996) note, "As rational, complex organizations with regular deadlines, the news media cannot cope with the unpredictable and infinite number of occurrences in the everyday world without a system. … Organizations must routinize work in order to control it" (p. 113). An important part of this routinization is developing consistent procedures. "Lacking any firm external benchmarks against which to measure the product," they write, "journalists take consistency as their guide: consistency with other news organizations, and even with themselves" (p. 113) Although some studies have found that the power of technology can overcome the power of routines (Robinson, 2007), standard procedures obviously have advantages for news organizations. If, however, routines become barriers to innovation or the embrace of newer technologies, then they can be counterproductive.

Research Questions

Those theoretical contexts, coupled with the lack of literature comparing how TV stations and newspapers are approaching the Web, suggested the following research questions:

   RQ1: How do local television station and newspaper Websites compare on their use of basic online components?

RQ2: How do local television and newspaper Websites compare in their use of more advanced Web-based practices?

RQ3: What types of content generated by convergence partners are television station and newspaper Websites publishing?

RQ4: What place does the Web operation have in broadcast and print news organizations?

Method

Data for this study were taken from a re-examination of a survey conducted in 2008, just as American news organizations were feeling the full brunt of the U.S. economic recession. This study, like those conducted for the American Radio-Television News Directors Association by Papper, used a "demand-oriented subjective approach" (Gerpott & Wanke, 2004), asking content producers about their websites' features. Invitations to fill out an online questionnaire were e-mailed in May 2008 to news directors or online news staff members at the 354 English-language commercial television stations with news operations in the top 100 U.S. markets. The survey also went to managing editors, editors, or online news staffers at the 320 English-language, general-interest daily newspapers with average weekday circulations greater than 25,000.[1] Follow-up requests to participate were e-mailed about two, four, and six weeks later, Then paper questionnaires were mailed in July and early August 2008 to journalists in the sample who had not completed the survey online.

Responses were received from 51% of the newspapers and 27% of the television stations or 38% of the organizations overall (266 of 694 news outlets), a rate comparable to or better than those in most other U.S. survey-based convergence studies.[2] Responses from television stations reflected their distribution across markets, with about half the responses coming from 50 largest U.S. television markets and half coming from markets 51 through 100. Newspaper response was fairly representative of the distribution of newspapers across the top five circulation categories used by the American Society of News Editors (2010), except for the smallest circulation category, 25,000 to 50,000, which was under-represented, (35.8% of the respondents vs. 49% of the population), and the next-to-largest, 250,000 to 500,000, which

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[1] Names of most survey subjects were found on the Websites of the news organizations involved, through professional association listings, or by calling the news organizations.

[2] Reported return rates for other similar studies were 20% for Smith, Tanner, and Duhé (2007); 25.6% for Dailey, Demo, and Spillman (2005); 20.7% for Dailey, Demo, and Spillman (2009); 37% for Lowrey (2005); and 40% and 53% for newspapers and 38% and 47% for TV stations in studies by Kraeplin and Criado (2006).

was overrepresented (8% of respondents vs. 4.7% of the population).

Findings

Television and newspaper Websites: Some differences in basic content

Data related to the first research question suggested that television and newspaper Websites represented by the respondents differed in some ways in regard to which types of basic Web components they used and how often those components were posted or updated. **(See Table 1.)** Some of the differences were related to the formats and deadlines of the Websites' legacy media parents. For example, although all respondents indicated that their organization's Website posted material from the legacy medium at least daily, television news directors were significantly more likely than newspaper respondents to say that their sites posted such material at least "several times a day" (x^2 = 16.482, df = 1, p < .001, when categories were collapsed to at least several times per day vs. less frequently to avoid expected cell counts that were too low). That finding fits the broadcast routine of producing several newscasts a day, just as reports by nearly two-thirds of newspaper respondents that stories from the print edition are posted daily reflects the fact that newspapers publish once per 24 hours. Similarly, TV station Websites were much more likely than newspaper Websites to provide video newscasts at least daily (x^2 = 29.366, df = 1, p < .001).[3] More than 70% of the TV respondents reported that their stations offered a Webcast at least daily, compared with just 20% of the newspaper respondents. Interestingly, the percentage of newspaper respondents with Webcasts was much lower than that reported by Brown and Collins (2009), 20% vs. 37.6%, though the percentage of TV sites was comparable (70% vs. 65.5%). The percentage of stations that reported that they were presenting Webcasts was much larger in this study, however, than the approximately 36% for live Webcasts and 38% for recorded Webcasts reported by Papper (2010) in a study conducted a year later.

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[3] When categories were collapsed to daily and less frequently. The collapsed category of less frequently than daily likely included some news outlets that never posted Web video newscasts. For each of the basic types of Web content discussed here, the least frequent response the questionnaire provided was "less than monthly."

TABLE 1: Frequency with which respondents reported their organizations Web sites posted or updated basic Internet content

Newspaper Web sites	Hourly	Several times a day	Daily	Less than daily	TV station Web sites	Hourly	Several times a day	Daily	Less than daily
Stories from print	14.8%	22.1%	63.1%	0%	**Packages from TV**	2.6%	75%	22.4%	0%
Breaking news	53.7%	40.3%	1.3%	4.8%	**Breaking news**	22.4%	51.3%	17.1%	9.1%
Wire copy	58.4%	24.2%	12.8%	4.6%	**Wire copy**	50.7%	30.7%	16%	2.6%
Webcasts by paper or Web staff	0%	3.3%	16.7%	80%	**Webcasts**	4.3%	42%	24.6%	28.9%
Multimedia presentations	0.7%	19%	28.9%	51.4%	**Multimedia presentations**	3%	10.4%	26.9%	59.7%

Other differences appeared less reflective of the influence of legacy media routines. Although similar percentages of television (50.7%) and newspaper (58.4%) respondents said their sites posted or updated *wire copy* at least hourly, newspaper respondents were significantly more likely than television respondents to report that ***breaking news*** was updated hourly ($x^2 = 11.499$, df = 1, $p < .001$, when categories were collapsed to hourly and less frequently). In addition, television respondents were somewhat less likely than newspaper respondents to report at least daily use of multimedia presentations, such as interactive graphics or photo galleries. The TV news directors were somewhat more likely than newspaper respondents to

report daily promotion of material appearing on the legacy medium. Neither difference, however, was statistically significant.[4]

Other online practices

Data related to the second research question, which asked how television and newspaper Websites compared in their use of other online tools or practices, indicated that they were more alike than different. Differences between the percentages of newspaper editors and TV news directors reporting that their sites used 22 specific online tools or practices was statistically significant in only six cases. (See Table 2.) In five of those cases, it was the newspapers that were more likely to have adopted the online element.

TABLE 2: TV and newspaper Web sites' use of advanced online tools and practices

	TV Web sites (N=70 to 76)	Newspaper Web sites (N=141 to 149)
Offer unlimited free access online to archived work ***	77.3%	27%
Offer limited free access online to archived work **	32.4%	61.7%
Create special-topic packages that remain online for extended time	89.5%	97.3%
Create micro-sites for special coverage (e.g., elections)	96.1%	93.9%
Upload video to YouTube.com	43.2%	61.2%
Use Twitter	31.9%	37.6%
Use Facebook, MySpace, etc. to drive traffic	42.7%	57%
Send content to mobile devices (e.g., cell phones, Blackberries)	84.2%	74%
Provide staff blogs	85.3%	96%
Host local bloggers who are not on staff ***	26.7%	75.7%
Use blogs to cover developing news and events *	54.7%	79.7%
Link to sites outside news outlet's organization (e.g., resources mentioned in news stories)	98.7%	89.3%
Link to stories published elsewhere	84%	72.3%

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[4] Multimedia presentations, such as interactive graphics or photo galleries: $x^2 = .690$, df = 1, p = .41; online promotions of legacy-media material: $x^2 = 1.525$, df = 1, p = .2169.

Link to video published elsewhere	76%	81.5%
Use mashups to map news or services **	27.8%	54.9%
Provide podcasts **	26%	51.4%
Offers ways to bookmark stories on social bookmarking sites (e.g., Digg, Reddit, De.lic.ious)	54.9%	62.8%
Publish lists that rank stories by popularity	59.5%	70.8%
Publish cloud tags to indicate relative popularity of topics	25%	28%
Provide in-text hyperlinks for non-commercial resources in news	76.1%	61.1%
Publish user-submitted material	69.9%	84.6%
Offer site feeds (e.g., RSS, Feedburner)	79.2%	90.3%

Interactive practices marked with boldface type and an asterisk* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Responses indicated that newspaper sites were significantly more likely than television sites to offer limited free access to archived work, host non-staff local bloggers, use blogs to cover developing events, feature mashup maps, and use podcasts. The only category in which data indicated that TV Websites were significantly more advanced was on offering unlimited free access to archives. Respondents' answers also suggested that newspaper Websites were also somewhat more likely than television stations to engage in eleven other practices, though differences were not statistically significant.

The data offered some evidence, however, that newspaper Websites were moving in on TV's traditional role as a producer of moving pictures. Newspaper respondents were more likely than TV respondents to say that their sites uploaded video to YouTube.com (61.2% vs. 43.2%) and linked to video published elsewhere (76% vs. 81.5%). This focus on video was evident in the fact that almost 66% of the newspaper respondents said photographers for their organization shot video, more than 60% said reporters shot video, and more than 40% reported that their organizations employed videographers. Nearly 58% of the respondents said that photographers at their newspapers shot video at least weekly. Nearly 41% of the respondents said that even reporters were shooting video at least weekly.

Little convergence content on the Web

Data related to the third research question demonstrated how little television and newspaper convergence partnerships—which several studies had reported to be on the decline (Thornton & Keith, 2009; Dailey, Demo, & Spillman, 2009; Silcock & Keith, 2006)—were affecting Web content in 2008. Although about half the respondents in this study (48.8% of the broadcast journalists and 50.3% of the newspaper journalists) said that their newsrooms had a cross-platform content-sharing agreement at that point, the vast majority of respondents reported that their Websites rarely featured content provided by a partner. For example, only 14% of news directors reported that their Websites used edited video shot by a newspaper partner at least monthly. This is not surprising, because one would not expect stations with newspaper partners to turn to the print outlet for video and audio, which TV stations are expert at producing. But only about a third of news directors said that their sites used the text of a newspaper partner's stories at least monthly, and less than a fourth said their sites promoted content that appeared in a partner newspaper once a month or more. So TV websites were not taking advantage of available partner material that complemented their own legacy medium's work.

Newspaper responses provided similar evidence of a lack of use of a TV partner's complementary content. Fewer than 15% of the editors said their Websites featured a broadcast partner's newscasts at least monthly. Fewer than 25% used a broadcast partner's story packages and audio at least monthly. Even video aired by a broadcast partner—content one might expect the 51% of newspapers with TV partners to find attractive—was used daily by only about 21% of newspaper sites. In fact, more than 60% of newspaper respondents said their paper's site used TV video less than once a month.

The importance of the Web operation

To answer research question four, about the relative importance of Web operations at local television stations and daily newspapers in 2008, the study posed three questions summarized in Table 3. The data revealed statistically significant differences between television and newspaper respondents on their newsrooms' prioritization of Web work and staffing. At first glance, the results (see Table 3) might appear to provide indirect support for the notion that newspapers are more focused on the Web than television stations. Indeed, newspaper respondents *were* more likely than TV respondents to indicate that their newsrooms aimed "to

serve Web needs first" and that "essentially the whole staff" was focused on producing content for the Web first and the legacy medium second.

TABLE 3: Importance of the Web in TV and newspaper news operations

Which best describes your newsroom's practices? *

Television respondents		Newspaper respondents	
We aim to serve broadcast needs first.	21.1% (16)	We aim to serve print needs first.	18.9% (28)
We aim to serve Web needs first.	7.9% (6)	We aim to serve Web needs first.	27.7% (41)
We aim to serve broadcast and Web needs equally.	71.7% (54)	We aim to serve print and Web needs equally.	53.4% (79)

$x^2 = 12.148$, df = 2, p = .002

Which is most true of your station/newsroom? *

Television respondents		Newspaper respondents	
Some staffers produce work for broadcast and some staffers produce work for the Web.	12% (9)	Print staffers produce work for the newspaper and Web staffers produce work for the Web.	4.5% (8)
Some staffers produce work for both broadcast and Web.	28% (21)	Some newspaper staffers produce work for both Web and print.	16.8% (25)
Most staffers produce work for both broadcast and Web.	57.3% (43)	Most newspaper staffers produce work for both Web and print.	53% (79)
Essentially the whole staff is focused on Web first, broadcast second.	2.7% (2)	Essentially the whole staff is focused on the Web first, print second.	24.8% (37)

$x^2 = 20.2$, df = 3, p < .0002

How often is information about Web page views distributed to news managers?

Television respondents		Newspaper respondents	
	Not I don't		Not at I don't

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	at all	know	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	all	know
59.2%	18.4%	13.2%	5.3%	3.9%	63.7%	15.8%	12%	4.1%	3.4%
(45)	(14)	(10)	(4)	(3)	(93)	(23)	(19)	(6)	(5)

$x^2 = 0.562$, df = 4, p = .967

* Differences between television and newspaper respondents' answers were statistically significant.

This is understandable since even without the Internet, TV newsrooms could reach audiences nearly instantaneously, either by breaking into programming or placing a text crawl across the screen while a program was in progress. In newspaper newsrooms, where the Internet provided the major technical means for reaching audiences nearly instantly, the Web stakes were higher, making a Web-first orientation more appealing. As a respondent from a newspaper in the smallest circulation class (25,000 to 50,000 weekdays) put it in an answer to an open-ended question about what convergence meant in his/her newsroom: "We must have a web-first mentality and must find a way to serve our readers through all forms of media." Another respondent from a similar-sized daily wrote: "Our policy is to get the story online first. In reality, the online-first policy shapes the budget for the print version of the paper."

It is important to note, however, that while it might seem that the Web merely allowed broadcast journalists to expand their instant-reaction capabilities to a new medium and, perhaps, a new audience, the picture actually was more complex. The threshold for breaking into regularly scheduled programming with live news reports always has been fairly high in the United States, and the amount of news that can be conveyed in a crawl at the bottom of the screen, as a show airs, is fairly small. So part of the added value the Internet brought to TV news operations was the ability to near-instantly update audiences, in a substantive way on breaking news that was not important enough to call for breaking into programming. As the news director of one smaller-market station put it, "We have no problem breaking a story on the Web and then airing it on TV."

Discussion and Conclusions

This study provides a snapshot of what U.S. TV news and daily newspaper managers perceived their websites were doing in 2008, at the beginning of a recession that was

responsible for some of the job losses that reduced the size of the newspaper workforce in the United States by 40 percent from 2001 to 2011 (Sass, 2012). In 2008, reports from newsroom managers indicated that websites produced by newspapers and local television news operations differed little in the types of tools and practices they offered users. There were statistically significant differences on fewer than a dozen of the measurements of how TV stations and newspapers approached their Web operations. Responses indicated that local television Websites posted material from the parent medium and hosted video newscasts more frequently than newspaper Websites and were more likely to offer unlimited free access to archives. In addition, responses suggested that local television news operations were more likely than newspapers to have a philosophy of serving broadcast and online audiences equally. In contrast, the data showed that in 2008 newspaper managers were significantly more likely than local television news directors to say that their sites updated breaking news online at least hourly, offered limited free access to archived work, hosted non-staff local bloggers, used blogs to cover developing events, featured mashup maps, used podcasts and had a "Web first/legacy medium second" attitude.

Certainly, the data did not indicate the general lag among newspaper Websites found by Engebretsen (2006) and Brown and Collins (2009). One reason may be that this research assessed different factors than those studies. For example, it compared reports of print and broadcast organizations' use of social media and social networking tools, which Brown and Collins did not, while Brown and Collins compared reports of TV station and newspaper use of mobile media, which this study did not. What can be noted from this study is that the data, as those in the Brown and Collins (2009) research, indicated that in 2008 local television station and newspaper Websites were reproducing some of the characteristics of their parent media. In some cases, that meant that the online entity was replicating the culture of the offline medium, as was evident from a larger proportion of television than newspaper respondents saying their sites hosted Webcasts. In other cases, the sites were trying to make up for a weakness of the offline medium, as was indicated by newspaper staffers, whose legacy medium is published once daily, being more likely than TV respondents to report that their newsrooms updated breaking news at least hourly and were focused on serving Web needs first.

It is in this tension between organizations reproducing the standards of traditional platforms online and moving to erase the constraints of legacy media that the constructs of Lewin's change theory are most evident. When news organizations hew closely online to what works in their legacy format—as newspapers might be seen to have been doing when they avoided online newscasts—that provides an indication that forces for change are not as strong as forces for maintaining the status quo. It also suggests that the sense of crisis that propelled a search for new solutions—*i.e.,* change—has diminished, has been minimized, was not perceived as threatening enough in the first place, or has been affected by external factors, such as an economic recession.

It appears that in 2008, the power of legacy broadcast and print routines described by Shoemaker and Reese were strong enough to produce some differences between the digital tools and practices of newspaper and local television news operation websites. In the handful of cases where differences existed, it was newspapers, apparently responding to the need to be able to reach news users nearly instantly—a capability that television has always had—that were generally more likely to employ the digital tools. The need to be able to reach audiences instantly, then, caused an "unfreezing," to use Lewin's term, of the routine.

The more important finding, perhaps, is that on most measures there were few statistically significant differences in the tools and online practices newspaper and TV managers reported that their sites used. That indicates that the news organizations were being affected by extramedia influences, which in the Shoemaker and Reese (1996) model exert more influence than media routines. It seems likely that declining readership and viewing were affecting newspapers and local TV news operations similarly, pushing them away from convergence partnerships and toward Webvergence, while the recession that began in December 2007 (Business Cycle Dating Committee, 2008) may have constrained them in similar ways from developing their websites further than they did.

This study, like all research, has limitations. First, it relied on respondents' knowledge of their news organizations' Websites, which could be incomplete. Second, the data are products of the time in which they were collected. Attributes of TV and newspaper Websites described here no doubt were affected by the significant layoffs and buyouts of journalists and resulting structural changes that occurred as the recession deepened (Project for Excellence in

Journalism, 2009). Nevertheless, the study provides a snapshot of the way that newspapers and local television news operations approached the Internet at one point of crisis in the early 21st century.

These data provide a baseline upon which future studies can build. Future research in this area might look at how a "digital first" mentality grew in print newsrooms and analyze whether it became more of a factor in television newsrooms or whether digital continued to be seen as a co-equal of broadcast. It also would be useful to compare news managers' perceptions of what their sites are doing after the recession with these data, gathered during an economic downturn, paying particular attention to social media, whose use has skyrocketed since 2008 (Smith & Brenner, 2012). Finally, future work should consider the effort news organizations are devoting to mobile media and how they fit into digital strategies.

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