



Radar Banten's Strategy in Facing the Era of Media Digitalization

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ABSTRACT

Newspaper readers continue to decline and slowly shift to using digital media platforms to obtain information. This happens along with the development of information technology where many online media, social media and so on have emerged. The task and challenge of the print media is to expand its presence into the realm of new media, while continuing to guard the accuracy, credibility and trust that have been the hallmarks of mainstream media. The proliferation of the internet, which is increasingly accessible, has made the media convergence movement grow in particular. Media convergence also occurs in Radar Banten as one of the media that exists in the national arena. This research aims to find out the strategy of Radar Banten Daily to transform itself towards media convergence. The study, which is a qualitative research adopting a constructive paradigm, collected data through interviews and literature review. This research investigates the application of media convergence concept by Radar Banten in facing modern media transformation. Three convergence models, namely newsroom convergence, news gathering convergence, and content convergence, are analyzed as an effort to unify media operations through a holistic approach. The result of the research shows that the 3M strategy (multimedia, multichannel, multiplatform) allows Radar Banten to increase its content coverage, create inter-platform synergy, and strengthen their position in the midst of technological development. The editorial work pattern underwent significant changes, with projection meetings conducted online and deadline adjustments to support online and social media. Overall, this research concludes that Radar Banten is progressively adapting and innovating to stay relevant amidst mass media changes. The continuity of this effort is the key to their success in facing the dynamics of modern media.

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INTRODUCTION

Along with the times, the development of information and communication technology is currently very rapid. Technological breakthroughs from time to time have facilitated our daily lives. The proliferation of the internet, which is increasingly accessible, has affected people's media consumption habits. For example, the shift of print media readers such as newspapers to online media. This condition certainly has an impact on the intense competition in the mass media industry in the digital era. Print, electronic and online media are competing to display the most up-to-date and in-depth information to attract public attention. As a result, there is an assumption that the competition will kill the print media because of the incessant coverage in online and electronic media. This mass media competition is inseparable from the influence of the rapid advancement of science and technology, especially Information Communication and Technology (ICT) which affects life in this modern society (Surahman, 2016). This phenomenon shapes Indonesian society into an information society, which is a society that spends most of its time using information technology such as mobile phones and computers.

Advances in information and communication technology have also given rise to a prosumer society (a society of producers and consumers), where the focus of production held by the mass media has now moved into the hands of consumers. For example, citizen journalism activities are now rife everywhere. Competition is not only between print media, electronic media and online media but now the competition is with the audience of the three media which is now transformed into a consumer audience.

Print media publishers are threatened with their existence because information that was originally controlled by print media is now easily accessible to the public without being bound by space and time. This has made the condition of print media when viewed from its circulation has experienced a downward trend. The existence of such a tight level of competition between print and online media needs to be watched out by conventional media. In order to further increase market penetration as widely as possible in the hope of increasing market demand and advertising revenue. To survive in the midst of competition with online media, print media inevitably needs to make changes in accordance with the typology of the audience. In the Association of Newspaper Publishers Union (SPS), which since 2011 has changed its name to the Press Company Union in the XXVII Congress in Jakarta in 2007, it was recommended that media convergence be a necessity that absolutely needs to be anticipated by print media publishers through increasing the human resources of press companies in mastering information and technology. Print media policy in the framework of media convergence is an anticipatory attitude to the predictions of a number of experts for the future of print media, especially newspapers. Newspapers are required to be more creative in thinking about product concepts in delivering news to their audience.

On a national scale, several media have implemented the concept of media convergence, one of which is the Kompas Gramedia Group. Kompas still maintains the print platform pioneered since 1965 and issued an online edition of Kompas (kompas.com) in 2008 and in 2011 Kompas Gramedia established Kompas TV. The presence of new media, such as the internet, mobile phones, i-pads, satellite radio, and the emergence of a different generation in consuming information has forced the print media to think hard about reorganising its position to remain relevant to its consumers. The advent of the citizen journalism era has also forced traditional media to change its mindset as the only alternative for delivering the 'truth' (Fachruddin, 2019). Another challenge that is no less devastating is the global economic crisis. The impact on print

media is that the price of imported paper continues to soar, advertising revenue decreases dramatically, distribution support is increasingly expensive, while circulation generally stagnates or even falls. As a result of these conditions, print media circulation has continued to decline in the last ten years.

In an interview with the author, Dahlan Iskan, President Commissioner of Disway.id, revealed that digital platforms can strengthen the existence of print media in the sense that its brand can survive and even strengthen. However, if what is meant is that the existence of print media is getting stronger, it cannot. According to the former CEO of Jawa Pos Group, print media will continue to get weaker because printing costs, paper prices and distribution costs are getting more expensive. Meanwhile, digital media does not need these three types of costs. Dahlan explained that print media will disappear faster than expected, especially in Indonesia. This is triggered by the gap between the income of print media consumers and the subscription price. In America, the price of a newspaper is 1 dollar, while the wage of a labourer is 12 dollars/hour (not per day).

The concept of convergence was born when newspapers were still trying to survive through convergence (Prihartono, 2016). According to Dahlan, even now through convergence, newspapers can no longer survive as professional media. In the initial concept of convergence, newspapers remained at the front. Now, in the practice of convergence, newspapers are in the back row. In terms of operations, media convergence requires media workers to be multitasking because the results of one news coverage are published in various types of media so that it is more efficient.

The media convergence movement grew specifically out of the rise of the internet and digitisation of information. This media convergence brings together the 3Cs, namely computing (entering data through computers), communication, and content (content material) (Asy'ari & Luthfi, 2019). One of the local print media in Banten Province that applies convergence is Radar Banten. Under the auspices of PT Wahana Semesta Banten, Radar Banten newspaper develops multiplatform information dissemination through online media with the Radarbanten.co.id portal, Instagram, Youtube and applications through Playstore.

In addition to developing an online portal, the utilisation of information technology is also applied by Radar Banten. It makes it easy for loyal readers to read the news in the newspaper through an application. This application can be downloaded in Playstore with the same name, Radar Banten. In the application, readers can read all the news in Radar Banten newspaper. Besides through the application, loyal readers who do not want to be complicated, if they have subscribed, will be sent every morning at 05.00 WIB e-paper of Radar Banten newspaper. Readers just need to open it on their gadgets or smartphones.

Media convergence is carried out by Radar Banten, as an effort to transform itself to meet these challenges. The digital media platform that Radar Banten has been developing since 2015, radarbanten.co.id, is currently a vehicle to strengthen the newspaper. The speed of information needed by the public is answered through the online portal. Various information is presented every minute, ranging from political news, government, social, to informational articles or we usually call it evergreen news. Not only that, media digitalisation to strengthen the newspaper is carried out by disseminating information through social media and YouTube. The latest trends in information dissemination are also developed such as podcasts.

The focus of this research is to provide an understanding of the strategy of Radar Banten Daily to transform itself towards convergence of news room, news gathering, content. To support this goal, the researcher conducted a search for previous research including Epkamarsa (2014), Prihartono (2016), and Wahyuningsih & Zulhazmi (2020). Based on these previous studies, it is known that media convergence is carried out as a transformation effort in the digitisation era. The media is forced to transform by developing multiplatforms to be more varied in presenting information to the public. However, in the application of convergence, the object of media research varies. In media convergence in Radar Jogja, the implementation is the application of content convergence model in Radar Jogja. The content convergence model is a convergence that presents varied contents. The output is presented in the form of multimedia, which is a combination of text, images, audio, video, blogs, podcasts or slide shows. Meanwhile, in Kompas newspaper, the contextual convergence and repackaging model is a new model of media convergence transformation strategy.

Based on a number of previous studies, there are a number of similarities in the application of media convergence. Where multimedia, multichannel, multiplatform (3M) is one of the media convergence transformation strategies; the implementation of media convergence transformation strategies is adjusted to the ability to invest, the context of needs, and culture, and not stuck on technical issues alone. Meanwhile, this research is related to 'Radar Banten Group's Strategy in Facing the Media Digitalisation Era', namely, the implementation of journalistic convergence. There are three models implemented, namely, newsroom convergence, news gathering convergence, and content convergence.

METHOD

The research approach used in this research is qualitative methodology with a focus on the case study approach. According to Agusta (2014), qualitative method is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from research subjects that can be analysed. Qualitative research involves the study of various studies and the collection of various types of empirical data, including case studies, personal experiences, introspective confessions, life stories, various texts and cultural productions, observations, history, interactional, and visual texts. The purpose of qualitative research is to provide a complete condition or description of the object under study. Case studies, as one of the social science research methods, are often considered a more appropriate strategy when research questions are related to 'how' and 'why' (Sugiyono, 2017). This method becomes a relevant choice when the research has little opportunity to control the events to be investigated and the focus of the research lies on contemporary phenomena in their living context (Yin, 2018). With this approach, the researcher aims to describe and in-depth how the media convergence strategy is implemented by Radar Banten Group.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Radar Banten endeavours to deliver the content in print through other platforms that are starting to be widely used by the public. This means that Radar Banten wants to serve its customers to still be able to access the printed Radar Banten content through other media that are in accordance with technological developments. It is this spirit that brings Radar Banten to finally decide to implement the 3M strategy, which is multimedia, multichannel, multiplatform. This means that printed Radar Banten products can be equipped with photos, graphics, videos,

texts and can be accessed through newspapers and the internet using computers, internet, paper, radio, television, laptops and other gadgets. After implementing the 3M strategy, there are various opportunities to advance and develop. Radar Banten has media, both electronic and digital that have the potential to deliver content to the public. Radar Banten's transformation is based on the spirit of inter-platform cooperation. Synergy, synchronisation, and coordination are always present and inherent in every change towards perfection.

The application of 3M strategy by Radar Banten, in line with Hierarchy of Influence Theory, can be seen as an effort to expand media influence through a more effective hierarchy. Through multimedia, Radar Banten provides various types of content that can stimulate various senses and form a more comprehensive understanding. With multichannel, the use of various communication channels such as radio, television, and internet allows the message to reach various layers of society. Meanwhile, through multiplatform, Radar Banten expands its audience coverage by ensuring its content can be accessed through various devices, from paper to gadget.

As a mass media, Radar Banten also applies the Mass Media Working Media Theory. In this context, Radar Banten acts as a working tool that guides public opinion and behaviour through the delivery of information that is fast, interactive, and accessible through various media. Thus, the convergence strategy implemented by Radar Banten allows this media to remain relevant in the digital era, by embracing mass media theory that emphasises mass influence and affordability.

Radar Banten understands well that convergence can be done in any condition without having to make radical changes that require a single newsroom. In other words, convergence has been implemented in Radar Banten. For Radar Banten, media convergence is implemented and adjusted to the ability to invest and needs and is not trapped in technical issues alone. So convergence as a whole can be done by the media adjusted to the context, or contextual convergence. From various opinions and theories, Radar Banten has achieved convergence by implementing the 3M strategy by directly making continuum convergence which includes cross promotion, cooperation, cloning, content sharing, and repackaging convergence.

The implementation of 3M strategy in Radar Banten has yet to produce maximum results. The challenge ahead is how to find and formulate business opportunities and revenue from products that come from the implementation of 3M strategy. In addition to business issues, the ability of journalists to do coverage is also continuously developed. For example, special education in photography, video, and online media writing for employees and journalists. So that the demand for multitasking for journalists and employees will soon be achieved.

Radar Banten's achievement in the implementation of 3M strategy is forming a special multimedia desk to realise and encourage synergy with Radar Banten with other platforms such as online, and Youtube. Radar Banten made a breakthrough by issuing diversified products. For example, printed Radar Banten can be enjoyed through e-Paper platform. Finding a standardised form of cooperation pattern between desks, units, and platforms. If this has been established and standardised, then this is a very significant step to be able to develop other patterns. If mapped further, Radar Banten has already run what is called convergence. So convergence is not a dream anymore, but already a fact. In the concept of transformation or mediamorphosis, for example, Radar Banten has implemented convergence and coevolution.

Convergence in media transformation is interpreted as multimedia communication by integrating two or more forms of communication. While coevolution is understood if a new

product influences other products or forms. From the convergence concept, Radar Banten has implemented a number of models including storytelling convergence, cross promotion, content sharing, cooperation, and cross media. These convergence models are wrapped in one strategy called 3M. By implementing 3M, the convergence models will slowly become a reality. In other words, Radar Banten found the right concept in transforming itself towards media convergence.

News Room Convergence

In this concept, journalists from different platforms, such as newspapers and online, unite in one news production room. They work on tasks according to their media platforms. In the news room with Radar Banten, one journalist is required to write as many as seven news in one day for the needs of the online media platform. The news sent by the journalist to the news room is then organised by the editor for the print media.

For example, the news about the fate of honorary workers in Banten Province who will be abolished by the Minister of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform (Menpan-RB). On the 31 July 2023 edition, the news about honorary staff became the headline in Radar Banten newspaper. The news had previously been written by journalists with several angles of writing in the online media radarbanten.co.id from journalists from each region in Banten Province. They wrote various angles of the news, starting from the plan for a massive demonstration in Jakarta on 7 August 2023, to the demands that would be voiced during the demonstration. The editing process for the print media was handled by the editor of Radar Banten newspaper.

As for the duties of journalists with the media convergence pattern, it starts in the morning through enrichment or commonly called morning news projection. At this stage, journalists are usually given news projections in the morning based on issues that are currently hot or viral in the community. In addition, Agus Priwandono also sees based on Google Analytics or Ubbert Suggest, an application to see what news the previous day was widely read by visitors to the radarbanten.co.id website.

News Gathering Convergence

The second model is convergence news gathering. In running this model, a journalist is required to be able to reach the level of multitasking. Through special training, a journalist is required to be able to do the work done by media with other platforms in one group. For example, a print journalist must be able to produce news for print, online, and television at the same time. They are also required to take photos or videos for news content on YouTube and social media.

Content Manager of Radar Banten, Aas Arbi said, since the strengthening of convergence by Radar Banten, every journalist is not only able to write straight news. But they are required to create content or evergreen news. Content or evergreen news is information that will not be lost in time. That is, not news of events or news of happenings but information written to educate readers. In writing content, journalists not only refer to the 5W+1H concept, but must also pay attention to SEO or search engine optimisation.

In writing news in online media, it does not only refer to journalistic rules but also to the placement of keywords. Aas Arbi explained that keywords are important words or phrases that people usually search for in search engines (Google). From the point of view of search engines, keywords are a set of words that serve as a reference for search engines in presenting various content on all websites available on the internet.

The convergence news gathering model, which involves multitasking of a journalist, creates a new dynamic in news presentation within Radar Banten Group. In this context, media convergence theory, as proposed by Jenkins (Jenkins & Plasencia, 2017), provides a conceptual basis that the integration of various media platforms is a must in supporting the delivery of holistic and up-to-date information. Jenkins emphasises the importance of collaboration between journalists from different platforms in creating content that can be accessed through multiple channels.

SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) theory is also an important aspect of convergence news gathering. In an effort to optimise the visibility and accessibility of online content, Radar Banten journalists must understand the concept of SEO. This is in line with the theory that in the digital era, writing strategies are not only oriented towards traditional journalistic aspects, but also consider technical factors such as SEO (Sharma et al., 2019). The importance of specialised training for journalists to face these convergence challenges refers to the concept of the need for dual competence or multitasking in journalism (Deuze, 2005). For example, the evergreen content training emphasised by Aas Arbi reflects a recognition of the shift in journalists' focus from simply presenting news events to delivering information that is educational and relevant in the long term.

In the context of convergence news gathering, the concept of tagging and the use of keywords is the theoretical basis applied in Radar Banten. This theory reflects the effort to organise and improve the discoverability of online content (Bruns & Burgess, 2012). The awareness of the important role of keywords and tagging in content grouping also refers to the concept that the integration of various media not only leads to the presentation of comprehensive content, but also pays attention to a more purposeful user experience. In other words, the concept of convergence news gathering in Radar Banten creates a bridge between media convergence theory, SEO technical expertise, and the demand for journalists' multiple competencies. In facing the dynamics of modern mass media, this strategy strengthens Radar Banten's position as the main actor in presenting diverse, current, and relevant information in the convergence era.

Content Convergence

The third model is content convergence. News is finally presented in the form of multimedia, which is a combination of text, images, audio, video, blogs, podcasts, or slideshows. Editor-in-Chief of Radar Banten, Delfion Saputra said, currently one news production in Radar Banten is able to fulfil the needs of online media, print media, and social media (Youtube and Instagram). Or one content through podcast shows, also complemented with news in print and online media.

This multi-platform combination is not easy to implement, because it must provide additional knowledge and skills to the existing human resources at Radar Banten. So far, the skills of Radar Banten journalists are only writing news and taking photos. Delfion Saputra said, with convergence, every journalist should be able to take videos for visual needs that will be posted for social media and Youtube accounts.

The concept of media convergence, as implemented by Radar Banten, reflects the shifting dynamics between print and digital media. The endorsement of former National Press Figure, Dahlan Iskan, provides a valuable perspective on the fundamental changes in the media

industry. According to McChesney (2013), the emergence of digital platforms has significantly changed the media landscape, forcing print media to adjust to the changes.

Dahlan Iskan's critical view on the weakening existence of print media is an important note in assessing the impact of media convergence. Iskan highlighted printing costs, paper prices, and the ever-increasing distribution costs as factors that burden print media. McChesney (R. McChesney, 2023) in his book entitled "Rich Media, Poor Democracy" presents an in-depth analysis of the changing media industry and its impact on the financial structure of print media. He highlights how production and distribution costs are critical factors in determining the sustainability of traditional media.

Meanwhile, Küng, Picard, & Towse in "The Internet and the Mass Media" provide insights into the financial shifts taking place in the media industry, with a special emphasis on print media (Küng et al., 2008). They describe how digital media has a competitive advantage in terms of cost, especially in the use of technology for content production and distribution. Media economic theory, as proposed by Picard in "The Economics and Financing of Media Companies," presents a framework for understanding cost dynamics in the media industry (Picard, 2022). The application of this theory to the context of media convergence supports the argument that print media, with its higher cost structure, faces significant financial pressure. When applied to the case of Radar Banten, Iskan's views are in line with the findings of this literature, suggesting that the shift to digital media is a wise response to the financial challenges faced by print media. This is in line with the theoretical perspective that emphasises the need for strategic adaptation to maintain existence and relevance in a changing media environment.

Iskan's observation reflects the challenges faced by print media in the convergence era, where strategic adaptation is the key to staying relevant and strong. As a result, Radar Banten not only strengthens its print media existence but also develops a digital platform as a strategic move to fulfil the information needs of an increasingly digitalised society. Overall, these literature and practical observations imply the complexity and urgency of adaptation in the face of changing media dynamics that continue to evolve.

CONCLUSION

Hundreds of years of print media as the only platform is no longer sufficient. So it is necessary to anticipate a revolution in the media industry through convergence. From the result of this research, it is known that the implementation of 3M strategy (multimedia, multichannel, multiplatform) has opened various opportunities for Radar Banten in increasing their media coverage and penetration. In addition, the application of media convergence concept by Radar Banten is a strategic step that gives a significant impact on their evolution and adaptation in facing modern media changes. The three convergence models, namely newsroom convergence, news gathering convergence, and content convergence, reflect Radar Banten's efforts to unify their media operations through a holistic approach.

Media convergence in Radar Banten requires journalists to be multitasking, including the development of evergreen content, attention to SEO, and the ability to present news through various formats. This process is implemented by paying attention to the needs of online media and the integration of multimedia content, such as text, images, audio, and video, creating a richer consumption experience for the audience. The establishment of a new editorial work pattern includes changes in the projection meeting process, adjustments to deadlines, and an emphasis on multimedia content production. News stages involving online and social media

were prioritised, reflecting a response to changing audience needs. Despite facing technological advancements and changing media consumption patterns, Radar Banten is also faced with constraints such as production costs and HR adaptation. These challenges demand constant innovation and resource investment to remain competitive.

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