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## **The Internet in the information system of media. The specificity of the Internet audiences**

### ABSTRAKT

#### **Internet w medialnym systemie informacyjnym. Specyfika publiczności internetowej**

Artykuł poświęcony jest analizie zmian, jakie zaszły w sposobach wykorzystywania mediów tradycyjnych wraz z pojawieniem się nowego typu mediów: internetowych i ich odbiorców. Na podstawie danych ESS można zauważyć wzrost użytkowników Internetu (w przypadku Ukrainy) wpływający na spadek oglądających telewizję, słuchających radia i czytających gazety. Zjawisko to jest charakterystyczne dla pewnych grup wiekowych. Porównując Norwegię, Ukrainę i inne państwa można zauważyć, że globalna sieć odbiera odbiorców innym kanałom masowej komunikacji, zaś poziom użytkowania mediów tradycyjnych uzależniony jest od cech społeczno-ekonomicznych tych państw. Konwergencja jest jednym z wiodących trendów w rozwoju Internetu. Internet stworzył nowy model kreowania i wykorzystywania informacji. Kiedy używamy mediów społecznościowych, „prywatyzujemy” przestrzeń informacji: czytamy wiadomości naszych przyjaciół, wiadomości tworzone przez media, autorytety społeczne, posty tworzone przez przedstawicieli świata nauki i kultury, mieszkańców naszego miasta. To nasze synkretyczne media. Odbiorców on-line tworzy grupa ludzi, która czerpie informacje z jednego źródła, biorą oni udział w tworzeniu i przekazywaniu informacji i tworzeniu opinii publicznej dzięki komentowaniu materiałów, dostarczaniu informacji do publikacji i dyskusji na ich temat. Ten rodzaj odbiorców jest zdecydowanie bardziej aktywny niż odbiorcy tradycyjnych mediów. Nie tylko media wpływają na odbiorców, lecz również odbiorcy wpływają na opinię publiczną.

**SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:** media, Internet, konwergencja, serwis społecznościowy, odbiorcy

The Internet has become an important element of mass communication and caused changes in the use of traditional types of media and the emergence of a new type of audience. Therefore, spreading the Internet in Ukraine raises questions about what media will become the leading sources of information; how the impact of traditional media will change and what new social media will bring in mechanisms of mass communication? We will consider interpenetration of TV, radio and printed press with the Internet and the specifics of their use by different age groups. We'll see how social networks become syncretic media for internet users.

We will use Manuel Castells' concept of convergence for research of interpenetration of different types of media in modern society<sup>1</sup>; we also used works of N. Kostenko for an explanation of models of using media<sup>2</sup> and I. Kononov's types of media systems<sup>3</sup>.

We can identify several types of media systems, which were changed during the history of the industrial society. I. Kononov offers the following systems: 1) the system of printed mass media; 2) combining printed media and cinema; 3) combining printed media, cinema and radio; 4) combining printed media, cinema and radio, TV and new audiovisual means<sup>4</sup>. At the present stage, the Internet is an important addition to the information system. It has also become the space in which all other mass media are integrating (TV, radio, press); the internet gave them the rapidity that surpassed classic TV and newspapers.

The emergence of new types of media each time caused a redistribution of influence among the ones that already exist. In contemporary world, it is the Internet that brings about such redistribution. We are going to show this on the example of Ukraine and some European countries.

We will consider the influence of TV, radio, printed press and the internet on different age groups in Ukraine. Our particular attention is given to youth, because its behavior helps to identify trends which will exist.

We will base on the results of ESS<sup>5</sup>. For clarity of dynamics we took data of two waves: 2004–2005 and 2010–2011, and for some indicators 2012–2013 and 2014. The waves in Ukraine were in 2005, 2011, 2013. In the waves after 2010–2011 there were no questions about the use of radio and newspapers anymore. The waves of 2014 and 2016 did not take place in Ukraine.

According to ESS, in 2013 the amount of time, which people spent on watching TV in Ukraine significantly differed depending on age (chi-square = 65,172; sig<0,001). Although, the correlation is weak (R Pearson =0,146; sig<0,001). The younger the group, the fewer people watch the TV and the bigger the share of those who never watch it. The comparison of data from 2013 and 2005 shows as follows: *amount of time spent on watching TV became lower in groups of the youth and the middle aged. Among the youth in 2005 33.6% watched TV more than 3 hours a day, but in 2013 – 10.5%; among middle-aged in 2005 year – 26.5%, but in 2013 – only 14.3%.*

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<sup>1</sup> М. Кастельс, Галактика Интернет: размышления об Интернете, бизнесе и обществе, пер. с англ. А. Матвеева под ред. В. Харитоновой, Екатеринбург, 2004, с. 220–234.

<sup>2</sup> Н. Костенко, Информационно-культурные стили в России и Украине, «Социологический журнал», 2009, № 1, с. 47–69.

<sup>3</sup> І. Кононов, Етнос. Цінності. Комунікація. (Донбас в етнокультурних координатах України), Луганськ 2000, с.310.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, с. 310.

<sup>5</sup> European Social Survey, 2016, <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/> (01.02.2016).

**Table 1.** «On an average weekday, how much time, in total, do you spend watching television?» by age groups in 2005 and 2013 (in % from those, who gave the answer)

		No time at all	Less than ½ hour	½ hour to 1 hour	More than 1 hour. up to 1½ hours	More than 1½ hours. up to 2 hours	More than 2 hours. up to 2½ hours	More than 2½ hours. up to 3 hours	More than 3 hours	Total
15-29	2005	3.2	5.6	8.8	6.9	17.9	7.7	16.3	33.6	100
	N=375									
	2013	6.6	10.1	15.8	13.5	17.2	14.9	11.4	10.5	100
	N=437									
30-59	2005	3.9	2.8	10.5	9.6	18.3	11.6	16.9	26.5	100
	N=935									
	2013	5.6	6.9	13.9	14.4	18.6	13	13.3	14.3	100
	N=1006									
60+ >	2005	11.6	2.5	7.7	9.2	14.6	10.3	17	27	100
	N=709									
	2013	4.4	6.6	10.3	11.1	15.1	13	14.4	25	100
	N=700									

Comparing the general level of TV use in 2005 and 2013, we see a significant decrease in time spent on watching TV (chi-square =139.205; sig<0.001): the percentage of those who watch TV more than 3 hours a day decreased from 28% to 17%.

We have the following situation with *the radio: indicators of use differ depending on the age, but not very much* (chi-square =23,469; sig=0,053). Young people listen to the radio more than elderly people (over 60 years old). But between 2005 and 2011 the percentage of those, who didn't use radio at all, increased in all ages.

As far as *reading newspapers* is concerned: *the younger people are, the less they read them* (chi-square=87.541; sig<0.001). In the group of 15–29 years old 55.1% never read newspapers in 2011. Comparing data from 2011 and 2005, we see *a decline in the level of newspapers' use in all the age groups, but it is the most evident among young people*<sup>6</sup>.

So, in group «15-29 years old» *TV has the biggest amount of time of use among traditional media, then comes listening to the radio, and reading the newspapers is in the last place*. This gives us the model of using traditional media, which will exist in Ukraine. The decreasing use of traditional media we explain as a result of the growing popularity of the Internet, which provides an opportunity to watch a movie

<sup>6</sup> О. Петренко, Використання молоддю телебачення, радіо, друкованої преси та Інтернету: специфіка та тенденції, «Молодіжна політика: проблеми та перспективи: збірник наукових праць», 2013, Вип.4, с. 325.

without the TV, listen to music like on the radio, learn the latest news without spending money on a newspaper etc. Users redistribute the time of leisure for the benefit of the Internet. In Ukraine (2016) in age group «15–29 years old», only 8% don't use the Internet<sup>7</sup>, so among the youth the Internet is more used than radio and newspapers (press is the least popular), but the Web is less used than TV. *For the population as a whole: first place has TV, the second place – Internet, then newspapers, and the radio on the last place.* The Global network very rapidly increases its influence and takes the audience's attention from other channels of mass communication.

In order to forecast future influence of different media in Ukraine we took data from countries, where the Internet had spread earlier. However, it has to be noted that those countries differ in how they use the different types of media, so the extrapolation should be done considering cultural and socio-economic specifics of the countries.

More than half of the Americans (55%) claimed that the main source of news in the country and abroad is the TV. Online media and social networks became the second most popular media (21%). Printed media was chosen as the main source of information by 9%, and radio by 6%<sup>8</sup>.

N. Kostenko explored the models of use of various media in the European countries. Her conclusions are based on data ESS 2006–2007<sup>9</sup> and demonstrate that the choice of media has a quite noticeable socio-cultural background. N. Kostenko made a *cluster analysis of countries with preference for the usage of the TV, radio and press*. The following five "combination types" were distinguished. In each country, some types are better represented than the others. No significant changes were indicated from wave to wave, so they are stable enough.

The moderate/minimum consumption: no high level of television use, low levels of radio listening and reading the press, active use of the Internet. Auditory culture: intensive use of the radio, TV consumption is below average, the level of press use is low, active use of the Internet. Audiovisual style: based on an intense use of TV and radio, with low consumption of the press. New types of communication are exploited less. Visually-verbal culture: the level of consumption of TV and the press is above average, with average use of radio. Internet use is lower than average. The visual style: TV is the main information source, and radio and press consumption is low, with majority of the population not using the Internet.

Therefore, we can see that active use of the Internet does not prevent Europeans from actively listening to the radio or reading newspapers, but it is not

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<sup>7</sup> Дані досліджень інтернет-аудиторії України, 2016, [http://www.inau.org.ua/analytics\\_vuq.phtml](http://www.inau.org.ua/analytics_vuq.phtml) (01.03.2016).

<sup>8</sup> Интернет для американцев стал вторым по важности источником новостей, «Зеркало недели», 2013, [http://zn.ua/WORLD/internet-dlya-amerikancev-stal-vtorym-po-vazhnosti-istochnikom-novostey-125389\\_.html](http://zn.ua/WORLD/internet-dlya-amerikancev-stal-vtorym-po-vazhnosti-istochnikom-novostey-125389_.html).

<sup>9</sup> Н. Костенко, Информационно-культурные стили в России и Украине, «Социологический журнал», 2009, №1, с. 50.

in line with a high level of TV consumption. In Ukraine and Russia this pattern is very strong in relation to TV: those who use the Internet more actively watch TV less. In case of radio in Russia: the more active the Internet use is, the higher the level of radio listening. In case of press in Russia: the more somebody reads newspapers, the less he or she uses the Internet<sup>10</sup>. In Ukraine the situation is similar.

Let us analyze the changes of the impact of television, radio, press and the Internet in Ukraine and the European countries with high level of Internet use. We will base on the ESS' data. The first study was conducted in different countries, over different years. So we took a close year for comparison, but not the same: Ukraine – 2005, Norway – 2002. We remember that during the analyzed period Ukrainians started to watch TV, listen to the radio and read the newspapers less often, but the level of the Internet use increased a lot. In 2016 year 62 % of all the population +15 years old used the Internet<sup>11</sup>.

**Table 2.** «On an average weekday, how much time, in total, do you spend watching television?» in Ukraine (in % from those, who delivered the answer)

	No time at all	Less than 1 hour	More than 1 hour, up to 2 hours	More than 2 hours, up to 3 hours	More than 3 hours	Total
2005 (N=2020)	6.4	12.4	25.9	27.2	28	100
2013 (N=2143)	5.4	20.5	30.4	26.7	17.0	100

chi-squared=139.205; sig=0.000

**Table 3.** «On an average weekday, how much time, in total, do you spend listening to the radio?» in Ukraine (in % from those, who gave the answer)

	No time at all	Less than 1 hour	More than 1 hour, up to 2 hours	More than 2 hours, up to 3 hours	More than 3 hours	Total
2005 (N=1994)	35	21.7	13.7	8.5	21.1	100
2011 (N=1870)	51.2	19.9	11.1	4.7	13.1	100

chi-squared=178.383; sig < 0.001

<sup>10</sup> Н. Костенко, Информационно-культурные стили в России и Украине, «Социологический журнал», 2009, № 1, с. 66.

<sup>11</sup> Дані досліджень інтернет-аудиторії України, 2016, [http://www.inau.org.ua/analytics\\_vuq.phtml](http://www.inau.org.ua/analytics_vuq.phtml) (01.03.2016).

**Table 4.** «On an average weekday, how much time, in total, do you spend reading the newspapers?» in Ukraine (in % from those, who gave the answer)

	No time at all	Less than 1 hour	More than 1 hour, up to 2 hours	More than 2 hours, up to 3 hours	More than 3 hours	Total
2005	28.8	54.7	12.9	2.6	1	100
(N=2010)						
2011	38	53.5	7.1	0.9	0.5	100
(N=1891)						

chi-squared =118.438; sig < 0.001

In Norway, for the period 2002–2014 we have a small change of use TV (but significant in chi-squared): on the one hand during the twelve years the number of people, that do not watch TV, slightly increased (+ 2.7%), the time of watching declined slightly. But we don't see rapid decrease of attention to TV, which we had in Ukraine in 2005–2013 years. Though indicators of TV using in Norway are moderate enough (Ukrainians, on average, watch TV longer), the share of those, who refused of TV, generally is lower than in Ukraine. But Ukraine and Norway are moving closer in this indicators.

**Table 5.** «On an average weekday, how much time, in total, do you spend watching television?» in Norway (in % from those, who gave the answer)

	No time at all	Less than 1 hour	More than 1 hour, up to 2 hours	More than 2 hours, up to 3 hours	More than 3 hours	Total
2002	1	23.9	37.6	25.6	11.9	100
(N=2036)						
2014	3.7	26.7	35.5	23.2	10.9	100
(N=1436)						

chi-squared =44.730; Sig=0.000

By the way, a decline in attention to TV and newspapers, for example in Poland similarly to Ukraine, goes together with the spread of the Internet.

Also in Norway (2002–2010) we see a significant decrease in the impact of radio (chi-squared=57.230; sig=0.001). But the trend is not clear: with an increase in the share of those who do not listen to the radio at all (from 13.2% to 16%), we have an increase in the share of those who listen to it more than 2 hours daily. In Norway, the decline in the use of radio couldn't be even compared with the situation in Ukraine, where 51.2% of population over 15 don't listen to the radio.

**Table 6.** «On an average weekday, how much time, in total, do you spend listening to the radio?» in Norway (in % from those, who gave the answer)

	No time at all	Less than 1 hour	More than 1 hour, up to 2 hours	More than 2 hours, up to 3 hours	More than 3 hours	Total
2002	13.2	47.6	16.7	8.1	14.4	100
(N=2036)						
2010	16.0	42.2	14.6	10.1	17.1	100
(N=1548)						

chi-squared =57,230; Sig=0,001

Changes in reading newspapers in Norway (2002–2010) is also significant (chi-squared =76.435; sig<0.001). On the one hand there is a slight increase in the number of those who do not read newspapers (from 3.6% to 5.6%), on the other hand there is an increase in reading newspapers in other categories. In Norway the level of reading press is higher than in Ukraine, France and Germany.

**Table 7.** «On an average weekday, how much time, in total, do you spend reading the newspapers?» in Norway (in % from those, who gave the answer)

	No time at all	Less than 1 hour	More than 1 hour, up to 2 hours	More than 2 hours, up to 3 hours	More than 3 hours	Total
2002	3.6	73	19.5	3	0.8	100
(N=2036)						
2010	5.6	67.3	21.6	3.9	1.6	100
(N=1548)						

chi-squared =76.435; Sig=0.000

*So the decline in use of traditional media in Ukraine could not be explained only as the impact of the Internet. Socio-economic circumstances and traditions of each society are very important. In the European countries with very high level of the Internet use, traditional media maintain their influence. Besides this, in Europe and America we saw a "renaissance" of the radio; there are signs that Ukraine will be included in this process. However, it's undoubtedly the Internet that is one of the main reasons for traditional media to lose their positions.*

In Ukraine population shows various models of using new and traditional media. As a result of factor analysis of roles different sources of information play in informing voters, we identified the following models. The research «Political parties

and people during the election campaign: context of the big city» was held on September – October 2012 in Luhansk by Department of Philosophy and Sociology Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University (n = 1100). If we take using media (TV, radio, newspapers, Internet) by youth, we can distinguish two factors, which totally explained 58.55% variance. The first (30,29 % variance) – the use of newspapers and TV, the second (28.26% variance) – Internet and radio. If we take 3 factors for the factor analysis, they totally explained 81.87% of variance. The first (29.246%) – using Internet and radio, the second (27.615%,) – newspapers; the third (25.014%) – TV. So these are the groups which can be identified by a typical use of certain media. In all cases, internet use negatively correlated with the use of newspapers.

*Internet has a certain specificity of spreading information and its perception by users.*

The global trend in mass communication is the «demassification of media», and it is even clearer on the Internet. Media have become extremely diverse, they are focused on narrow groups; audiences are under the process of fragmentation. «Today, it is not the mass of people that receives the same information, but small groups of people who exchange images created by them»<sup>12</sup>. On the Internet people choose sources on their own choice: ordinary sites, forums, internet-media (online editions, online-radio and TV), channels on YouTube and different groups and accounts in the social networks. Often all these produce difficulties in forming a common agenda at the national level.

As we have said, the *convergence* (a term used by M. Castells) is one of the main trends of Internet development – interpenetration, confluence with other types of media. Printed editions have their internet-version, there are also internet-based newspapers which have no paper edition, TV channels have their own websites or are broadcast over the Internet. On the Net there are also broadcasts of internet-radio stations and internet TV channels. Media have their accounts in social networks and form their content by using Internet sources, making social media reviews. The last ones are specific media (blogs and social networks), where users are producers of information, spreaders and consumers of information.

Traditional audience is based on communication "one-to-many". But «new media» on the Internet complemented this model of communication by models "many-to-many" and in some cases «one -to-one».

Internet begot a new model of production and use of information by users. *Users "center" information and its sources around themselves.* What information we get when we use search services, is determined by what we ask in the query string. When we use social networks we subscribe to the public, groups and media topics which we are interested in. We subscribe to accounts of politicians,

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<sup>12</sup> Э. Тоффлер, Третья волна, 2004, [http://www.gumer.info/bibliotek\\_Buks/Culture/Toffler/\\_Index.php](http://www.gumer.info/bibliotek_Buks/Culture/Toffler/_Index.php) (15.12.2010).

public figures, journalists and other opinion leaders. We "privatize" the space of information: in social networks we see news from our friends' accounts, news from media, public authorities, posts from the figures' of science and culture pages, posts from townspeople from a group or site of your city. *It is syncretic media for us.*

*New type of Internet media form their content like news from eyewitnesses: users propose their news and information, comment and discuss information in a particular group in social network or on the site. Some popular blogs also acquire media features.*

The features of media include the following: internet-version of tradition media; internet-media, which function only on the Internet; sites of news agencies. Important features of online media include search engines, which have a news line. They have a significant impact on informing the audience about current events<sup>13</sup>. Acting as media aggregator, news lines of search sites become intermediaries between media and users. A lot of users in Ukraine will use search engines and their news lines, rather than use particular media. Most often people see news on those sites where they have their e-mail accounts. The most popular search sites and sites with news aggregation in Ukraine are Google, Mail.ru, Yandex, Ukr.net, I.ua<sup>14</sup>.

The websites which are just Internet editions of more traditional media can influence public opinion not only by posting certain articles, or by the content of their comments, but also through the user's ability to place his/her information (message, photo or video), for example, through blogs or the button «propose the news» on sites and pages in social media. Some media websites also host discussion forums.

A variety of services (social networks, blogging services, YouTube etc.) acquired media functions now.

Therefore we think that the main *features of online media audience are*: it is a group of people that takes information from one source; they are also together involved in the production and/or dissemination of information (share link or repost) and forming public opinion through commenting materials, using options «agree / disagree» («like», «+/-» and so on), providing information for publication, its discussion through special services available on the sites (forums, polls, blogs). *This kind of audience is a more active group than the more traditional one.* Through integration in social networks and services (like YouTube) Internet media expand their audience: users (obviously, only some of them) take part in a discussion, "repost" relevant materials, then disseminate information to "friends" of users in social network. In order to assess media audiences on the Internet we

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<sup>13</sup> Г. Кашуба, Українські інтернет-видання: комунікативно-лінгвістичні та правові аспекти, «Вісник Львівського УНТУ. Серія журналістики», 2004, Вип. 25, с. 474–480.

<sup>14</sup> Дані досліджень інтернет-аудиторії України, 2016, [http://www.inau.org.ua/analytics\\_vuq.phtml](http://www.inau.org.ua/analytics_vuq.phtml) (01.03.2016).

should take into account not only those visiting the sites, but also the number of the followers a given page has in social networks. Not only media affect the audience, but also members of audience affect public opinion with the comments and by spreading information.

Some features of online media affect the specific perception of information from this source:

- 1) The combination of text information, photos, videos and audio materials;
- 2) Such audience is active (comments, «likes», share links in social media), so users can support or condemn an article, which will affect the perception of the material and shape public opinion.
- 3) High speed of material feed. News feeds have become permanent elements which give pace to the flow of events.
- 4) The Internet provides enormous speed and volume of information. Information becomes obsolete very quickly, where old messages gets "buried" under a flurry of more recent ones.
- 5) The audiences of online media have much more opportunities of content management: links between thematically related materials, access to archives, ability to review any video (for example TV shows or news) from any place and at any time, to save any information or find information with a search engine.
- 6) The fragmentation of audiences and personalization of search results based on previous user queries, algorithms of offering "interesting" materials in social networks contribute to users' circuit in a narrow thematic worlds, can prevent the perception of something new (for example echo chamber effect).
- 7) Live polylogue or dialogue that occurs during the commenting is available to others, influencing not only readers' way of thinking, but also their emotions and change their opinions.
- 8) Anonymity or physical distance promote a serious character or even brutality of discussions. As a result, in some cases, the websites of media and blogging sites are characterized by homogenization of audience.

Marshall McLuhan forecasted the decadence of the text in the era of audio-visual culture, but text has not "died" on the Internet. It has changed from a linear one and from a logic of book to the networks of hyperlinks, short, emotional messages, small articles etc. In some ways the Internet gave "renaissance" to the text – a lot of information on the Internet gets spread in the text form.

I. Ashmanov notes the following features of information perception on the Internet: „epidemic of "clip thinking": user's attention become fragmented, unstable. The average user does not keep the focus of attention, can't read long texts. No one watches a long video. Content should be finely granulated, easily

digestible...”<sup>15</sup>. The technical features of most social networks make user be limited to short posts plus a few photos or videos or links.

Internet communication channels give a lot of opportunity for participation and development of the public sphere, but also provide an opportunity for escapism, removal from the agenda of society.

The development of the Internet has changed the media: convergence of traditional and new media; redistribution of using different types of media; movement from model «one source of information - passive audience» to active audience, which can comment, share or even create information that can be spread and influence public opinion; some of the functions of traditional media have been inherited by Internet media, social media (social networks, blogs etc.). Social media have become syncretic media for the modern user, which give the opportunity to select information sources from private and public sphere, to produce and distribute information.

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## **The Internet in the information system of media. The specificity of the Internet audiences**

### Summary

This article analyzes changes in the use of traditional types of media and the emergence of a new type of internet media and audience. On the basis of ESS data we see that growth in Internet use leads (in case of Ukraine) to a reduction in the level of TV watching, radio listening and newspapers reading and this process can be observed to have different specificity in different age groups. Comparing Norway, Ukraine and some other countries we see that the Global network takes the audience's attention away from other channels of mass communication, but a specific level of use of traditional media is caused by cultural, social-economic features of these countries. The *convergence* (a term coined by M. Castells) is one of the main trends of Internet development – interpenetration with other types of media.

Internet begot a new model of production and use of information by users. Users "center" information and its sources around themselves. When we use social networks, through subscribing we "privatize" the space of information: in social networks we see news from our friends' accounts, news from media, public authorities, posts from the figures' of science and culture pages, posts from townspeople of our city. It is a syncretic type of media for us. The features of online media audience are: it is the group of people that take information from one source; they are together involved in the production and/or distribution of information and forming public opinion through commenting materials, providing information for publication and its discussion. This kind of audience is a more active group, than the tradition one. Not only does media affect the audience, but also members of audience affect public opinion.

Key words: media, Internet, convergence, social network, audience