

Convergence drives evolution of content management

For a long time we have talked about broadcasters and telecommunications companies in different conversations. The very strong influence of increasing convergence within the media industry, however, has changed the discussion, as broadcasters and telcos now share the goal of acquiring TV programming and delivering this content through a multiplatform distribution model including TV channels, video-on-demand (VoD) services, Internet platforms, and mobile services.

Though they began offering very distinct and different services, TV broadcasts on one hand and telephony and then Internet service on the other, broadcasters and telcos are converging on the wealth of new platforms available today. One illustration of this powerful trend is the shift of the NAB Show, which is proposing for the first time that telecom operators join both as exhibitors and attendees. It's a sensible proposition as, having taken on similar goals with respect to receiving and distributing content, these media companies now face similar challenges in managing that media.

Multiplatform delivery

Media asset management thus has become critical for both broadcasters and telcos, who have realized that the only cost-effective way to establish multiplatform delivery model is to build a single central workflow that will allow them to receive and store content, handle metadata, and transcode or otherwise process media for automatic delivery to the appropriate target in the appropriate format. Centralizing asset management is the first step in building a streamlined and cost-effective model for multiplatform media delivery. Elimination of duplicate processes and storage saves both time and money while simplifying overall operations. The second step brings automation to bear in maximizing the efficiency of the workflow. Using preconfigured rules to guide the flow and processing of media from start to finish, broadcasters and telcos can redirect human resources toward more creative areas of content delivery. The third step is to establish a single dashboard or interface that supervises the whole system, monitoring all media management processes from start to finish. Tight integration of the media asset management system with third-party systems across the workflow makes this last key step possible. As convergence begins to alter media companies'



business models, it also will affect their implementation of media asset management systems. Whereas broadcasters traditionally have adopted such solutions in a B2B approach, in which they purchase the product and deploy it to support their services, telcos have operated in a B2C approach that functions more like a revenue-sharing model: it depends on the revenues gained rather than on a flat fee. This discrepancy stems from the relatively small size of the broadcaster as compared to the telco operator. As a result, their use of media asset



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management has become very similar, but the way in which they handle the subject has been very different.

Change on the horizon

For the most part, broadcasters and telcos have been independently pursuing the more sophisticated, more streamlined model of asset management required for multiplatform delivery. A significant change is on the horizon, however, as these companies begin to realize that in a converged market, cooperation may be more profitable than competition. Up to this point, both broadcasters and telcos have put their resources toward acquiring the content that is popular with viewers. They have made sizeable investments in movies and programming in order to draw or maintain subscribers. Larger players across the industry are rethinking this approach, some even entering into alliances with their competitors in order to share – and ultimately lessen – the costs of acquiring content and the costs of operating TV channels and other delivery systems. As these partnerships continue to evolve, the concept of convergence will grow to encompass media companies in their entirety. 