A RESEARCH ON THE FUTURE OF TRADITIONAL MEDIA IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING MEDIA ENVIRONMENT.



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*“What is new about new media comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media and the ways in which older media refashions themselves to answer the challenges of new media”*

*Bolter & Grusin – 1999.*

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# Dedication.

It’s only seems right to thank the people who helped me conduct this research. In the first place I would like to thank my interviewees for their time and for supplying me with the necessary information. Without them this research could have never been done and their help is therefore greatly appreciated.   
  
Secondly I wish to thank my tutor Renee Coers for her help and guidance in the process. She managed to motivate me at times when I was struggling and needed someone to tell me how I could best approach things. After a rough start on my part I am very happy with the end result and a lot of that is thanks to Renee’s efforts to get the best out of me.

Last but certainly not least my gratitude goes out to my parents who stuck by me during my whole academic career which has not been the smoothest of rides. They were always there when I needed them most, sometimes just to talk but often also for advice and a push in the right direction. A special thanks goes out to my father for reading my entire thesis and correcting and giving advice where necessary. Your critical look on my work over the years has been much appreciated.   
  
I can only hope that the end-result of this thesis will be as satisfying as I have been with all of your help.

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# Management summary.

The future of traditional print media such as newspapers and magazines has gradually become a topic of discussion over the last few years. Due to the increase in digital media consumption, traditional media companies see their newspaper subscriptions decline and print magazines are slowly disappearing from company’s portfolios.

The main aim of this thesis centers on the future of print media in a rapidly changing media environment. The theoretical framework is the foundation of this research and is used to, at a later stage, justify conclusions. For this particular research the author has chosen to use the Uses and Gratification model to depict what needs are satisfied per medium, the Convergence Continuum model to illustrate how media companies can collaborate and a recent media report by Nielsen to show the differences in audience engagement per medium. In this chapter it is highlighted that print media has a more trustworthy image than digital media but that digital media has a higher audience engagement level due to the multimedia options digital media provides.

Chapter 3 and 4 focus on how the expert interviews were conducted and consequently analyze the most important results from this qualitative data research. The interviewees mainly stressed the importance for print media to emphasize on their unique values such as their in-depth articles and more effective means of advertising. In addition to this, the importance of innovation within the media sector was also mentioned frequently, and traditional media companies should seize opportunities to innovate rather than to solely stick to their print product.

The conclusion of this research is drawn on both the desk-research and the conducted expert interviews. The main findings relate to how print media can diversify themselves from their digital counterparts. The author concludes that diversification can be achieved by means of focusing on a niche market, by adopting media innovation such as ‘Blendle’ or by effectively communicating the advantage print media hold over digital media to their consumers. Detailed results and recommendations are presented further in the thesis.

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# Chapter I - Introduction and background.

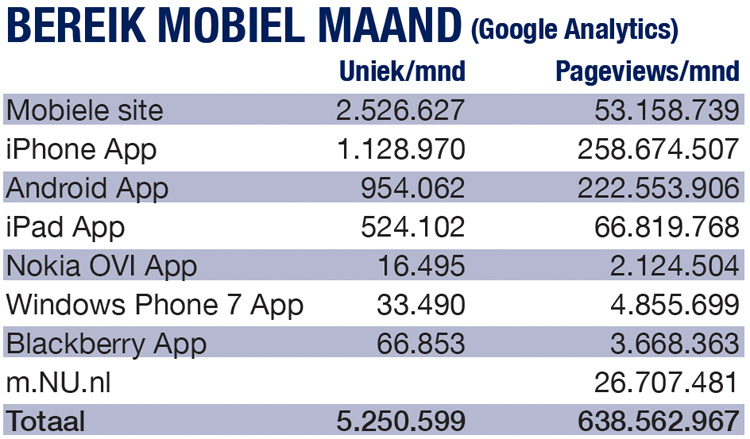
In this first chapter an overall introduction will be given to the research topic. In addition the problem definition, possible restrictions to the research, research questions and the further chapter division will be described.

## 1.1 Description of the problem situation.

#### 1.1.1 The case of Sanoma.

On the 31st of October 2012 Sanoma B.V. , the biggest media company in the Netherlands (Sanoma, 2014), opted for a reorganization. Due to the decline in magazines sold, Sanoma B.V decided to focus more on the digital domain of media. From the more than 50 magazines Sanoma B.V originally owned, only 17 were kept. The rest was either sold or merged. (Sanoma, 2013). Not only did this have consequences for the business model of the company, it also meant 500 people either lost their jobs or got relocated. (NOS, 2013)

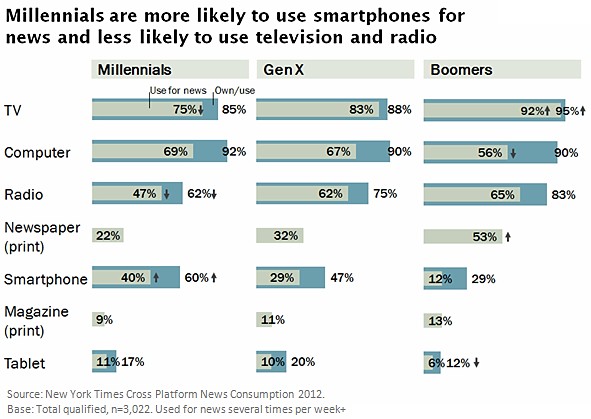
The main reasons given by Sanoma B.V for this reorganization was the decline in magazines sold, and the consumer’s shift from print media to digital media. As market leader, Sanoma was prepared for this and swiftly switched their focus to the digital media market. With several popular websites, television channels and mobile applications Sanoma B.V is still the largest media company, but with a different company strategy (Sanoma, 2014). To give an indication of the company´s online portfolio, the table below (fig 1) illustrates the reach of one of their most popular mobile news applications; *NU*. On the left side of this table, the unique visitors per mobile platform are shown, and on the right side the number of page views per month. According to Google analytics these page views accumulated to a staggering 638.562.967. This shows that despite the fact that their revenues from print media went down, Sanoma B.V. opted for a new, digital, strategy and remained the largest media company in the Netherlands.

  
 *(Fig 1. Reach NU on mobile devices per month)*

### 1.1.2 A new generation?

As the internet enables interactive engagement by means of social media like Facebook and Twitter, the way to a participatory culture is paved. By sharing and collaborating online via the aforementioned social media individuals are participating in communicating and creating content. This participatory environment has facilitated the emergence of a convergence culture (Jenkins, 2006). A convergence culture can be explained as a culture in which the consumer no longer uses one device per media consumption. Instead the consumer now opts for a consumption pattern in which several media devices are used to consume the same type of media. To illustrate, the news can now be read via a smartphone, tablet and traditional media like a newspaper. This convergence culture especially applies to the current younger generation (12-20), who are more prone to checking the news via several online media than by means of a tangible newspaper.

In the table below (fig.2) three generations can be depicted, the *Millennial’s* (1980’s-2000) , *Gen x* (1960’s – 1980’s) and the *Boomers*( 1945 – 1960). Looking at the table, it can be stated that there is a rapid decline in the consumption of the printed newspaper. Of the current generation ( the Millennial’s ) only 22% consume a printed newspaper, whereas the newspaper is the number one source of information / news for the boomers (54%). This indeed indicates that there is a decline in the consumption of print media. This consequently leads to a rise of usage of other media, such as the computer (internet) and the smartphone. Figure 2 and the decline in print media consumption illustrate the situation of the current media environment and especially the consequences for the traditional print media. The relevance of this research is not only strongly related to the decline in print media subscriptions but also the increase of consumption of its digital equivalents.



*(Fig 2. News consumption among the different generations. )*

The problem for print media can be described as a shift towards a more digital consumption of news, information and entertainment. If the decline of print media will continue, then the next generation will barely consume any of these types of media. By means of this thesis I therefore want to research what can be done by print media organizations in order to prevent this from happening.

### 1.2 Problem definition.

The aim of the my research is to find a way for traditional print media to successfully co-exist, and/or compete, with their online equivalents. If the decline in print media consumption progressively continues then the next generation will barely consume any of these media types. The research is therefore focused on what traditional media organizations can do to prevent this from happening.

### 1.3 Research questions.

**Main research question:** *What changes must traditional print media make to be able to compete with its digital equivalents?*

**Sub-research questions:**

1. What are the strongest points of traditional print media?
2. What are the biggest weaknesses of digital media?
3. What are the main reasons for people to shift from traditional to digital-media consumption?

### 1.4 Chapter division.

**Chapter 1 – Introduction and background.**

Chapter 1 will cover the background of the thesis. This means that the research itself will be justified during the description of the problem situation. The focus in this chapter will also be on the problem definition and restrictions of the research. Questions as: ‘Which problems might occur during the research?’, or ‘In what way could I be limited in my research?’ will be answered in this chapter.

**Chapter 2 – Theoretical framework.**

The focus of the second chapter will be on the theories and models used in this research. All models will share a relevancy with the topic of the dissertation, and will be justified by means of articles and other publications. In essence, the theoretical framework describes the tools with which the research was conducted.

**Chapter 3 - Methodology**

The third chapter will look at the methodology of the research. Here will be explained how the required information was found, and why this information was considered to be essential. Furthermore, it will also focus on how the research subjects were sampled.

**Chapter 4 – Interviews and results.**

In this fourth chapter, the aim will be to gather the interviews, summarize them and pinpoint the most important statements. This will be done in order to get a clear overview on *who said what*, which will consequentially help in drawing more accurate conclusions and findings.

**Chapter 5 – Findings**

In this chapter the main findings gained from the expert interviews will be listed and analyzed by means of the data and theory as mentioned in the theoretical framework.

**Chapter 6 – Conclusions.**

This chapter will feature the final conclusions of this research report, which will be drawn on the findings as described in chapter 5. In addition the sixth chapter will also give answer to the aforementioned research questions.

**Chapter 7 – Recommendations and advice.**

Chapter 7 will focus on the recommendations and advice that will be drawn from the *findings and conclusions* chapter. The advice and recommendations as eventually given will be realistic and derived from the research results.

### 1.5 Restrictions to the research.

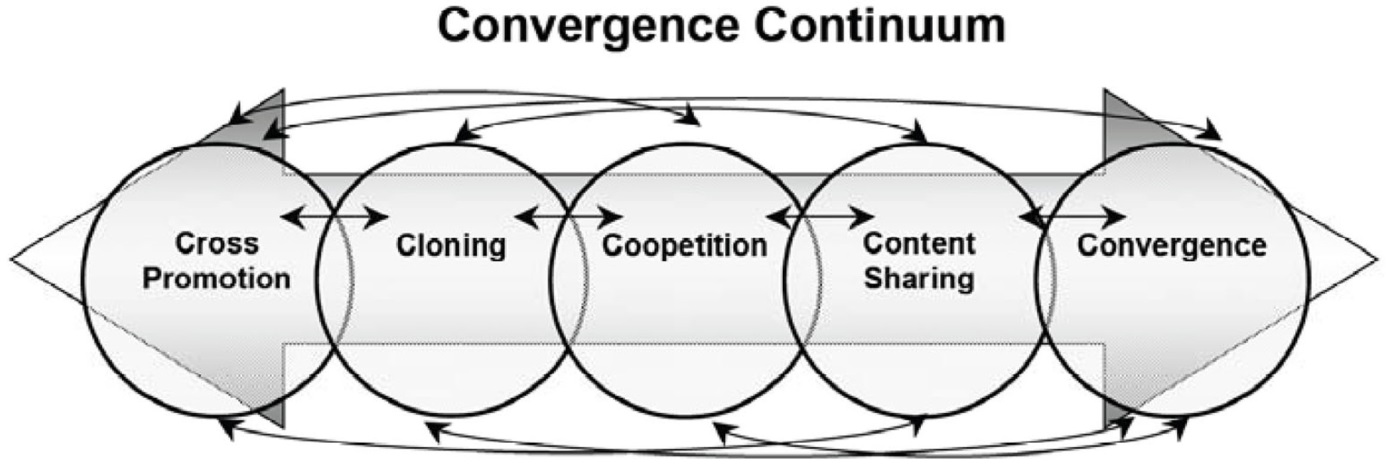
The balance between the actual research and documenting the results is, in my opinion, not ideal. A better and more elaborate research might have been conducted if more attention could have been paid to gathering relevant results from interviews and surveys. For instance, with more time to spend on the research, an option would have been to actually test the research’s hypothesis by handing out both print and digital versions of the same content to people, and see if their preferences are in line with the findings of the research. In addition to that another restriction to this research is that it requires very specific data to answer the research question. A mass survey would not suffice as the research requires data from people who are professionals in the field of print or digital media. Finding these people to use as expert interviewees was difficult as I found that many companies and/or people are not willing to take the time to be interviewed.

# Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework.

The theoretical framework will be used to review models and theories which will be applied in this research. The relevancy of the models and theories will be justified by means of articles and other publications. The chosen models and theories should lead to eligible recommendations at the end of this report. The models selected for this research are:

* The convergence continuum model (fig 3) .
* The Uses and Gratification model ( fig 4) .
* National Cross media engagement study by Nielsen (2013) .

## 2.1 – The convergence continuum model by Larry Dailey.



*(Fig 3. The convergence continuum model.* (Dailey, 2003)*)*

### 2.1.2 Descriptions of terms.

Before elaborating on the model as shown above, it’s important to define the terminology linked to it.

*Definitions of convergence.*

1. In the world of media convergence, every story gets told, every brand gets sold and every consumer gets courted across multiple media platforms (Jenkins, 2006)
2. The definition of convergence is evolving within a media landscape where competing newspapers and television stations form alliances to meet a variety of technological, editorial, regulatory and market-based opportunities and challenges. The partnerships, some of which have existed for several years, were created as digital technology allowed journalists to produce news across several multimedia platforms at increasing speed. (Dailey, 2003)
3. The combining of old (traditional) media with new media for the dissemination of news, information and entertainment (Borders, 2008)

Although many definitions can be used depending on context, in this research convergence will be described as the combining of old (traditional) media with new media for the dissemination of news, information and entertainment. This definition is most applicable due to its strong focus on the link between old and new media and how both can complement each other. Another important term to define is *cross media*. As the convergence continuum model focuses strongly on ways of collaboration between different media, cross media is a relevant term in this context.

*Definitions of cross media.*

1. The concept of cross media describes communication or production where two or more media platforms are involved in an integrated way. (Erdal, Coming to terms with convergence journalism : Cross media as an analytical and theoretical concept, 2011)
2. Cross media is defined as any content (news, music, text and images) published in multiple media channels. The content is posted once and it is available on other channels. Multiple media simply means that the same content is delivered to end-users in more than one medium. (Veglis A. , 2008)
3. Cross-media refers to integrated experiences across multiple media, including the Internet, video and film, broadcast and cable TV, mobile devices, DVD, print, and radio. The new

media aspect of the “cross-media experience” typically involves some high level of audience interactivity. In other words, it’s an experience (often a story of sorts) that we “read” by watching movies, dipping into a novel, playing a game, riding a ride, etc. And this experience is connected across the various media involved through the story and the audience interactivity. (Davidson, 2010)

In this research the term *cross media* will be described as the process of publishing any content (news, music, text and images) in multiple channels and thus delivered to the end-user by means of more than one medium. It is important to not confuse the term cross-media with *trans media.* Although both terms are quite similar, there is an important difference. Where cross-media communications require a pro-active role by the audience to interact with the *experience* and thus get more directly involved, this is not considered a necessity for trans media. So the main differences between the terms is found in the rate of audience participation. (Davidson, 2010)

### 2.1.3 Elaboration on the convergence continuum model.

The model as displayed in paragraph 2.1 (fig.3 ) is best described as a conceptual framework for understanding convergence. In the most simple sense, the continuum model displays five ways of how (media) companies can collaborate. Although each circle has its own characteristics and behavior, the outcome will always be linked to the previously defined term *cross media.* The convergence continuum model features 5 circles that each illustrate a stage. These stages are all characterized by a wide range of behaviors. An important note to this is that all these types of behavior can overlap (intertwine) as interaction and cooperation between organizations increase. This also means that there is no fixed first place in the model, as the collaboration can start from any circle.

The first circle is *cross promotion* and can be best described as the process of using words and / or visual elements to promote content produced by a media partner in the medium owned by another media firm. An example of this type of collaboration would be a newscaster pushing the audience towards a certain newspaper article or website or a magazine article about a new mobile application.

*Cloning,* the second circle in the model, is the direct display of content made by a partner. For instance, if one were to copy the content of a partner’s newspaper on their own website this would be considered cloning behavior.

The term *coopetition* is a merge of two well-known words in the business environment: cooperation and competition. The definition of the term coopetition also has aspects of both these words. It is the point at which partners do cooperate by sharing information on selected stories, but at the same time still compete and produce their own original content. For example, a newspaper reporter might appear as a expert or commentator on a television station’s newscast to discuss a current issue, but the two staffs are careful not to divulge any information that might be exclusive to their news products.

A more intense type of collaboration is *content sharing*. When this occurs the two partners meet on a regular basis and develop special projects together. This could, for example, be an election coverage in which media organizations share information and together blend it into an article or promotional campaign.

The last circle is about the previously defined term *convergence*. In this model convergence is having a shared assignment ( an article or promotion campaign for example), and using the strengths of each medium to most effectively get it to the consumer. This is often done by using a cross-media approach. Hybrid teams of journalists from partner organizations work together to plan, report, and produce a product. Along the way the hybrid team decides what parts are best told in print, broadcast and / or digital form.

### 2.1.4 Justification of the model.

Looking at the current situation of news and other media companies, cross media is emerging as an effective growing strategy for media organizations. A significant development over the last few years is the growth in the number of convergent ‘media houses’at all levels of news journalism, from (inter)national media to regional and local media. Media houses is a term used to describe converging companies because today, few modern media organizations publish on only one platform. (Erdal, Convergence, 2011) Different types of media such as text, images, audio and video are no longer to be found on only one publishing channel. In this day and age we do not only have multiple ways of receiving news in various formats but current multimedia devices also enable cross usage of various publishing channels on the same device. (Petersen, 2007) Despite the aforementioned change in the variety of publishing channels and multimedia devices, people often think that this also changes the media content. The only things that normally change however are the channel, visual appearance and the smaller size of the text. The essence of the article however often remains the same. (Veglis A. , 2008). Looking at cross media itself, the distribution of the same content is not considered to be a criterion when utilizing multiple distribution channels. It’s merely the way of publishing content through a variety of channels that has given birth to *cross media* as we know it today.

## 2.2 Uses and gratification model by Katz, Gurevitch & Haas (1973).

### 2.2.1 Introduction and justification.

The main reason for adopting the model into the research is the fact that it is not only applicable on every type of media, but it can also be approached from two perspectives. The first perspective is that the model can analyse the motives of the consumer. Why do they use a certain type of media and what sort of gratification does it give them? The second perspective is that the focus can be on the media provider who can, if aware of what the target audience wants, adjust their approach in such ways that they achieve a higher *consumer gratification* which potentially can lead to a larger audience. This could consequentially increase the revenues and reach of the company. It’s important to define gratifications, before delving deeper into the model itself. For further reference the term gratification is defined as a source of pleasure or satisfaction. Uses and gratification (U&G) is a psychological communication perspective that examines how individuals use mass communication (Ruggiero, 2000). The whole theory is based on the assumption that consumers select media and content to fulfill their needs or wants. In essence the relationship between media usage and gratifications is rather easy to illustrate. A family might watch a family-friendly movie to be entertained. A businessman might read the Wall Street Journal to satisfy his need for information on the latest business news. The U&G model assumes that audiences are not passive receivers or consumers of media, but instead hold power over their own media consumption and take on an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives. This notion also complements the essence of the model, which states that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their desires and needs, to reach a level of gratification. One could therefore actually state that media companies are actually competing over viewer’s gratification (Uses and gratifiation theory, 2008). The Uses and Gratification model has always been revised, questioned and criticized for its limitations. The problem with the model was that, to apply it, the consumer has to be active in consuming information. However, in the past there was often a one way consumption between a consumer and the media that was used. Consequentially the audience could not be considered as active, but as a passive group which merely consumed information. The aforementioned criticism was justified, due to the passive form of the audience. However, the tools offered by modern media have increased the participation rate of consumers. Instead of merely consuming the information, the target audience now discusses the information in the comment section or shares it on their social media. Media- technologies such as the computer or tablet offer a wide range of possibilities for the consumer. People type, click , use joysticks and scroll as part of interaction with the medium. These actions were conceptualized as affordances (Norman, 1999)*.* These affordances allow internet users to not only experience the media in newer ways, but also to get actively involved. The notion of media has changed over the years. It used to refer to a handful of mass communication tools such as newspapers, radio and television. This notion has however changed and more specifically, became broader. Media today range from a large number of devices (smartphones, tablets), to channels (internet, cable) to different *venues* on these media such as social network sites and home shopping. This has not only allowed the consumer to communicate with the device ( give a machine an order to do something), but it has allowed the user to also communicate with other users (S. Shyam Sundar, 2013). This has led to a far more active audience in terms of media usage. The criticism that the U&G model could not be well applied due to the passive role of the consumer is no longer relevant. Consumers are more active than ever, and therefore the U&G model can serve very well as applicable theory in this research. Although much of research has been done on U&G, there is a general consensus towards an ideology where consumers have five motives that are directly linked to their needs and gratifications (fig 4).

*1.Cognitive needs*

Using the media to acquire information and news and knowledge. This need can be satisfied by means of several types of content. For instance, a quiz show on television can increase their knowledge, whereas a search-engine on the internet can supply them with the information they were looking for.

*2. Affective needs*

People use media to satisfy their emotional needs. This ranges from happy feelings to crying during an emotional scene in, for example, a film or series.

*3. Personal integrative needs*

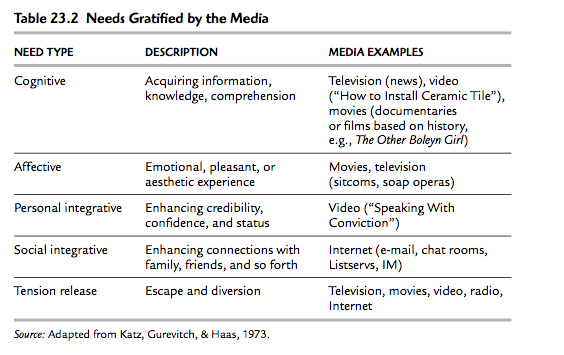
This is also described as the self-esteem need. People use the media to reassure their status in society. They watch television advertisements like jewelry and clothing commercials, and buy the products believing that they thus improve their status.

*4.Social integrative needs*

People use media for their social interactions and satisfaction. Instead of going to a family gathering in the weekend, people now have a tendency to use social media or their cell phones to enquire their dose of social interaction.

*5. Tension free needs*

People have a need to sometimes escape reality and relieve tension. This need can be satisfied by watching television or listening to soothing music on the radio.

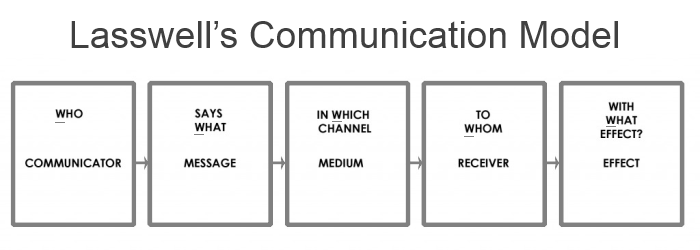


(*Fig 4. Uses and gratification model by Katz, Gurevitch & Haas, 1973)*

The five gratifications as described above illustrate that the U&G model emphasizes motives, attitudes and behaviors related to media consumption will vary per group or individual. In the case of this research, the model can be used to seek explanations for the shift towards a more digital orientated media consumption among consumers. Furthermore, it can be used to explain why a certain person prefers a tangible newspaper over the same article on a tablet.

### 2.2.2 History of the U&G model

The origin of the Uses and Gratification model can be traced back all the way to Laswell’s model (Laswell, 1948), of ‘who uses which media, how and to what effect’ (fig 5.) The last step in this model by Laswell is about the effect of communication. Relating this to the U&G model, this effect can be one of the five types of gratifications mentioned on page 16. Rosengern (1974) stated that basic needs interact with individual characteristics (social position and life history) , and society (media structures) to produce perceived problems and perceived solutions for them. These problems and solutions are then moulded into motives for communication, and consequentially lead to media and other behaviour.

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*( fig 5. Laswell’s communication model)*

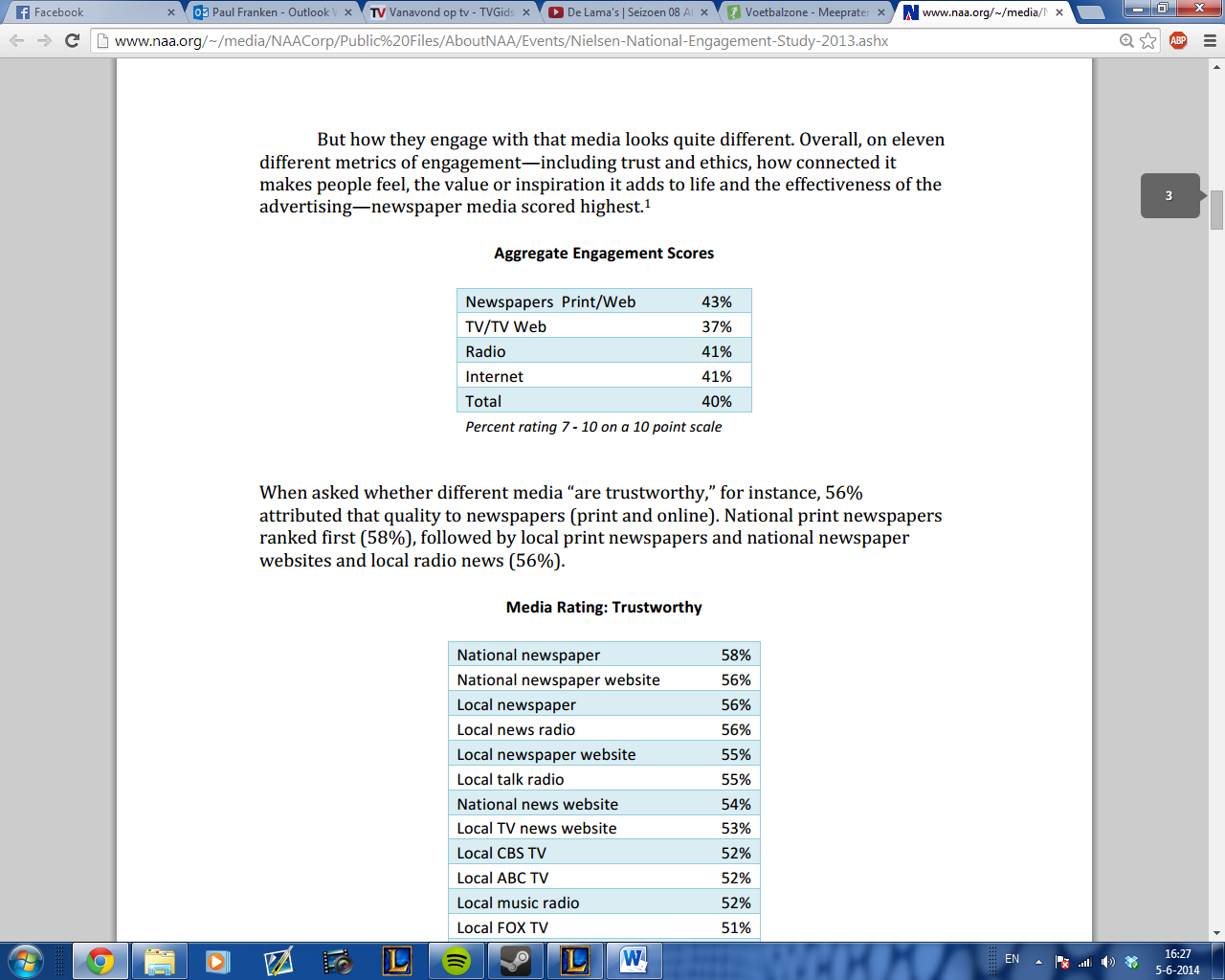
The strength of the U&G perspective lies in its applicability to a variety of media contexts. Despite the diversity of the context and the interests, Uses and Gratification studies tend to share a common frame of analysis that focuses on motives, social and psychological antecedents and cognitive, attitudinal or behavioural outcomes. In 1984 Palmgreen sketched an U&G model which summarizes the uses and gratification research in six main areas, which specifically relate to the scope of U&G research. These six areas can be used to research the relation between audience and any type of media. It has also been used often in the past to look at the U&G of soap operas, news broadcasts and listening to the radio. This is an example of a common frame of analysis which focusses on motives and behavioural outcomes.

1. Gratifications and media consumption – What gratifications are fulfilled by consuming media?
2. Social and psychological origins of gratifications – Why do consumers use media to gratify their needs?
3. Gratifications and media effects- How can media gratify human needs and wants?
4. Gratifications sought and obtained – What type of media gratifies what type of need?
5. Expectancy value approaches to uses and gratifications – The difference between the expected gratification and delivered media gratifications.
6. Audience activity – What is the role of the audience in media consumption?

In 1996 Ruggiero argued that each individual is now able to rely on easy-to-use media for low interest topics and more complex media for higher interest topics. Interesting for this dissertation is the fact that Reagan argues that researchers should move away from the whole notion of ‘one individual watches only television, or only reads newspapers’*,* and should instead consider them as a cross-media cluster. (Ruggiero, 2000) For this thesis the U&G theory will be used to analyze the need of the consumer (hardcopy or digital) as well as the capability of the provider (media companies) to offer what the individual wants. By means of the Uses and Gratification theory as created by Katz, Gurevitch and Haas the media effects and consequences for both consumer and provider will be described and explained.

## 2.3 National Cross media engagement study.

In 2013 Nielsen, a leading global information and measurement company (Nielsen.com, 2014), did research on the overall audience engagement in media. The survey compares the nature of audience engagement with different major media on several key aspects such as the consumer engagement with advertisements, the level of trust people have in different media and the general impact of media on the daily lives of consumers. This survey was conducted among 5,000 American adults from December 9, 2012 till January 8 , 2013 (Nielsen, Nielsen National Cross Media Engagement Study, 2013). The author has chosen to use this report by Nielsen to strengthen and justify his conclusions and the advices given in this report. The relevance the survey shares with this thesis is the fact that it compares the effectiveness of different media types in terms of the consumer engagement. This means that the author can use the data in the survey to his benefit when describing the strong points of print media, the weaknesses of digital media and the biggest differences between both types of media in regards to consumer engagement. In figure 6 and 7 on the next page (Nielsen, www.naa.org, 2013) an example of relevant data retrieved from the cross media engagement study survey is shown. The first table, figure 6, shows the aggregate engagement scores per medium. As can be seen the printed newspaper and their respective website have the highest score in consumer engagement with 43%. If compared to the engagement score of the Internet it can be stated that the newspaper has a higher level of engagement as the difference is 2%. In this research the aim is to look at how print (traditional) media can differentiate themselves from their digital counterparts. A good argument for this case is presented in figure 7. This table shows the media trustworthiness rating per medium. The national and the local newspaper are both found in the top 3 with respectively 58% and 56% scores on trustworthiness. Once again comparing this to the digital forms of information, in this table presented as twitter/blogs and social networks, there is a big difference that can be identified. The newspapers, local as well as national, hold a 10% margin over digital media when it comes to trustworthiness. The conclusion that could potentially be drawn from this is that consumers prefer print media over digital media due to their trustworthy character and their capability to better engage with their consumers.



(Fig 6 . Aggregate Engagement Scores)

# 

*(fig 7 . Media rating : Trustworthy)*

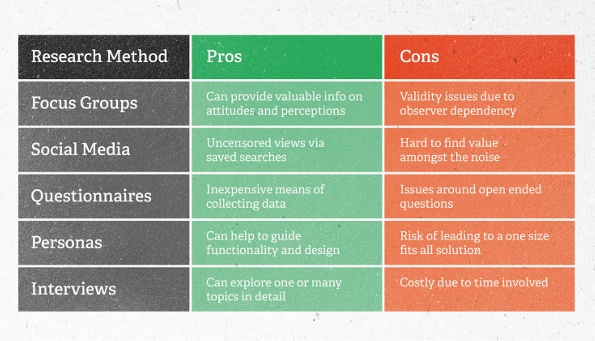
# Chapter 3 – Methodology

In this chapter the main focus will be on the ‘’how’’ and the ‘’why’’ of the research. *How* were the respective theories and interviewees selected, and *why* were they selected?

Before elaborating on the research methods that are used in this thesis, it’s important to explain why a survey was not conducted. Looking at the main research question ‘*What changes must traditional print media make to be able to compete with its digital competitors?’,* it can be stated that a mass-survey won’t supply any relevant data. This is already partly explained by looking at the definition of a survey. According to Martyn Descomb the word survey means to view comprehensively and in detail. In other words, it refers specifically to the act of obtaining mass data for mapping (Descomb, 2013). The research question in this thesis requires qualitative and accurate data to be answered, as the research question clearly indicates a need for specific answers. For example, if a quantitative research method like a survey would have been used, the answers would not prove useful. This is mainly due to the fact that the research question can only be answered by people who have experience in the field of media and communications. When people lack this expertise they won’t be able to identify why traditional media should even make changes to their strategy. Nor would the majority be aware of the direct link between print and digital media consumption. This is further elaborated on by Martyn Descomb when looking at the limitations of surveys.

* Wide and inclusive coverage. Implicit in the notion of ‘survey’ is the idea that the research should have a wide coverage. A survey, in principle, should take a panoramic view and take it all in. (Descomb, 2013)
* Detail and depth of the research. The data that are produced are likely to lack much by way of detail or depth on the topic being investigated. (Descomb, 2013)

In figure 8 a table is displayed with the most important pros and cons of popular research methods. Looking at the weakness of questionnaires often issues arise around open ended questions, which are necessary to answer the research questions in this thesis. Comparing this to the pros of interviews it states that interviews can explore one or many topics in detail. The research question for this thesis is an open question, and requires detailed answers on the topic. Therefore, in this case qualitative data will yield better and more relevant information to answer the research question with and eventually draw conclusions on.



(*Fig 8. Pros and Cons research methods* (Mahoney, 1997)*)*

### 3.1 Desk research.

Desk research is a term that is mainly used for gathering as well as analyzing secondary data. This means that the data already exists. This information can be found by means of several sources, but in the case of this research most data was gathered via the internet , books and online articles (Desk Research, 2014). Whilst doing the research, the author came to the conclusion that most relevant research and articles were found online, as there were little books about the struggle traditional media is having as the popularity of digital media grows. This is mainly because that this is a recent topic of discussion, and online articles and research are brought to the public faster than by hardcopy books.

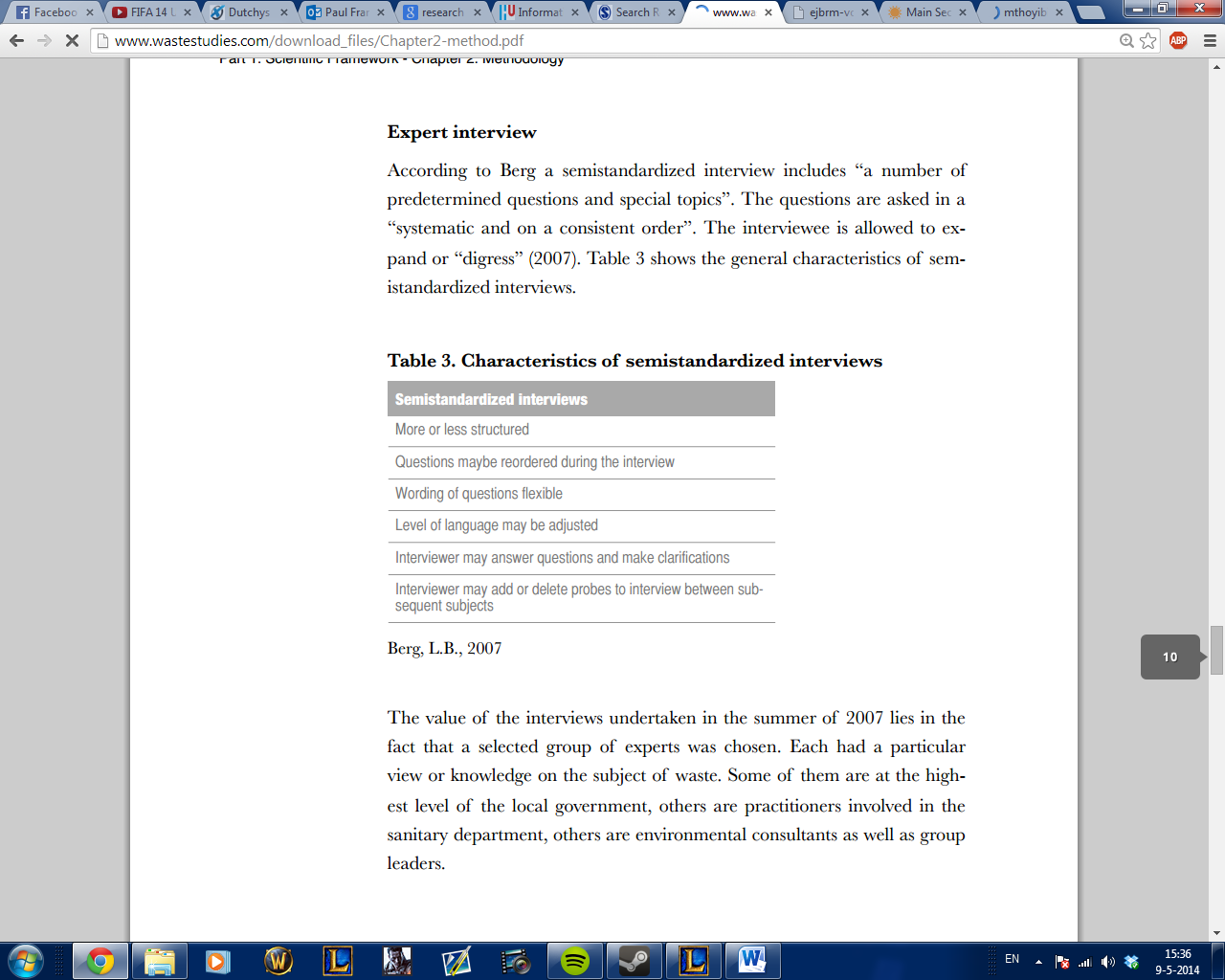
There are several advantages to conducting desk research for this research. The two main reasons are the following.

* To gain background knowledge on the subject (Desk Research, 2014).
* To prepare for fieldwork by helping you identify what gaps need to be filled. Fieldwork involves collecting first-hand data by interviewing people (Descomb, 2013).

The relevance of conducting such research in the case of this particular thesis is gaining knowledge about the subject matter and the media environment. Looking at the research set-up, it will be a combination of desk-research and expert interviews. The preliminary desk research will improve the quality of the interviews, as information about the subject was already gained.

### 3.2Expert interviews.

In terms of definition, expert interviews are defined by Bruce L. Berg as  ‘’ *a number of predetermined questions and special topics. The questions are asked in a systematic manner and in a consistent order. The interviewee is allowed to expand or digress* (Berg, 2007)*.* As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, the research question for this thesis is an open ended question. In order to answer this, detailed answers are required and expert interviews will yield this relevant data to answer the research question and eventually draw conclusions (Mahoney, 1997). In the table below (Fig 9) the six most important and frequent aspects of a semi standardized interview, such as an expert interview, are shown. The greatest advantage of conducting an interview which is subject to change based on the replies received, is that the interviewer can be very flexible and think of better questions or angles during the interview. This is also shown in the table where it is stated that the interview is more or less structured and the wording of questions is flexible.



*(Fig 9. Characteristics of semistandardized interviews, Bjerg 2007)*

According to Greene there are five main rationales for conducting mixed method research. The five rationales are the following (Greene, 1989).

* **Triangulation:** Seeking convergence and corroboration of results from different methods and designs studying the same phenomenon.
* **Complementarity** : Seeking elaboration, enhancement, illustration and clarification of the results of one method with results of the other method.
* **Initiation** : Discovering paradoxes and contradictions that lead to a re-framing of the research question.
* **Development**: Using the findings from one method to help inform the other method.
* **Expansion**: Seeking to expand the breadth and the range of research by using different methods for different inquiry components.

Expert interviews were chosen as a means of research mainly due to the *complimentary* factor of the mixed method research. During the desk-research many articles , theories and models were found. By using the data (answers) acquired during the expert interviews, the research can use these for elaboration, enhancement, illustration and clarification of the previously found data. Articles found online can be very informative, but if you can illustrate and justify with examples and quotes from experts who work in the field of print and / or digital media, a stronger case can be made. Therefore the rationale *development* ( as described above) is also essential to the final conclusions of the research. However, in terms of relevance and importance to the applied research techniques, triangulation is considered a key-term. Documents and observations can provide back-up for the content of the interview and interview content can be checked against other interviews to see if there is some level of consistency. The notion that interview data can be dealt with as facts is wrong, the interview statements should always be disputed or confirmed using alternative data (Descombe, 2007 ). In this thesis the data acquired during the expert-interviews will be confirmed or disputed by the data retrieved from the preliminary desk research.

The tools that have been used in order to accomplish the aforementioned research are :

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Desk research** | **Expert interviews** |
| Free-web | Skype (and recording device) |
| Deep-web ( Via the HU servers) | Telephone (and recording device) |
| Books (HU library and University library) | LinkedIn (approaching media professionals) |
| Articles (HU library and University library) | Facebook ( approaching media professionals) |
|  | Face – to – Face interviews |

*(Fig 10 . Tools used for data collection)*

### 3.3 Elaboration on expert interviews.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Interviewee** | **Company / profession** | **Date of interview** |
| John Olivieira | Sanoma B.V | 26-03-2014 |
| Peter de Groot | Media trends lecturer | 24-04-2014 |
| Wouter Groot | Research agency - the future now. | 01-05-2014 |
| Daniel Kro | Fullhaus B.V | 06-05-2014 |
| Fabian Reiche | Westnetz | 15-05-2014 |

Expert interviews have been conducted to get the opinion of experts in their respective, and relevant, fields about the matter at hand. The full interviews, in the form of a question and answer model, can be found in the appendix. In the table below a list can be found of the interviewees and the date when the interview was conducted.

(*Fig 11. Table of interviewees)*

The sample size, as can be seen in the table above, is five expert interviews conducted between 26-03-2014 and 15-05-2014. There are several reasons as to why the author chose five experts to interview and not more or less. First and foremost, there are several demographic factors that create a good diversity between the interviewees. Daniel Kro and Fabian Reiche are both relatively young (25) whereas John Olivieira and Wouter Groot are of an older generation (32-38). And Peter de Groot is the oldest. If they would all share the same age, there would be a chance for a consensus in the retrieved answers. Having a difference of ages also increases the chance that they have different views on traditional and digital media. Wouter Groot is the link between both age groups. On top of that, the interviewees also have different backgrounds in the field of media and communications. Fabian worked as a journalist, Daniel as an content manager, Wouter Groot specializes in media innovation, Peter de Groot as an external media advisor and John Olivieira works as manager marketing partnerships at the biggest media company in the Netherlands, Sanoma B.V. As they all have experience in different areas of media and / or communication, they will presumably also have different views on the future of print and digital media. The author feels that with these five diverse interviewees he is capable of answering the research question.

### **3.4 Justification of interviewees used.**

### Interview 1.

The first interview was conducted by means of a telephone conversation on 26-03-2014 with John Olivieira, Manager marketing partnerships at Sanoma B.V . Sanoma B.V is known for its impressive media portfolio. They are home to many magazines, television networks, events, e-commerce, websites and mobile applications. Sanoma B.V opened their doors in 1913 at which point they were solely focused on magazines. It was not until 1996 they started their online activity. At this stage the company noticed what changes technological advances can generate. This notion of change has led to Sanoma being the number 2 on the list of companies who generate the most digital revenues. In 2011 Sanoma B.V made their next big step with the acquisition of big Dutch television channels such as SBS6 , Net5 and Veronica (Sanoma.nl). Sanoma is the biggest media company in the Netherlands, and thus getting their opinion on the future of (print) media would be a great resource for the research. It is also interesting to note that the company started out as a print media company, and over the years adopted a new strategy focused more on cross media. This is also something they want their consumers to know and is thus displayed very prominently on their home website. With the cross media approach that Sanoma B.V uses, the company is home to a large variety of media and with that knowledge an interview with someone in a management function who works at that company fits perfectly into the research. An interview with someone from such a big and influential company is very useful in its own right, but in addition the interviewee himself also proved to be a great resource of information. Mr. Olivieira was very enthusiastic to share experiences and explain certain aspects of media to the interviewer. Despite his busy schedule he made time to answer the questions and gave some great insights on how to approach media as a whole and how he sees the future of print media. This is also why Mr. Olivieira will often be used as a frame of reference later on in this thesis. His experience, enthusiasm and great examples supply vital information for the research.

*The interview was recorded with full knowledge and approval of the interviewee.*

### Interview 2.

The interview with Peter de Groot was conducted on the 24th of April. An appointment was made for a face-to-face meeting at the Hogeschool Utrecht. For 30 minutes the interviewee and interviewer talked about the future of media, the route from product to consumer and current developments in the media field. Mr. de Groot is currently teaching at the Hogeschool Utrecht, in which he specializes in media economics, media research and media trends. The link between the level of expertise of Mr. de Groot and the topic of the dissertation is obvious so an interview would prove to be very valuable. Mr. de Groot introduced the interviewer to several models which influence the production and consumption of media. As a lecturer he was very well aware of the newest trends in the area of media, as well as what defines the difference between successful and unsuccessful media. Mr. de Groot did not obtain his knowledge from books and articles, rather he has been active in the (new) media sector for several years. In 1993 he started as an independent Senior Consultant and Project Developer for a variety of organizations. of his many skills, most prominent ones are his knowledge about new media, and his research on media trends.

*The interview was recorded with full knowledge and approval of the interviewee.*

### Interview 3.

The interview with Wouter Groot was conducted on the first of May 2014. Wouter works as a project manager for *the future now*, a research-project which focusses on the creation of new business models related to new media. This research is also directly linked to the Media Future Week, a three day convention at which students, lecturers and professors attend presentations and lectures on the latest developments in the international media industry. The primary aim of the project is to bring participants to the next level in their respective fields, but also to enhance and enforce the relationship between education and the media industry. Wouter has been working in several fields of media consumption and production, and his affinity with new media is therefore understandable. From June 2007 until December 2008 he worked as a producer for a Dutch television show. In March 2009 he started as an advisor for the BMC group and consulted / supported them in projects directly linked to innovation and new media. The information Wouter supplied will, undoubtedly, prove to be a valuable source of information for this dissertation. Wouter painted a clear picture on how media can be successful, what traditional print media companies should / could do to remain profitable and why Blendle( a new website where consumers can purchase articles of their interest instead of buying the whole newspaper and/or magazine)could prove to be the next big thing in media consumption.

*The interview was recorded with full knowledge and approval of the interviewee.*

### Interview 4.

The fourth interview was conducted on the 6th of May 2014. Daniel Kro is an expert graphic designer who worked for 3,5 years at FullHaus. . FullHaus is a German company that specializes in marketing and promotion for big (German) clients (p. 1). To illustrate the size of companies they work for, they did promotional work for Eurobaustoff , which is Europe’s biggest supplier in wood used for construction. Fullhaus did their full promotion for them, ranging from flyers and magazines to online banners and their website. During his period at FullHaus, Daniel was actively involved in this process. Daniel has worked in both the print and digital media department of the company, and was therefore very suitable as an expert interviewee for this research. Next to his expertise, Daniel is also younger than the people that were previously interviewed. Reason for mentioning this is the fact that with his age , he has a different view on media and has a different media-consumption pattern than the older generation. In order to draw conclusions at a later stage in the dissertation, it’s important to have interviewees who are diverse in the way they consume and view media. Interviewing someone from a younger generation but who still has 3,5 years of experience would prove to be very interesting. As stated before Daniel worked at FullHaus at both the print media department as the digital media department He worked on creating the magazine and flyers and he also worked on their online content.

*The interview was recorded with full knowledge and approval of the interviewee.*

### Interview 5.

logo-westnetz-header.pngThe fifth interview was conducted on the 15th of May 2014. Fabian Reiche has, despite his relatively young age of 28, a great deal of experience in the field of media and journalism. From 2006 to 2011 he worked as a web designer for Backslash, a web design company which at that time was part of a large Swiss newspaper, the Thurgauer Zeitung (Swiss Newspaper). During his time there he was responsible for the visual aspects as well as the content of big governmental websites. As he started there in 2006 he witnessed the gradual growth of the importance of the internet as a news-medium. Initially the company was an experiment to see what could be done with the internet., Later on the company became an independent news-organization . He now works as a journalist at Westnetz, a news-agency that started out as a print media company but soon saw the importance of the internet, and shifted towards a digital approach. Fabian has a journalistic function within the editorial team and is responsible for interviewing and writing the articles. In his spare time he now also works as an editor at Combobreaker, a website created by him and a number of his friends that publishes reviews of video-games. The relevance in using Fabian as an interviewee is the fact that he has worked in both the print and media industry, has at firsthand experienced the growth of the internet as a news medium and also has experience as a journalist which makes him well aware of the way people tend to consume media. This also became clear as the interview progressed. He has a lot of knowledge of both print and digital media, but especially of what print media could do to increase their chances in this digital world.

*The interview was recorded with full knowledge and approval of the interviewee.*

# Chapter 4 – Interviews and results.

In the previous chapter on methodology every interview and interviewee was justified in terms of relevance to the research. The focus was on *why* these people were selected and *how* they were selected. Terms as diversity, relevance and experience were key here. In this fourth chapter, the main findings (statements) of the interviews will be presented in a clear and concise way. This will done to be able to easily refer to interview statements in the findings and conclusions chapter.

### Step 1 . Interpreting the data

The process of categorizing and labeling the interview data will be done in three steps (Descombe, 2007 ). *The first step* will be the coding of the data. In this case the interviewees will be color coded in the following order.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Interview** | **Interviewee** | **Color** |
| 1 | John Olivieira | Blue |
| 2 | Peter de Groot | Green |
| 3 | Wouter Groot | Orange |
| 4 | Daniel Kro | Purple |
| 5 | Fabian Reiche | Dark-red |

*The second step* in the process is to categorize the codes. For this process certain recurring interview themes will be selected and quotes on the respective themes will then be labeled in accordance with the color-scheme. For this research the following six recurring themes will be used for capturing the most important statements.

1. The power of print media
2. The power of digital media
3. Differences between print and digital media
4. Importance of cross media
5. Changes in media consumption pattern of consumers
6. The importance of media innovation

The reason for choosing these six themes is their relevance towards the research questions. The author feels that by using these themes, the research questions can be answered by combining the data from the interviews with the data from the theoretical framework. When comparing the six themes to the (sub) research questions, there is a clear link. Both refer to the power of print media, the differences between print and digital media and the changes in media consumption

**Main research question:** *What changes must traditional print media make to be able to compete with its digital equivalents?*

**Sub-research questions:**

1. What are the strongest points of traditional print media?
2. What are the biggest weaknesses of digital media?
3. What are the main reasons for people to shift from traditional to digital-media consumption?

*The third* and last step in the process will be to develop concepts and a number of general conclusions based on the data retrieved by conducting expert interviews. These conclusions might take the form of concepts or hypotheses due to the lack of secondary information. In this case the data from the theoretical framework (secondary data) will be used in a later stage to back-up the findings (Descombe, 2007 ).

The chart flow below (fig.12), made by the author, illustrates the process of the qualitative data analysis as it will be applied in this thesis. The interviewees will be color-coded (step 1) , then the author will establish six recurring themes and collect them in coherence to the color codes (step 2) and the last step (step 3) is the drawing of conclusions.

*(Fig 12. Flow chart of qualitative data analysis.)*

### Step 2- Analysis of qualitative data.

During the interviewees questions about the aforementioned six themes (step 1, page 28) were asked. What do they think are the strongest points of print media, where does the power of digital media come from and what are the main differences between both media types? In the table below the answers given to these questions are gathered and color coded to their respective interviewee.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recurring Theme** | **Color-coded quotes.** |
|  |  |
| **1.Power of print media.**  John Oliviera  Peter de Groot  Wouter Groot  Daniel Kro  Fabian Reiche | * Print media has an exclusive attention towards the consumer. For print media, the consumer is still willing to pay. * The newspaper is used for more in-depth articles. * The advantage of a design magazine is that the writers already put information in to the correct context, whereas if you try to find it online it’s more difficult. * The newspaper also provides more in-depth information, that can’t be found on other channels. People have a tendency now to go for a brand instead of the content. * If you are only looking to get information, then the newspaper could prove to be a viable source. * Changing your approach is only viable when your consumer wants to consume in a different way. If they are happy with solely print media, and have no interest in digital forms, then there is no need to change. * Although print media is probably also not 100% reliable, it does have that image and compared to digital news it’s the most reliable source of information we have. * The strongest point of print media is that the product (newspaper) is read with more engagement and consciousness. * I think print media has simply more soul. You can hold it in your hands and it’s more personal. |
| **2.Power of digital media.**  John Oliviera  Peter de Groot  Wouter Groot  Daniel Kro  Fabian Reiche | * Digital media is more interactive, you can use video’s, print is still one dimensional. * When looking at digital media, people can discuss their articles with others, can post it on their social media channels, easily save it to read it again, and so on. So if you also want to do something with the information you’ve acquired, digital media provides more information. * Digital media is normally more accessible and easier to find than print media. * Research has shown that people greatly appreciate user-friendliness / user interface when it comes to new products. * For me the biggest advantage of digital media is that it’s more of everything. Not only do you have access to more content, you can also access it anywhere with nearly any device. I think this is also one of the reasons that these days people prefer digital over print. * by using e-books (instead of hardcopy) and other online sources, all you basically need is a smartphone , tablet or laptop. It’s just far more convenient. * The strongest point of digital media is the fact that it’s fast and accurate. You can also remain very up-to-date. If there is something happening in the world you can immediately put that online and later on edit it with further information about the topic. * You can also add videos, pictures and comment, so there is more to see and get for the consumer in that way. |
| **3.Biggest differences between print and digital media.**  John Oliviera  Peter de Groot  Wouter Groot  Daniel Kro  Fabian Reiche | * …talking about the difference in advertisements. For print (glossy’s for example) the advertisements are still viewed as part of the content, mainly due to the nice visual aspects of the advertisements and are thus valued by the consumer. This is the only media type where this is the case. For digital media this can be the case, but only if it’s made relevant for the consumer. * In the case of print media you also know what type of consumer you are dealing with, and with that knowledge you can make the advertisements relevant for the target audience. * This means that the way of consuming has changed. NU.nl is used for the latest news, and the newspaper is used for more in-depth articles. * In terms of the satisfaction of needs, when looking at digital media, people can discuss their articles with others, can post on their social media channels, easily save them to read it again, and so on. Compare this to the newspaper , where you just *consume* the information. * The content should be relevant to the media the consumer is using, or wants to use for the consumption of your product. Looking at Sanoma, the print sector is only a very small aspect of where the consumer is at the moment. * Print promotion is definitely the more expensive of the two. If you use digital promotion you have to create the online content, and keep people up to date using social media. However, this can be done with 2 or 3 people. When it comes to printing, you have to create the content, produce it (using raw materials) and also distribute it. * A big difference between print and digital media is the way you consume the information. If you read a newspaper you are often 100% focused, but if you read something online you are easily distracted. |
| **4.Importance of cross-media.**  John Oliviera  Peter de Groot  Wouter Groot  Daniel Kro  Fabian Reiche | * The challenge for Sanoma is to keep on creating value for these types of media, especially by using a cross media approach. So interconnecting all media, and thus creating more value for the consumer . * Is it an absolute necessity to change to a cross media approach? Yes, if they don’t go with the flow they will not manage to stay competitive and survive. The essence is that TV programs and such need to have their content available on as many platforms as possible. * The companies who are doing well at the moment, have a well-integrated cross-media approach. However, adopting such an approach is only viable when your consumer wants to consume in that way. * It’s important for media companies to stay aware of new developments and techniques and not sleep like they did when the internet kicked in. They need to seize opportunities, as long as it matches with the demands of their consumers. This can range from cross media, to more exclusive print media articles. |
| **5.Changes in media consumption pattern of consumers.**  John Oliviera  Peter de Groot  Wouter Groot  Daniel Kro  Fabian Reiche | * Looking at the shift, there is no ‘’or – or’’ , it’s more an ‘’and-and’’ situation. This is often a big challenge when looking at media usage. We see a decline in newspaper subscriptions, and this also has to do with the fact that there are more ways of getting the same content. Looking at this current shift, this does not mean the media type will change. It will merely change the way consumers consume information. * I think that older people are also adapting to the new technologies. The highest growing group in use of tablets is women from 35+. Next to that the new generation, digital natives, also have a clear influence on the increase of digital media usage. * The only method for two way interaction was the letters people used to send to the newspapers. These days people react on news articles and such online. In terms of the satisfaction of needs, when looking at digital media, people can discuss their articles with others, can post in on their social media channels, easily save it to read it again, and so on. Compare this to the newspaper , where you just *consume* the information, there is less variety in needs that can be satisfied. * Normally people don’t read every article that is printed in the newspaper. They are interested in certain articles that match their interest. This is exactly what Blendle can realize. * First of all, most people will always try to find the easiest and most accessible way. In the world of media, digital media is normally more accessible and easier to find than print media. * If you grew up with big media developments, you are used to them and *don’t know better*. Also research has shown that people hold great value to user-friendliness / user interface when it comes to new products. * People have Ipads and smartphones and the internet is everywhere, so people can access it from everywhere. Next to that another reason is the current young generation, the digital natives have grown up with the notion that news comes from the computer or other digital device. So why would they pay a lot of money for a newspaper subscription if they can just read it from their screen. It’s just easier. |
| **6.The importance of media innovation.**  John Oliviera  Peter de Groot  Wouter Groot  Daniel Kro  Fabian Reiche | * So the challenge for the distributor is to know what the consumer is looking for. An example is the 'Libelle Zomerweek', where 80.000 women come together and discuss the latest lifestyle . One of the biggest events for women in the country. Margiet has 'Work for women', a job agency for women. So media are continuously looking at what the consumer wants, and try to supply that to them. And I expect this to become increasingly more important. * This is the sole reason for the reorganization within Sanoma. They saw a shift in consumption behavior and acted accordingly with a cross media approach to cater towards the needs of the consumers. * It depends on the kind of innovation. When talking about ‘going forward change’, then this is often a key to success and maintaining audiences. Looking at the print media sector a strategy to try and maintain your current position will be of no effect when you see that the digital players are slowly *stealing* your consumers. * Research has shown that people hold great value to user-friendliness / user interface when it comes to new products. Looking at the *swipe function* on smartphones, give it to an infant and it will soon enough know that moving your finger on the screen creates a pattern. * You need to find you audience, know what they are interested in and what they want to read. If you do that, I believe you can still engage them with the more traditional products. * It’s important for media companies to stay aware of new developments and techniques and not sleep like they did when the internet kicked in. They need to seize opportunities, as long as they match with the demands of their consumers. This can range from cross media, to more exclusive print media articles. |

### Step 3 – Preliminary conclusions based on interviews.

In step two of the process the most important statements and quotes by the interviewees were gathered on the previously selected recurring themes. In this third and final step, short conclusions will be drawn based solely on the interview data.. Answering the research questions will be done by combining these conclusions with the data from the theoretical framework.

#### power of print media .

The interviewees were asked what they thought was the main power of print media. Which aspect(s) make traditional media stand out from their digital equivalent? In the answers that were retrieved there were a few aspects that were mentioned by multiple experts. The one thing that really illustrates the power of print media is the way the people consume a newspaper and at the same time the type of information that is delivered to the consumer. Print media has an exclusive attention towards the consumer. This leads to a more engaging and conscious way of consuming. This is also due to the fact that the articles in printed newspapers have more in-depth articles and tell a whole story, instead of just a short summary that is often found online.

#### power of digital media

Digital media is one of the main reasons why print media is seeing their subscriptions going down. It’s therefore important to identify the strong points of digital media in order to see where chances may lie for print media to gain ground. The most given answer when asked about the power of digital media is the fact that it’s fast and far more up to date. In addition to that digital media is also considered to be more convenient by the interviewees. Arguments such as ‘you can access it wherever whenever’ and ‘you only need 1 device’ were often given. Digital media also has a different way of interacting with consumers. This can be done by using video’s and photo’s to make the news-stories or articles more elaborate, or by adding a comment section where the readers can discuss the topic.

#### biggest differences between print and digital media.

After having stated the main strengths of both digital and print media, it’s important to identify the biggest differences between the two. When this question was asked during the interviews, the answers varied but there was also some consensus in the answers. The most recurring answer was aboout the way information is consumed. When consuming news from a printed newspaper you are often very focused and consume the information. When doing the same online, you are easily distracted, but you do engage more with other people by for instance, using the comment section. Another notable difference is when advertising in a newspaper, it is important that you know your audience . When placing advertisements online, you often have less knowledge about the people reading the article and thus less effective means of marketing promotion for the advertisers. The last difference that should be mentioned concerns the content. Where the newspaper delivers more in-depth and elaborate stories, the digital platforms are more concerned about delivering the latest news as fast as possible.

#### Importance of cross media

In the introduction of this thesis Sanoma B.V, the biggest Dutch media company (Sanoma.nl) was used as an example in terms of adopting to the current media landscape and adopting a cross media approach. As the same content now can be found on different platforms, it’s essential to research the importance for companies to have a cross media strategy. The general consensus to the question of the importance of cross media was that companies should always provide as much value as possible for their consumers. In the interview with John Olivieira of Sanoma it was argued that connecting all media with each other creates more value for consumers. This was also mentioned by both Peter de Groot and Wouter Groot. The latter stated that the companies which are doing well at the moment often have a well-integrated cross media approach. Peter de Groot even called it a necessity for companies to adopt a cross media approach in order to stay competitive. Based on the expert interviews it can be concluded that a cross media strategy can be a very good step for a company, as long as they make sure this is what their consumer wants.

#### Changes in media consumption pattern of consumers.

In order to find out what newspapers can do to attract new or maintain current consumers, it’s important to see what their current consumption pattern is like and what the important factors are that made them shift from print media to digital media. Having already discussed the advantages (power) of digital media, it’s obvious that these also play a role in the increase in digital media consumption. Another reason for the increase in digital media consumption is the current young generation, that grew up with digital media and are used to using these media for news and other forms of information. An interesting footnote here is the fact that John Olivieira, Sanoma B.V, does not think it will lead to an or-or situation (or print or digital), but an and-and situation. He does not think the media type itself will change, but merely the way the people will consume the information.

#### Importance of media innovation

Whether or not innovation is the key to success, the field of media is known for its innovations. An example is Blendle, a new website where people can pay a small amount per article from renowned newspapers. This means consumers no longer have to buy the whole newspaper, but can just pay for the articles they want to read. This saves them both time and money (p. 2014). According to Wouter Groot innovation can play a big role when it comes to maintaining audiences. If a print media company notices a decline in subscriptions, it’s a sign that the current strategy might not be the most effective anymore. That’s when you need to act and perhaps innovation can be the key in that process. But technical development is not the only kind of innovation mentioned by the experts. Magazines, like Libelle, organize events for their readers. The 'Libelle Zomerweek' is an annual Dutch event that caters towards the needs and interests of 80.000 women. This is also a form of innovation, offering something extra that other magazines (competitors) don’t. It is all about continuously looking at what the consumer wants, and trying to act accordingly.



# Chapter 5 - Findings.

Based on the analysis of the recurring themes in the previous chapter the following three main findings have been identified. These three topics are in a sense the main findings based on the conclusions drawn on the expert interviews. By applying the theory from the theoretical framework these findings will be strengthened and justified.

1. Diversification of traditional media.

During the expert interviews it became clear that print media still holds several advantages over digital media. Examples of this are in-depth articles, advertisements catered towards the specific audience and the trustworthy image of print media. Keeping the research question in mind, *(what changes must traditional print media make to be able to compete with its digital competitors?),* it’s important to define and elaborate on the strong points of print media in comparison to digital media. These characteristics that make print media stand out from digital media serve as a way to diversify themselves from their digital counterparts.

1. Traditional media should be complementary to new media.

In this second paragraph the focus will be on how print media can use new media to increase their range among consumers. In the expert interviews many interviewees mentioned possible options for print media to use digital media to their advantage. An example of this is a cross-media approach. By means of theory and data gathered from the interviews, these findings will be relevant when drawing conclusions on strategies print-media could apply to increase their competitiveness.

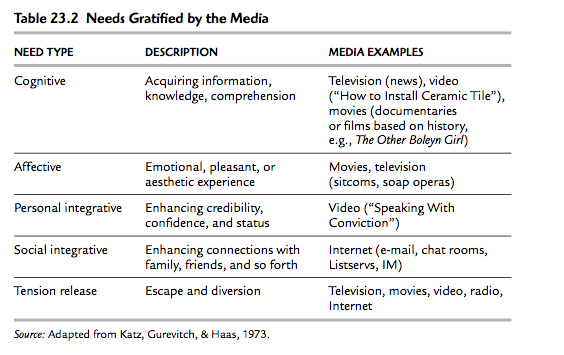
1. Traditional media should innovate .

In a rapidly changing environment, such as the media environment, it’s important to look into possible innovations that print media could opt for. The expert interviews yielded several options for print media. Examples of these are Blendle and personalized newspapers to possibly meet more of their consumer’s demands.

### 5.1 Diversification of traditional media.

Diversification is a defining characteristic of media firms and products in this day and age. There was a time when media companies solely concentrated on their core business, like publishing a newspaper (Borders, 2008). Another good example is the movie industry, where once the films were only to be viewed in theaters around the world. Consumers can now view them by satellite, video on demand and cable etc. The same goes for the news sector in which the newspaper is no longer the only medium news can be retrieved from. Time and innovation altered the industry to dramatic degrees (Kunz, 2008).The following quote is taken from the expert interview with John Olivieira from Sanoma B.V.: ‘*’* *you go to a bookstore and there are still many magazines in the shelves. And I predict many more will be added, and there will be even more differentiation. Libelle for example, the first edition was solely aimed at monarchy and gossip etc. Nowadays, this function has completely changed. The news aspect has vanished and it became more lifestyle oriented’’ .*  Mr. Olivieira, points out that, despite the popularity of digital media, there are still many magazines found at bookstores. This means that they still have value for the consumer and are not easily replaced. The reason for this is that they offer the consumer more than just a magazine. They offer exclusive information and diversify by, for instance, organizing events like the ´Libelle Zomerweek´. John Olivieira also mentions that advertisements are still highly valued by the readers. ‘*For print media (glossy’s for example) the advertisements are still viewed as part of the content, mainly due to the nice visual aspects of the advertisements and are thus valued by the consumer.’*

In chapter two 'Theoretical framework’, one of the models mentioned is the Uses and gratification model (U&G). The theory of this model is grounded on the assumption that people select media and/or content to fulfill their needs. The model as displayed in figure 4, paragraph 2.21, illustrates the needs which are gratified by media usage (Uses and gratifiation theory, 2008). The values such as providing information or creating a pleasant experience that are generated by print content from magazines or newspaper can also be viewed as needs which are gratified. For instance a newspaper brings information this gratifies the need of acquiring information which, according to the table below, is the *cognitive need.*

(*fig 4. Uses and gratification model as created by katz, Gurevitch & Haas, 1973)*

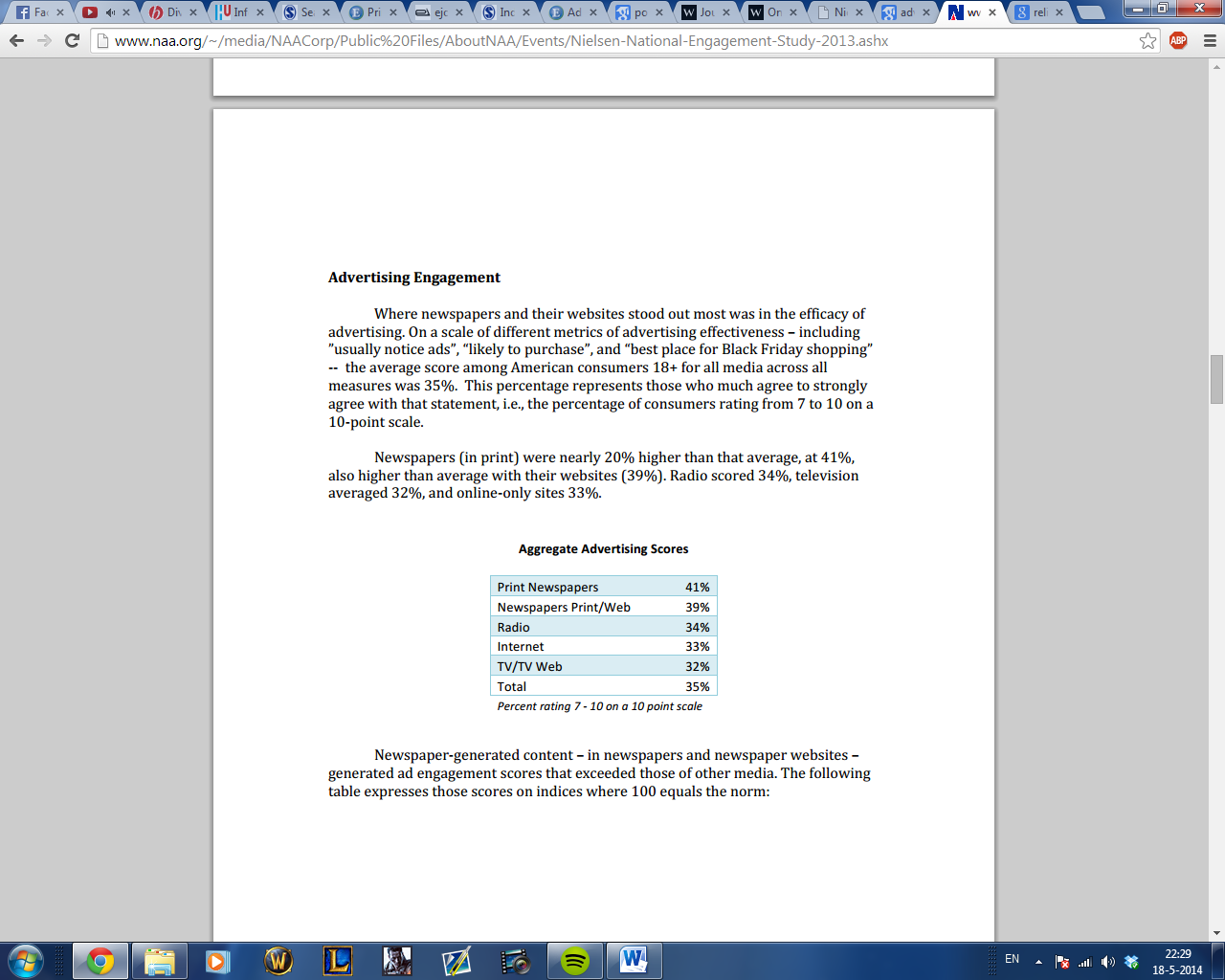
Looking at ways in which print media can diversify, we already mentioned exclusive information, advertisements catered towards the target audience and organizing events such as the 'Libelle Zomerweek' . If we link these aspects of diversification to the Uses and Gratification model we can link a certain need gratification to these exclusive features of print media.

* The exclusive information that magazines offer and the in-depth articles that newspapers publish are coherent with the *cognitive* need type. This gratification is built around acquiring information and knowledge. The readers will, by consuming the information, increase their knowledge and acquire more information about the subject matter.
* Another unique value that is created by print media is the fact that they are able to publish relevant articles, because they are better aware of their consumer’s demographics than digital media. In accordance to the U&G model, this gratifies both the cognitive as the affective need. Advertisements aim to reach the consumers by using relevant information and attractive visual aspects to create a positive emotional experience for the consumer, in order to generate a high brand recall. This is also mentioned in research done by Mehta and Purvis on brand recall and emotion in advertising. In their research they state that the key to branding is the triggering of a meaningful emotional response. Secondly, the process that consumers go through in deciding what brands to buy has a heavy-emotion based dimension to it (Abhilasha Mehka, 2006).
* The third aspect mentioned by John Olivieira, which helps magazines stand out, is their capability to organize events which cater towards the interests of their audience. As mentioned, the Dutch magazine Libelle organizes an annual event which is built around the interests of their readers. Relating this to the U&G model there are two needs that are gratified by organizing such events. The first one is the *social integrative*, this gratification focusses on enhancing connections with family, friends and so forth. In the case of the 'Libelle Zomerweek', people with similar interests come together and connections are made. The second need which is gratified, is the *tension release*. There are many ways to release tension, and these are often dependent on the person, but going to such an event that caters to your interests can definitely aid in the release of tension.

These are a few ways in which magazines and newspapers can diversify themselves from their online equivalents as well as from each other.

#### 5.1.1 Advertisements and in-depth articles.

Regarding the relationship between print and online news, early research by Neuberger, (Neuberger, 1998), predicted that online stories would be shorter, presented in an abbreviated news-item style and would be heavily linked to other online features. If one were to compare a news-article online with a hardcopy article on the same topic, the one in the traditional newspaper would be more elaborate and include more background information. Based on the table in fig 4, this would gratify the *cognitive* need to acquire information, knowledge and comprehension. Diversification can be met in many ways and be projected in many forms. One of these is to stand out from online news equivalents by providing more and in-depth articles. This is also something that came forward in the interview with Fabian Reiche, a former journalist and now a news-editor. He stated that traditional print media should diversify themselves by using something which can only be derived in printed form. Examples are in-depth articles and specified articles. This is also something that was mentioned by John Olivieira, Sanoma B.V, who stated that print media have the advantage of knowing who their consumers are, whereas online media does not have that specific knowledge. By knowing who your audience is, you can use advertisements more effectively and thus create more value for the reader. In the table below, fig 6, the aggregate advertising scores of media are displayed. This research, conducted by Nielsen in 2013, is based on an online survey filled out by 5,000 adult Americans (Nielsen, Nielsen National Cross Media Engagement Study, 2013). In the table it can be seen that the engagement consumers have with advertisements is highest for print newspapers and their respective websites. The internet scores 8% lower than print media.



(*fig 6. Aggregate advertising scores, Nielsen 2013)*

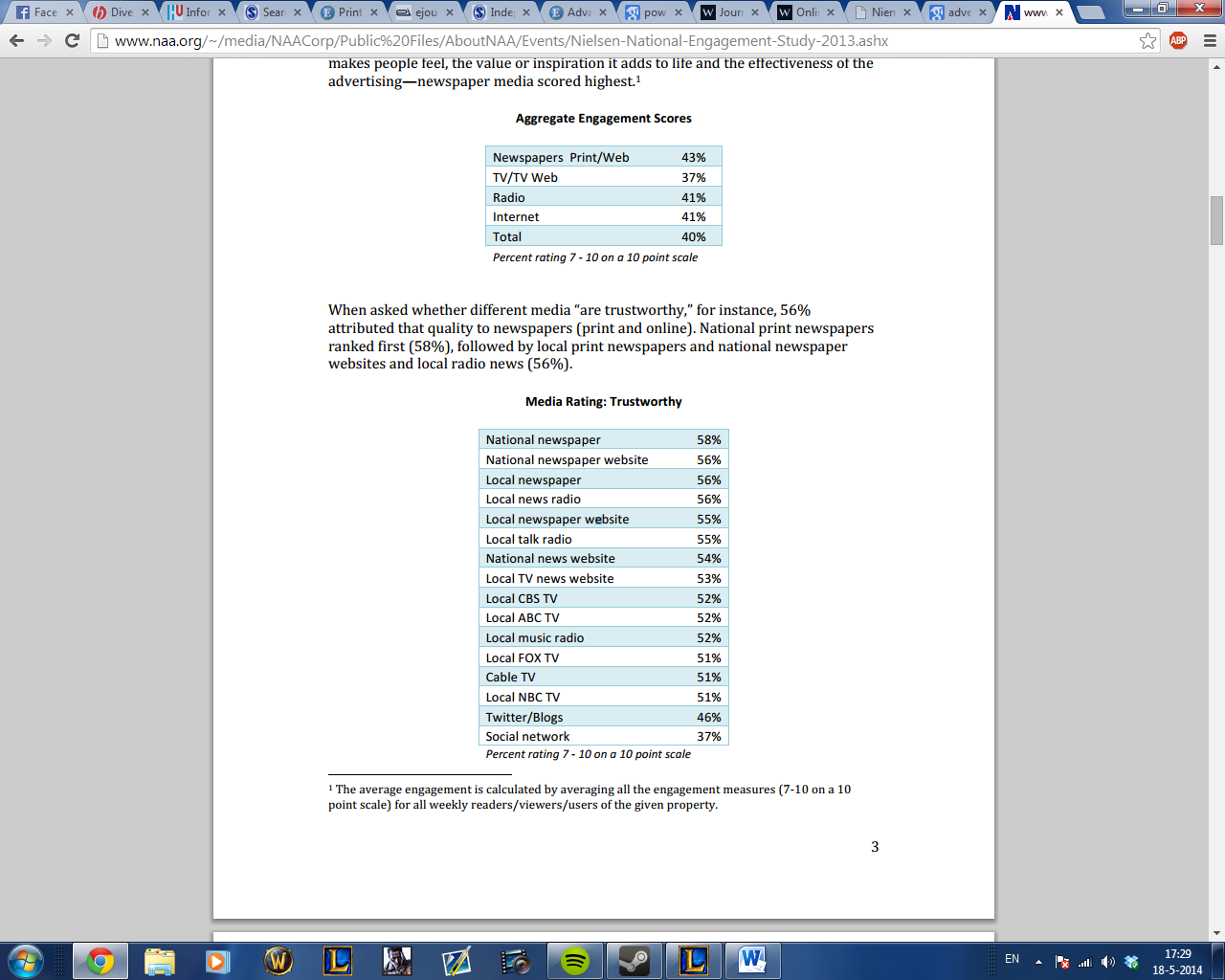
In addition to the statement above regarding the effectiveness of media advertisement a research by Bezjian – Avery and Calder on the differences between traditional advertising and digital advertising yielded an interesting conclusion. The most important implication of the research was that often interactive advertising is not better than traditional advertising (Calder, 1998). Despite the fact that advertisers often think that they are most effective on the platforms where most people are (digital) the research has shown that interactivity can interrupt the process of persuasion. The purchase intention and the time spent viewing the advertisement declined the moment it was displayed digitally (Calder, 1998). In terms of diversification this means that print media often still are the better platform for advertisements. This is due to the fact that the advertisers have better knowledge what type of consumer (demographics) makes use of the print medium and that interactive advertising can disrupt the process of persuasion.

This research-result can be directly linked back to the previously mentioned advantage that print media has on advertising. As concluded in chapter 5.1, advertisements are more effective because the publisher knows his / her target audience better. Advertisements are considered to be part of the content rather than a separate aspect and they generate a high brand recall by using visual aspects that create an emotional gratification.

#### 5.1.2 Newspapers as a trustworthy medium.

Daniel Kro worked for several years at a FullHaus where he was responsible for both print and digital content in terms of advertising, content creation and design. During the interview he said that although digital media is capable of delivering the news faster to the consumer, we have to question the reliability of the news.

*´´‘When I read something I always have a doubt of reliability in mind. This is mainly due to the fact that a blogger can write something from his own point of view which is not researched well, and that is not journalism. Comparing that to print articles, you know there is a journalist behind it who does his research.’´– Daniel Kro.*

In 2013 Nielsen did a national cross-media engagement study to get a better view on the consumer engagement with different media types (Nielsen, Nielsen National Cross Media Engagement Study, 2013). The research was conducted by means of an online survey and filled out by 5.000 American adults. The research itself covered many aspects of media such as media engagement, advertising effectiveness but also media trustworthiness. Keeping the previous quote by Daniel Kro in mind, in which he questions the reliability of online content the outcome of the research conducted by Nielsen yields interesting results.

As can be seen in figure 7, the national newspaper (58%) and its website (56%) and the local newspaper (56%), are deemed most trustworthy by the consumers. Looking further down in the table, we see that television news is rated lower than the newspapers. At the bottom blogs (46%) and social networks (37%) can be found.

(Fig 7. Media rating: trustworthiness, Nielsen 2013)

With diversification in mind one could state that the traditional media is still seen as the most reliable source of information. The internet on the other hand is, mainly due to its many bloggers and other semi-journalists, considered to lack the trustworthiness people expect of a news-source.

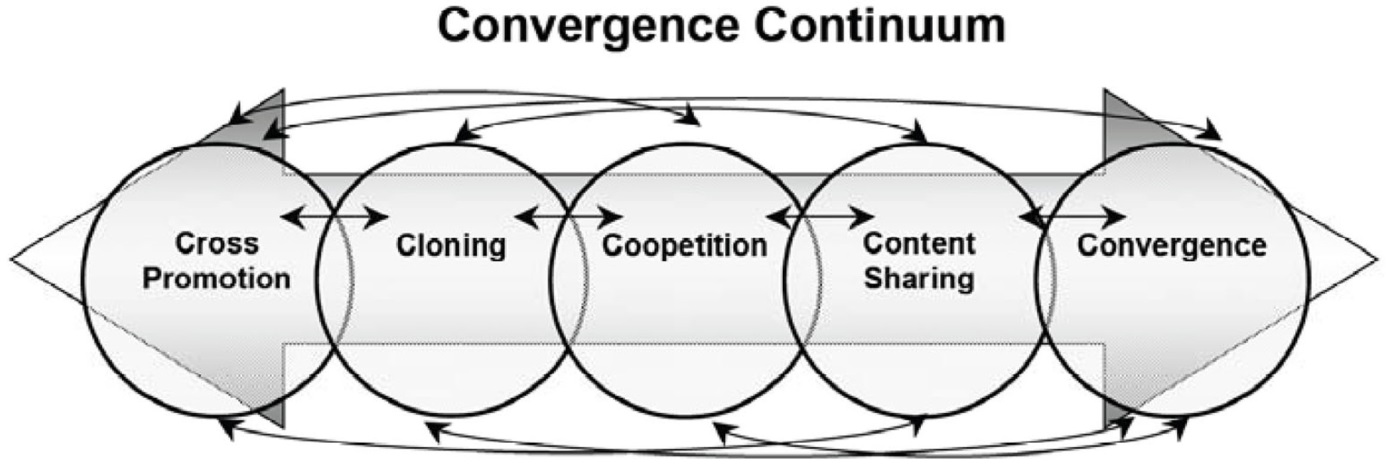
### 5.2 Traditional media should be complementary to new media.

There are many discussions as to whether or not new media (digital) is replacing the traditional media. People have the tendency to make the simple assumption that the new media is better than the old media, because it’s newer and faster and more catered towards the needs of a new generation of consumers. However, research has shown that new media has a complementary effect on old media instead of a replacement or substitution effect.

Nguyen and Western did research in 2006 on the information usage level of consumers. Their aim was to find out if new media was replacing the traditional media. Their main findings concluded that online news and information usage at different usage levels are positively associated with the use of traditional news and information sources, especially for those that are more information-intensive, such as elaborate articles (Nguyen A, 2006).In 2007 research was conducted by Vyas and Bahbhra on whether or not new media (internet) was substituting or complementing traditional media. In order to get accurate results they sent out surveys to adults as well as students. The conclusion of the research was that reading news on the internet is considered to be complimentary to reading newspapers, and it’s in no way substituting the newspaper. The internet is more popular in case of business / stocks and sports news, but the newspaper is used for elaborate articles on local and national news (Richa Sharma Vyas, 2007) .The interviewees that were approached for this research all had a different background, different work-experience and, in some cases, differed in age and nationality. Yet, there was one thing they all agreed upon and that was that traditional media should listen to their consumers’ needs before ´diving head first´ into something the consumer might not even want. The following quote by Wouter Groot illustrates this accurately: ‘*So the question is how you are going to offer that to the consumer. You can alter the news you provide to the context and the environment of the consumer. Due to the large amount of news that is out there, the question for the providers is: ‘H****ow*** *can I get the information that is relevant for my audience, to my audience?‘*

This was also mentioned by Daniel Kro when asked what traditional media should do to maintain their consumers: ‘´*You need to find you audience, know what they are interested in and what they want to read. If you do that, I believe you can still engage them with the more traditional products.´´* The aforementioned research showed that new media is in fact complementing old media and the traditional media should use this to their advantage. Key here is that traditional newspapers need to *listen* to their consumers, as they need to find out what they want and how it should be delivered to them in order to increase brand loyalty and their reach among the consumers. In the theoretical framework we looked at the convergence continuum model (Fig.3) , a model which displays 5 circles that represent ways in which different media can join forces / complement each other. As stated in the beginning of this chapter, the newspaper readers are mainly interested in local and national news with in-depth background information. This information is often not found online and this is exactly what is meant by complementing each other. The consumer reads an article online and wants more information on the subject matter. This is where the traditional newspaper comes into play and supplies the reader with the whole elaborate story. This is also explained by John Olivieira in the following statement taken from the expert interview. *´´I grew up with black and white television with only 2 channels. Over time new types of media were added (like internet), but did this mean that television vanished as a type of media? No, we even started watching more television. What has changed is how we watch television because it offers far more diversity than it used to. Will the newspaper disappear? No of course not, but the function of the newspaper will simply change.´´ – J. Olivieira*

The essence of the above quote is in the mentioning of the function change of the medium. The new media, for instance a website or mobile application, might take on the function of supplier of quick and short news and the traditional newspaper will change to a function in which it supplies more in-depth information and delivers background stories to complement the function of the new media.



(fig 3. Convergence continuum model)

Consumers using old media for the elaborate in-depth articles, and new media for a quick update on the latest news is an example of cloning*,* as presented in the Convergence Continuum model (paragraph 2.1). The second circle in the convergence continuum model is the display of information created by another source. To illustrate this, if the newspaper were to place a small article on their website to generate enough consumer interest, the consumer would be more likely to want to read the full article in the actual hardcopy newspaper. The third circle in the model, coopetition, is a merger of cooperation and competition. This describes the point at which partners cooperate by sharing information, but at the same time still compete and produce their own original content. When looking at how media can complement each other it would be valuable for a traditional print media company to join forces with a company specialized in generation of online awareness. This is also something that Wouter Groot mentioned during his interview: *´´ It might not be about competing with other firms, but joining those who do have experience in the fields where you as a company are lacking it ( if you can’t beat them, join them).´´*

### 5.2.1 A cross media approach.

In the previous paragraph it was stated that traditional media can definitely use digital tools to their advantage. The key to this is to listen to what consumers want and not just assume that a cross-media strategy is the best approach. This is also mentioned by Fabian Reiche, when asked if cross-media is the only way for traditional media to be able to stay competitive.

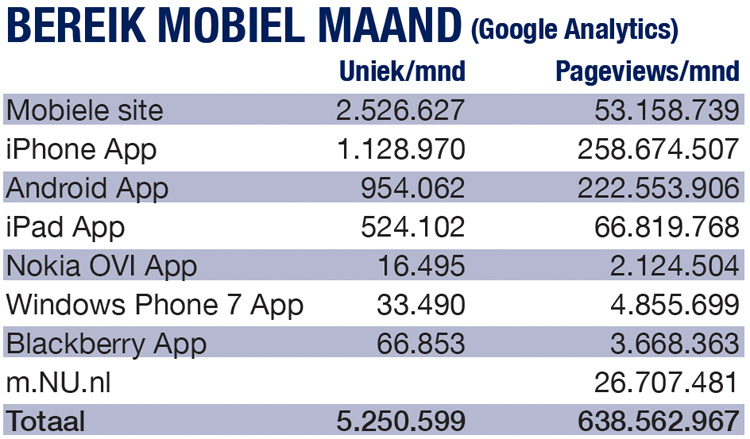
*From my point of view, cross-media is overrated. I see it more as a hype at the moment, where every company wants to jump onto the cross-media bandwagon. That companies think that they have to have social media, a website and what not. I often think there is not really a thought behind it, they just offer the same content in a different medium and there is very little to gain for the consumers.*

Fabian points out that traditional companies have the feeling they need to jump onto the ´cross-media bandwagon´ or else they will lose out. Wouter Groot shares this opinion with the following statement: *‘’Adopting a cross media approach is only viable when your consumer wants to consume in that way. If they are happy with solely print media, and have no interest in digital forms, then there is no need.’’* In essence it’s all about what the consumer wants, and the capabilities of the company or organization to supply that to them most effectively. According to Wouter Groot this is often an issue for traditional media agencies. ‘’*When considering a cross-media approach, it’s not only about bringing the product to the consumer in the way they want it. You also, as a company, need to ensure that you have the right resources for it (internally) . If all the employees of the company are acquainted with print-media, but have no knowledge of digital media, then you first need to ensure that you have the right people to guide the shift towards cross media.’’*

Daniel Kro also argues that the traditional media companies have an approach that is too traditional, and are unlikely to innovate. He claims that he found it difficult to convince traditional companies when he was working at FullHaus. He continues to illustrate this with the following example: ‘’ *I once tried to convince a client to set up a Facebook page and promote themselves online in the simplest of ways. The client refused as he had no idea what this was, and he thought that it would be a very expensive and intensive means of promotion.’’* However, when you have a company which is able to make such a switch then it can prove to be a viable choice. An example of this situation was drawn by John Olivieira from Sanoma B.V. He stated that there is no ‘or-or’ situation but rather an ‘and-and’ situation. Again the complementary effect new media has on old media. He continues by explaining how they saw a decline in newspaper subscriptions and they felt they had to act. They then decided to launch Nu, a very popular Dutch mobile news application which gives users the latest news with a single press of a button. The effect was that people now check their phone regularly for the latest news via the NU application, but still use the newspaper as a complementary factor for the in-depth articles. John Olivieira continues to illustrate their choice of cross-media in the following quote:

*‘’The challenge and at the same time option for Sanoma is to create more value and synergy by conducting a cross media approach. With the purchase of television channels we can realize this. Another media type is mobile, which is also a huge platform. With NU and Startpagina.nl, we have some great mobile websites / applications. People use these applications a lot and often even start their day with it.’’*

This is a form of cross-media, but at the same time it was well thought through by the company and they didn’t do it because everyone else did it. They simply did it because they saw a decline in their traditional news product, the newspaper, and created something that would attract consumers and complement their other news-sources. The advantage for Sanoma B.V at that time was that they were market leaders, and already had experience in the field of cross media. The portfolio already consisted of several media types such as newspapers and magazines but also websites and even television channels. With the experience they gained from using several media, they were prepared for the decline of print media and swiftly switched their focus to a more digital approach. Fig 1 (paragraph 1.1.1), illustrates the success of their shift. The unique views their NU mobile application generates per month accumulates to more than 5.000.000.



( fig 1. Monthly reach of mobile news application NU )

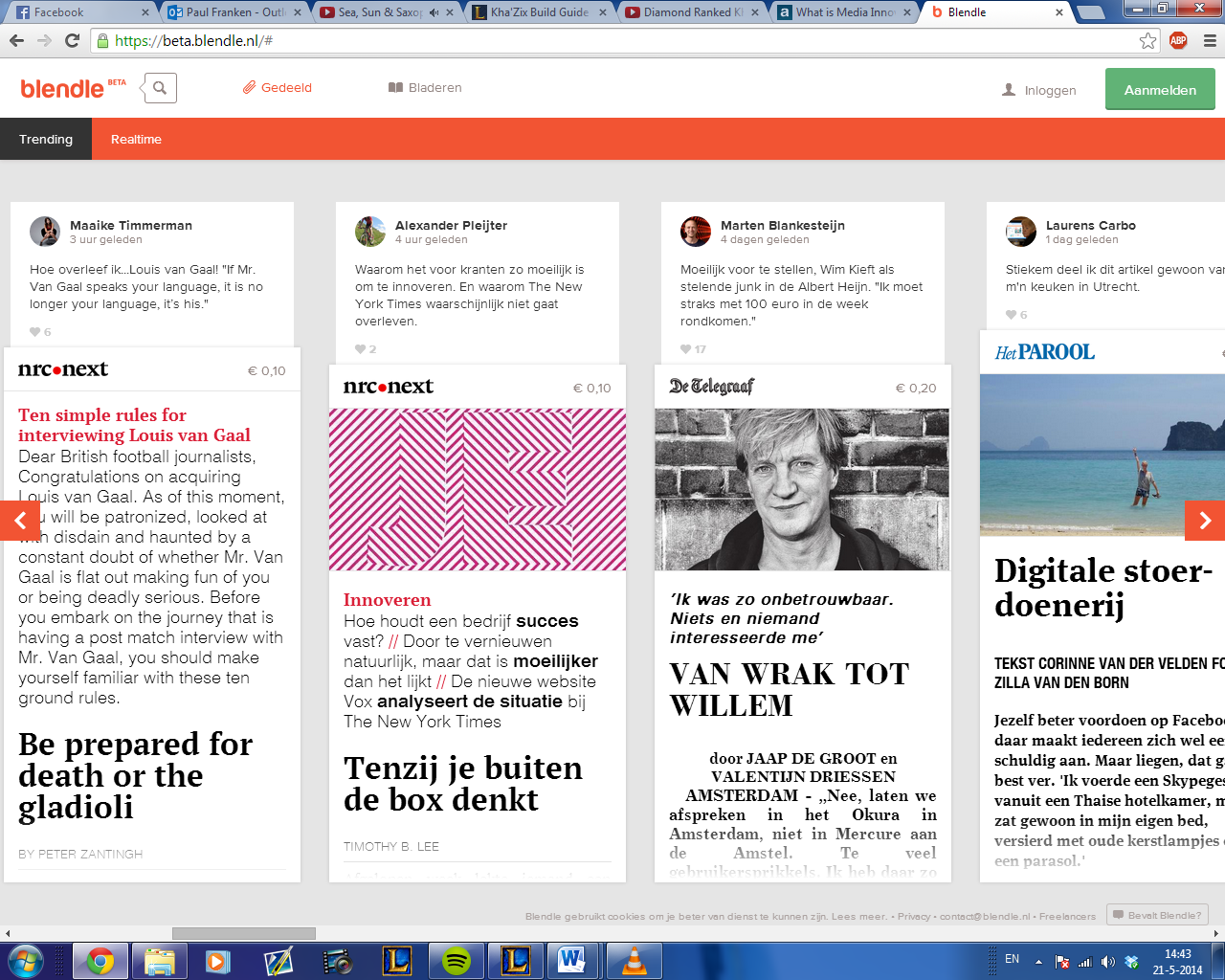
In coherence with the cross media example of Sanoma B.V, Pavlik and McIntosh researched the important factors of adopting a cross media approach. They state that here is one defining factor when it comes to whether or not to adopt a cross media approach. They state that the tendency towards cross-media production appears in a time where media companies experience stagnation or decline in the consumption of traditional media, such as newspapers (Pavlik, 2004). This relates to the example given by John Olivieira when Sanoma noticed a decline in their newspaper subscriptions, they acted with a cross media approach and launched a mobile application.

### 5.3 Traditional media should innovate.

Innovation has many forms and can be applied in many ways. This also applies to media innovation. It’s not necessarily about coming up with new devices , it also relates to new business-models, a unique market focus or a new strategy to stand out from the rest. It’s important, to avoid confusion, to define the difference between *innovation* and *invention.* According to Fagerberg an invention is a new idea or new theoretical model, while an innovation is the implementation of this invention in a market or social setting (Fagerberg, 2006). When talking about media innovation it refers to the implementation of an invention into the market or social setting.

#### 5.3.1 Blendle.

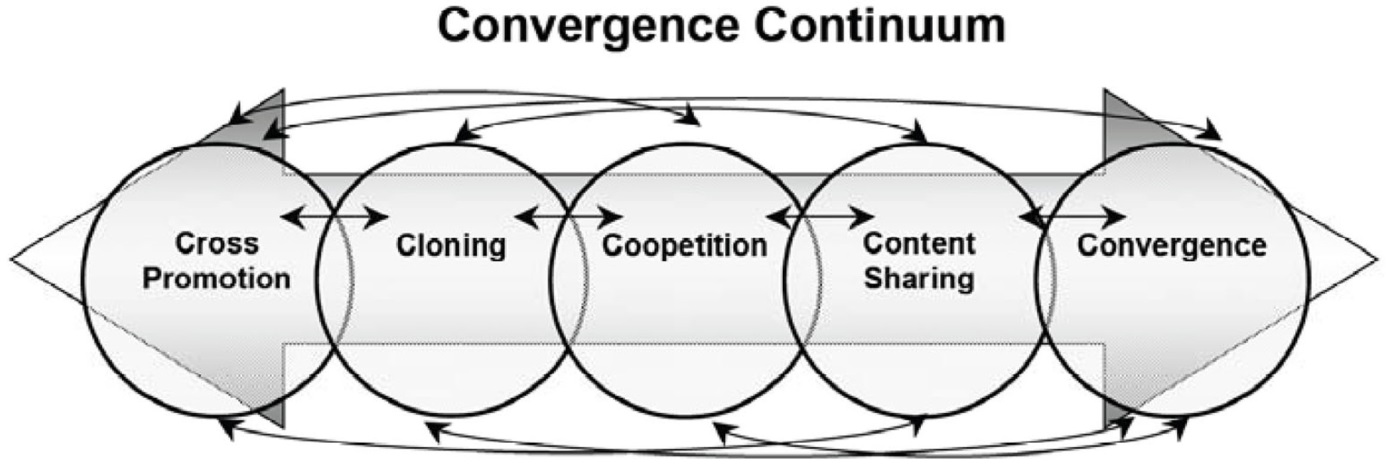
The first example of innovation to point out is the Dutch concept of Blendle (fig.11) . This is an online platform where articles can be purchased one at a time for a small amount of money (€0,10 – €0,75 per article) (Blendle, 2014). This means that consumers can just pick the articles of their interest and no longer have to buy the whole newspaper to read that one news story. In the expert interview with Wouter Groot, he points out several unique and strong points of this media innovation. The first thing Wouter mentions is the fact that Blendle made really good deals with the biggest news-agencies. As discussed previously the internet is filled with short news-articles, but the bigger and in-depth articles are often found in the traditional media. However, Blendle managed to get every big and renowned Dutch newspaper to offer their content online via the Blendle portal. This is a unique occurrence as these newspapers are competitors, but can now be found on the same website.



( fig.13 Blende homepage , retrieved from https://beta.blendle.nl)

According to Wouter Groot the reason for this lies in the approach that the creators of Blendle used. *‘’They (Blendle) created a platform which does not have a Blendle look, but instead they maintained the image of the newspaper itself. They offer the content but give the consumer a choice as to when they want to receive it. Publishers and news-agencies also see the necessity to change to a more digital approach. But the difficulty there is, how to maintain your corporate identity when using a new platform. So what Blende did is create a platform where people can get content on their own time, but the brand of the newspaper remained the same.’’*

In the chapter on trustworthiness in media, the conclusion was drawn that traditional media holds a more reliable image than digital media. This is why Blendle used the exact same font and lay-out on their website as the respective newspaper uses in their hardcopy version. This does not only create a trusted environment for the consumer, but it also creates brand-awareness for the company itself. With the decline in newspaper subscriptions and the increase of digital consumption, traditional media publishers realize that they need to look into new ways of generating revenues. Blendle created a business model in which they can make money without losing their traditional image and reputation as a trustworthy news medium. The main reason for newspapers to do this, as depicted in the above text, is to maintain their corporate identity. It also creates brand awareness and it generates revenues. In the theoretical framework the Convergence Continuum model (paragraph 2.1) was mentioned as one of the theories to be used in this research. In the case of Blendle and traditional newspapers, this model becomes very relevant due to the unique cooperation the two media share.



*(fig 3. The Convergence continuum model)*

*Convergence* is a key term and is defined as the combining of old (traditional) media with new media for the dissemination of news, information and entertainment. In the model as displayed above, the last circle is called convergence and highly applicable to the cooperation of Blendle and traditional newspapers. This is due to the fact that in this model convergence is having a shared assignment ( an article / or promotion campaign for example), and using the strengths of each medium to most effectively get the product to the consumer. This is often done by using a cross-media approach. In the case of Blendle, they use traditional media for the quality of the content. The in-depth articles which are highly valued by the consumers. And on the other side they use digital media for distribution and to reach more consumers. In theory this looks like a very decent model of innovation for print media, and this was also what Wouter Groot thought when asked if this concept of Blendle is combination of ‘the best of both.’

*‘‘I think that is the way you should see it. Because normally every newspaper has its own distribution channel. So if a consumer wants the content, they have to have a subscription to said newspaper, or go on the respective website. For the consumer this seems like a very long road to get the content he wants. Normally people don’t read every article that is printed in the newspaper, they are interested in certain articles that match their interest. This is exactly what Blendle can realize. ‘’ – W. Groot*

Fabian Reiche mentioned during the interview that newspapers were sleeping when internet became increasingly important, and didn’t take full advantage of it. Something Sanoma B.V , for instance, did do. In addition to this, when asked about the importance of innovation, he mentioned that it’s very important for media companies to stay aware of new developments and techniques. As long as it matches with their consumers’ demands , they need to seize opportunities. That last statement by Fabian Reiche is in good coherence with the concept of Blendle., Newspapers acted on a new-business and distribution model but above all maintained their own image they value so much. The importance of innovation was also mentioned by Peter de Groot: ‘*‘As long as the newspapers adjust to current developments in coherence with the wishes of their audience, they can very well manage to stay competitive.’’*

#### 5.3.2 A niche-market strategy.

Although many traditional media agencies see their numbers going down, there are those who not necessarily adopt a cross media strategy but instead innovate by going into a niche position. Niche is defined as satisfying specific market needs by means of your product, this relates to the price of the product, production quality and the demographics that it is intended to impact (Petersen, 2007). Scott Flanders, chief executive of Freedom Communication Inc., explains in the Wall Street Journal the power of focusing on a niche market. He states that in the past newspapers did well to reach broad audiences, but that is not where the growth is occurring at the moment. He continues his argument by mentioning that if newspapers and magazines are to see growth, it will come from capturing new readers, being able to segment them and being able to let advertisers target audiences (Hagan, 2006). In coherence with the statements of both Petersen and Scott Flanders, Wouter Groot mentioned that a niche market strategy could potentially be a worthwhile strategy for print media. *‘’ One of the ways to do this is to make the news you provide relevant to the audience. Look at where they live, what they do and what their interests are. And based on this knowledge offer the news that they find interesting. In the end I think that well-researched stories will always stay in demand.’’*

Wouter Groot continues to illustrates his statement. *‘’An example is ’de Groene Amsterdammer’. This is not financed by big conglomerates, but is an independent newspaper. They rely on external investments. Their main focus is on very in-depth articles, they do this because they see the value and relevance of elaborate and accurate information which is, in comparison to newspapers which are part of bigger organizations, unbiased. But using this model they can still generate revenues. By being an independent source of information they rely on consumer dedication for financial aid and subscriptions. This can be considered as a way of innovation.’’*



Daniel Kro complemented Wouter Groot’ vision on niche markets by stating that people are willing to pay for personalized content as it better matches their preferences. Reasons for this are found in the Uses and Gratification model (fig 4). Assuming a newspaper or magazine applies a niche strategy and thus aims to satisfy specific market needs by means of their product means that different needs will, perhaps in different ways, be gratified according to the U&G model (Petersen, 2007). It was stated previously that a niche market focusses on a very specific target audience, a segment of the population. If the publisher knows the characteristics of this audience he will be able to use the *affective* and *personal integrative* need to his advantage. The affective need is satisfied by creating an emotional, pleasant or aesthetic experience for the reader. In the chapter on advertisement (5.1.1) the conclusion was drawn that print media advertisements are more effective in triggering emotional reaction from the readers. This will be even more so when the target audience of the print medium only covers a small segment and thus the demographics of these readers are very clear to the advertiser. Next to the emotional aspect, the pleasant experience can also be satisfied by means of distributing relevant articles to the consumer. As mentioned, a print medium which focusses on a niche within the market is also able to satisfy the personal integrative need. In the model above (fig.4) this is defined as enhancing credibility, confidence and status. To illustrate how this need can be gratified, the following example. If a magazine's publisher defines the niche market as ‘students in Utrecht’ and writes an article on research that concluded that the Hogeschool Utrecht is the best university in the Netherlands, the confidence of the readers (student) would go up. Also the awareness of studying at the best university in the Netherlands would enhance their status among students in the Netherlands. These needs, affective and the personal integrative need, are often not gratified by other print or digital media.

Daniel Kro also mentions the need for print media to find their target audience and cater towards their needs and interests in a more specified way. ‘’*The fact is that newspapers and other print articles will not automatically get picked up anymore. You need to find your audience, know what they are interested in and what they want to read. If you do that, I believe you can still engage them with the more traditional products. ‘’*

# Chapter 6 - Conclusions.

In this chapter the main conclusions of this research will be drawn. This will be done based on the main findings, as elaborately explained in chapter five, as well as by giving answers to the research questions. All answers and conclusions are derived from the data retrieved from the expert interviews in combination with the theory and data used in the theoretical framework. First the sub-questions will be answered, then the main research question will be answered. The last part of this chapter will be an overall conclusion on the research.

**Main research question:** *What changes must traditional print media make to be able to compete with its digital equivalents?*

**Sub-research questions:**

1. What are the strongest points of traditional print media?
2. What are the biggest weaknesses of digital media?
3. What are the main reasons for people to shift from traditional to digital-media consumption?

### 6.1 Answering the sub-research questions.

#### 6.1.1 What are the strongest points of traditional media?

There are several strengths that were mentioned as the research progressed. During the interviews it became clear that the experts highly value the *exclusive attention* that print media has towards the consumer. This leads to a more *engaging* and *conscious* way of consuming. The reason for this unique way of consumer consumption is the fact that the newspaper features in-depth articles, which in comparison to their online equivalents, makes them stand out. This finding is in perfect coherence with research done by Neuberger who predicted that online stories would be shorter, presented in an abbreviated news-item style and would be heavily linked to online features (Neuberger, 1998). However, it was not just the size of the articles but also the *trustworthy* image that newspapers have. In the theoretical framework, a research by Nielsen was displayed which showed that consumers deem the national and local newspaper as the most trustworthy news-source .Another advantage for print media is that they are well aware who their target audience is. This enables them to also direct advertising more effectively to their readers. Or, to quote John Olivieira: ‘*By knowing who your audience is, you can use advertisements more effectively and thus create more value for the reader.’* This effect was also elaborated on in research by Nielsen and showed that the engagement that consumers have with advertisements is highest for print newspapers and their respective websites (Nielsen, Nielsen National Cross Media Engagement Study, 2013). The last important aspect to mention is the information newspapers supply to the consumers. The traditional media are known for well written, elaborate and in-depth articles. This is a unique characteristic of print media, and still has value for the consumer according to Wouter Groot: ‘’*I think that some people still have a big need for in-depth articles. So the question is how you are going to offer that to the consumer.’’*

#### 6.1.2 What are the biggest weaknesses of digital media?

In order to answer the question on how traditional media can compete with their online equivalents, it’s important to define the weaknesses of new media. The first thing that was mentioned by the experts is the fact that digital media, and especially news, has a low reliability among their consumers. In this day and age everyone can become a journalist with a blog, social media and information they gets from other sources. This was also proven in research by Nielsen on the trustworthiness of digital media where social media and blogs scored the lowest, and most confidence was in the articles printed in the hardcopy newspaper (Nielsen, Nielsen National Cross Media Engagement Study, 2013). Secondly, the internet might have a larger audience, it’s also far more diverse than the readers of a specific newspaper. People from all over the world, with different ages and nationalities read articles online because it’s easily accessible. That might sound like a positive thing, but when it comes to advertising it has proven to be a weakness. The advertisement engagement online is 10% lower compared to print media. Taken into account that far more people are active online in comparison to those who read a newspaper, the fact that the newspaper still has 10% more advertisement engagement says a lot about the effectiveness of online advertisement (Nielsen, Nielsen National Cross Media Engagement Study, 2013). In coherence with chapter 6.1.1, strong points of print media, it can also be stated that digital media lacks in-depth information and elaborate articles which are easily accessible. Digital news is known for its speed and straight-to-the-point information, but consumers feel that they lack the background information to complete the story.

#### 6.1.3 What are the main reasons for people to shift from traditional to digital-media consumption?

One of the important reasons for the decline in newspaper subscriptions is the huge amount of information that is available online. In order to answer the research question it’s important to know what, in detail, has been causing this shift and how traditional media could possibly use this to their advantage by adapting to this situation. An important aspect for this shift, mentioned by Peter de Groot, was the occurrence of two-way interaction. He states that when using digital media people can discuss their articles with others, can post in on their social media channels, easily save it to read it again. Whereas with a newspaper you just consume information. In this digital era people like to show their online presence by commenting, liking and sharing things they find interesting. This is a need that can be satisfied by digital media. Also important to mention is the speed with which information is supplied to the consumers. Mobile news applications and online news-websites / blogs have the technology to be very fast on updating the reader with the latest news. Although this often has a negative effect on the in-depth information of the article and possibly on the trustworthiness, consumers do enjoy being up-to-date . Another, perhaps obvious, important factor in the occurrence of the consumer shift to digital media is the fact that it’s far more accessible. Not only can you access information and news from everywhere by using Wi-Fi and 3G networks, it’s also possible to access it from almost any device. This is also what Daniel Kro mentioned when asked about reasons for the consumer shift. ‘‘For me the biggest advantage of digital media is that it’s more of everything. Not only do you have access to more content, you can also access it anywhere with nearly any device.’’

The last aspect which explains the consumer shift from print media to digital media consumption is perhaps the most obvious reason. In the introduction of this thesis reasons where given as to why research on the future of print media is relevant. There a link was made between the current generation ( digital natives) and theory by Jenkins. He stated that the participatory environment has facilitated the emergence of a convergence culture (Jenkins, 2006). This culture especially applies to the younger generation which is more prone to checking the news via an online news medium than a tangible newspaper. In the adjoining table , chapter 1.1.2 figure 2, it was made clear that the current generation is a main reason for the increase of digital media consumption. This was also mentioned by all of the interviewees, who recognized that the current generation grew up with digital devices and are therefore used to working with them.

### 6.2 Answering the main research question.

The main research question, ‘w*hat changes must traditional print media make to be able to compete with its digital equivalents’ ,* will be answered based on the answers given to the sub-research questions. Before doing so, it’s important to note that this research revolves around media trends and a media environment which can change rapidly. The answers should therefore always be considered in their timeframe, henceforth known as May 2014. Using this research in 2016 might yield inaccurate results due to changes in the field of media.

The main research question will be answered in the form of two possible scenario’s which will be explained by referring to the outcomes of the sub-research questions. The two scenario’s that will be used are:

1. A scenario in which traditional media does not use new media to diversify.
2. A scenario in which traditional media uses new media to complement their product.

The reason for using these scenario’s is due to the fact that based on the expert interviews and data from the theoretical framework these two options seem most plausible. If traditional media decide not to change anything, and decide to stick with what they know best (print product) it is plausible that sales and subscribers will decline even more with possible fatal consequences. A complete transaction from print media to a solely digital product is also highly unlikely, mainly due to the fact that traditional companies are run by an older generation of people, the traditional companies value their product and consumer relation too much and furthermore a change from print to 100% digital is very expensive. Therefore print media companies need to find a strategy which allows them to keep their product but at the same time innovate without losing their reputation among the target audience.

After describing both scenario’s, the author of this research will give his own personal reflection on both scenario’s and pick the one that is most likely to happen, in his own opinion. As this is entirely subjective, it is in no way a guarantee that this scenario will truly be the future of print media. This will be presented in chapter 7, advice and recommendations.

#### 6.2.1 Scenario 1.

It’s not easy to remain competitive as a traditional product when digital media is gaining ground. However, there are some characteristics that make print stand out from their online equivalents and could aid them in becoming / staying competitive. The first and most important aspect that diversifies print media from new media is the information they supply. Printed newspaper have in-depth articles with a lot of background information, which is still valued by the consumers (6.1.1). Secondly they have an advertising advantage. Research has shown that print advertisements are more effective due to a higher level of consumer engagement with print product compared to digital consumption. In addition to that newspapers need to use their level of trustworthiness among consumers, as well as their good reputation to their advantage. Digital articles are considered less reliable. There are several ways in which print media could remain competitive. One way is to effectively communicate the advantages they hold over digital media to their consumers. Ensure the consumer that the information they supply is the most reliable and gives the consumer the most information. This could be done, by writing an article on the advantages of print media and publishing it in the newspaper. Make the consumer aware of the fact that digital media is not necessarily better, and explain that if they value good journalism they should take a subscription to the newspaper. Another option for the traditional media sector, is to go into a niche market. As discussed in chapter 5.3.2, there is a lot to gain for print media in a niche market. By focusing your product on a very specific target audience, you can create more engagement with relevant articles and advertisements. By knowing the demographics of your audience, newspapers can supply information which completely caters to the needs of the consumer ( chapter 5.3.2 , figure 4) .

#### 6.2.3 Scenario 2.

As stated in chapter five, new media does not replace the traditional media, but instead complements it. This is one of the most important findings to consider when talking about the future of the newspaper. Although traditional media companies greatly value their hardcopy products, they should also realize that this is a new age and the digital market is (becoming) bigger than the print media market. There are several ways in which traditional media can use new media to their advantage , without losing their corporate identity and reputation among the consumers and at the same time create brand awareness and generate revenues. A prime example of how old media can use new media to complement their product is Blendle (chapter 5.3.1) . Wouter Groot, an expert interviewee, called it a combination of the best of both media types. The reason for him mentioning this is the fact that this concept illustrates how the strongest attributes of both media types can join forces and create something that could prove to be profitable for both.

Newspapers retain their identity and image since the articles are displayed online in the exact same lay-out of the hardcopy newspapers. By doing this they create an environment for the consumer which feels trusted. Secondly, the information that is in the articles is in-depth and elaborate as one would expect from a renowned newspaper. Now combine this with the far reach of the internet, the easier and faster way of online distribution and the option for the consumer to choose the articles he or she wants to pay for and you have Blendle. Not only will this increase the brand-awareness of the newspaper and potentially could increase their subscriptions to the hardcopy newspaper. It also generates revenues. This is a perfect example of how traditional media can use new media to complement their product, instead of remaining distant from it and afraid that they will steal all their consumers. To illustrate this, a quote from the interview conducted with Wouter Groot: ‘*In most cases it might not be about competing with other (online) firms, but joining those who do have experience in the fields where you as a company are lacking. If you can’t beat them, join them.’*

# Chapter 7 – Advice and Recommendations.

In chapter six the two most plausible scenarios were mentioned as possible options for the future of print media. These scenarios are derived from the research results and data gathered from the expert interviews. Giving recommendations and advice is a creative activity based on the author´s personal opinion and the knowledge he gained during the process of writing this thesis. In this chapter I will give my own personal advice for print media companies in regards to what they could do to ensure a positive future. Although this is subjective the advice is clearly derived from the research results.

In my opinion traditional media companies should at all-time react to developments within the market. I feel that they have been passive for too long and missed out on some opportunities to innovate and increase their reach among the consumers. When Sanoma B.V noticed a decline in magazine subscribers they started to focus on the digital market and developed mobile applications such as NU. Now after several years have passed, NU is one of the most popular mobile news applications in the Netherlands. This is no coincidence because Sanoma B.V knew what the ‘modern’ consumer was looking for, and acted accordingly by bringing an application that allows the consumer to always be up-to-date on the latest news. It was a risky move by Sanoma B.V to shift towards the digital market, but it was a successful move as well. Now, several years later, mobile news applications are all around us and are no longer considered to be innovative or new. Therefore traditional media companies should look into new ways in which they can make their product stand out from the rest. In my opinion innovations such as Blendle offer a great platform for newspapers to reach out to a new market whilst not losing their image or trustworthiness among their consumers. Although many traditional companies want to stick to what they know best I feel that a shift towards a more digital platform is inevitable for those companies. This is mainly due to the fact that their current consumers are an older generation and research has shown that the younger generation ( the millennials) are less likely to pick up a newspaper but rather stay updated via smartphones and tablets. This is a serious problem for traditional media companies, because who will buy a newspaper in 20 years if that generation prefers to consume their news online? To avoid that scenario the traditional media should make their current and new potential consumers aware of the fact that newspapers are more trustworthy than their digital counterparts. This does not guarantee that traditional media will gain a large amount of consumers but it will make audiences think about the advantages that print media still holds.

I feel that if print media allows innovation into their traditional companies and at the same time makes the young generation aware of the advantages of their products, there is a bright future ahead for them. As Wouter Groot said during the interview, print media should combine the best of both print and digital media. In my opinion this would be traditional newspapers offering their products via platforms such as Blendle, whilst at the same time making their potential audience aware of the fact that the news they supply is more elaborate and trustworthy than the information which is generally found online. In the humble opinion of this author it’s time that traditional companies start meeting the needs of the modern consumer by supplying them with in-depth articles combined with the speed and reach that new media offers.

# Chapter 8 - Appendix.

#### Appendix 1 – Interview with John Oliviera, Sanoma B.V

**By means of: Telephone**

**Interviewee: John Olivieira, Manager marketing partnerships.**

**Conducted on: 26-03-2014**

**Duration: 30 minutes.**

**Question 1:**

*What are the advantages of print media in comparison to digital media?*

**Answer:** Print media has an exclusive attention towards the consumer. Looking at magazines, for instances, the consumer has a 1 on 1 experience with the advertisements and content. Comparing this to the digital format, there is much more distraction. That’s the biggest difference. Next to that it’s also the business model. For print media, the consumer is still willing to pay. Digital payment is mainly done for games and applications. Talking about the difference in advertisements. For print (glossy’s for example) the advertisements are still viewed as part of the content, mainly due to the nice visual aspects of the advertisements and are thus valued by the consumer. This is the only media type where this is the case. For digital media this can be the case, but only if it’s made relevant for the consumer. In the case of print media you also know what type of consumer you are dealing with, and with that knowledge you can make the advertisements relevant for the target audience.Looking at digital media, there are several advantages compared to the print form. For one , digital media is more interactive, you can use video’s, print is still one dimensional.

**Question2 :** *Why are people shifting towards digital media, what makes it so strong?*

**Answer:** This is very dependent on the target audience. The current generation has grown up with digital media and are therefore less print orientated. Another influencing factor is your home situation, if you grew up with a newspaper, there is a rather large change that you will use a newspaper as well in a later stage of your life.  
Looking at the shift, there is no ‘’or – or’’ , it’s more an ‘’and-and’’ situation. This is often a big challenge when looking at media usage. We see a decline in newspaper subscriptions, and this also has to do with the fact that there are more ways of getting the same content. Looking at this current shift, does not mean the media type will change, it will merely change the way consumers consume information. As an example, people have a tendency to check the news on NU.nl, but before that, one would just read the newspaper. This means that the way of consumption has changed, NU.nl is used for the latest news, and the newspaper is used for more in-depth articles.

For magazines as an example, you have a new home and are looking for decoration idea’s, then the ‘’design magazines’’ still have a very clear function. This information could be found online as well, but the advantage of the magazine is that the writers already put it in to the correct context, whereas if you try to find it online it’s more difficult.

**Question 3:** Looking at the current generation (those who grow up with an Ipad), do you think that they will still read a newspaper?

**Answer:** I grew up with black and white television with only 2 channels. Over time new types of media were added (like internet), but did this mean that television vanished as a type of media? No, we even started watching more television. What has changed is how we watch television because it offers way more diversity than it used to. Will the newspaper disappear, no of course not, but the function of the newspaper will simply change. The same goes for magazines. If you go to a bookstore, there are still many magazines in the shelves. And in my prediction there will be many more added, and there will be even more differentiation. Libelle for example, the first edition was solely aimed at the monarchy and gossip etc. Nowadays, this function has completely changed. The news aspect has vanished and it became more lifestyle oriented. So the challenge for the distributor is to know what the consumer is looking for. An example is the Libelle zomerweek, where 80.000 women come together and discuss the latest lifestyle . One of the biggest women events in the country. Margiet has work for women, a job agency for women. So media are continuously looking at what the consumer wants, and try to supply that to them. And I expect this to become increasingly more important. It’s all very dependent on the situation, you’ve bought a new house, where will you go for inspiration. Will you go to a shopping mall like ‘’Vila Arena’’, do I buy a magazine etc? And that creates a function for the media regardless of type. And the same goes for digital.

**Question 4:** On the website of Sanoma B.V the following statement is made several times : ‘*’we are the strongest media-company in the Netherlands*’’ . How do you envision to maintain and even improve this position?

**Answer:**We used to be very strong mainly due to the titles we had in our portfolio. However, there has been a decline simply because people are reading less. Therefore Sanoma is transforming , and will focus on a select amount of magazines. Digitally we have a strong portfolio as we were already focusing on that. Also in television we have a very good position. The challenge for Sanoma is to keep on creating value for these types of media, especially by using a cross media approach. So connecting all media with each other, and thus create more value for the consumer .

**Question 5:** You started with print media, then included digital media and now, since 2011, also have a majority share in several television stations. What were the main reasons for Sanoma to add another type of media to the portfolio?

**Answer:**You just got the answer to that. The challenge and at the same time option for Sanoma is to create more value and synergy by conducting a cross media approach. With the purchase of television channels we can realize this. Another media type is mobile, which is also a huge platform. With NU.nl and startpagina.nl, we have some great mobile websites / applications. People use these applications a lot and often even start their day with it.

The future is simple, we need to ensure that our brands are ready for the future. So don’t think in print or digital, but think in terms of the brand itself. And ensure that these brands make each other stronger.

**Question 6**: Nu.nl has a greater reach than the official website of the NOS. (according to research by Vinex, feb 2014) . What is the reason(s) for this?

**Answer:** (I opened with : NOS has always been seen as the biggest news distributor of the Netherlands. John laughed and stated that this hasn’t been the case for the past 10 years)**.**It’s all about perception, you grew up with the 8 o’clock news, so you think it’s big. But in fact, you only watch that and the rest of the day you look at NU.nl . And that makes us the biggest. Even Telegraaf is bigger than NOS. The main reason for the popularity is the speed and user experience, NU.nl can be accessed at all time. Another thing is that it is unbiased, it just offers the news as it is.

**Question 7:** One of the reasons for the reorganizations that was mentioned was the fact that Sanoma was suffering with declining profits from advertisements. Is this directly linked to the decline in consumption of print media products?

**Answer:** This also plays a part, yes. For one, digital is playing a more prominent part. The digital revenues are already bigger than those of print. The revenues of print mainly decline due to the loss in subscriptions , people are reading less and there are simply less newspapers purchased. But this has nothing to do with the revenues generated by advertisements, but solely the decline in usage.

#### Appendix 2 – Interview with Peter de Groot, Media trends lecturer at Hogeschool Utrecht.

**By means of: Face-to-Face interview**

**Interviewee: Peter de Groot, Media trends lecturer at the Hogeschool Utrecht**

**Conducted on: 24-04-2014**

**Duration: 30 minutes**

**Question 1:** There are two camps when it comes to the discussion of print media in the future. Those who say it will never disappear, and those who say it will be gone soon. Where do you stand on this argument?

**Answer:** It’s interesting to notice that some newspapers are not declining in subscriptions, such as the NRC. However, a paper as de Telegraaf and local newspaper are declining rapidly. The difference there is that the NRC has a good reputation among the consumers, and the consumer general age is pretty high. The NRC also provides more in-depth information, that can’t be found on other channels. People have a tendency now to go for a brand instead of the content. As long as the newspapers adjust to current developments in coherence with the wishes of their audience, they can very well manage to stay competitive.

**Question 2:** How do you explain the increase of digital media use? Is this purely a *generation thing*, or do people simply see more advantages?

**Answer:** I think that also older people are adapting to the new technologies, the highest growing group in use of tablets are women of 35+. Of course does the *new* generation has an impact on the growing numbers. Also looking at Sanoma who started as a traditional media company, they are looking at what models are working. A simple tip for everyone involved with media is *what does the consumer use*. Which platforms / media do they use, and what do they use it for. This is the sole reason for the reorganization within Sanoma, they saw a shift in consumption behavior and acted accordingly with a cross media approach to cater towards the needs of the consumers.

**Question 3:** People use media to satisfy needs. Is there a difference in needs that are satisfied when reading a newspaper online and when holding one in your hands?

**Answer:** The media used to be stable, but these media are becoming increasingly unstable due to the two-way street media is on now. People used to get the paper on their doormat, and consumed the information. The only way of two way interaction was the letters people used to send to the newspapers, these days people react on news articles and such online. In terms of the satisfaction of needs, when looking at digital media, people can discuss their articles with others, can post in on their social media channels, easily save it to read it again, and so on. Compare this to the newspaper , where you just *consume* the information, there is less variety in needs that can be satisfied. So if you are only looking to get information, then the newspaper could prove to be a viable source. If you also want to do something with the information you just required, then digital media provides more options.

**Question 4:** Is a cross-media approach the only option for traditional media? And is it an absolute necessity for media companies to adopt this approach?

**Answer:** This is indeed what you see nowadays, a combination from broadcasting, V.O.D, a proper website, second screen, social media etc. A good example is De wereld draait door, a popular Dutch talk show, where you get the full program available on V.O.D minutes after the broadcast. Is it an absolute necessity to change to a cross media an approach what the consumer want? Yes, if they don’t go with the flow they will not manage to stay competitive and survive. The essence is that programs and such need to have their content available on as many platforms as possible. So in essence you say that the definition of the medium will not change, but the case in which the media is presented changes. So news, will stay news, but it will be brought to the consumer in a different manner or in more ways.

#### Appendix 3 – Interview with Wouter groot.

**By means of: Skype**

**Interviewee: Wouter Groot , project manager at The Future Now.**

**Conducted on: 01-05-2014**

**Duration: 30 minutes**  
  
**Question 1: With the release of Blendle, a new means of news consumption was released. Will it be a successful tool?**

**Answer:** There are several aspects of Blendle which make it stand out from the rest. Their approach, by using an extended beta phase, has proven successful. They have learned lessons from slowly bringing it to the audience (step by step), and hear how they could potentially increase their service. The first thing that might make Blende into a success is the fact that they made very good deals with the biggest news-agencies. Secondly, they created a platform which does not have a Blendle look, but instead they maintained the image of the newspaper itself. They offer the content but give the consumer a choice as to when they want to receive it. Publishers and news-agencies also see the necessity to change to a more digital approach. But the difficulty there is, how do you maintain your corporate identity when using a new platform. So what Blende did is create a platform where people can get content on their own time, but the brand of the newspaper maintained the same. So the same font and same lay-out. Not only does this create a trusted environment for the consumer, but it also creates a bigger brand-awareness for the company/ newspaper itself.Another reason is the fact that Blende created a business model in which revenues could be realized in a new way. This was accepted by the deliverers of the content due to the fact that they also see that a new approach (way to make money) is becoming more important with the decline of newspaper subscriptions and the increase of digital consumption.

* *Is the possibly the best combination between old and new media? People can get access to in-depth articles via a screen.*

I think that is the way you should see it. Because normally every newspaper has its own distribution channel. So if a consumer wants the content, they have to have a subscription to said newspaper, or go on the respective website. For the consumer this seems like a very long road to get the content he wants. Normally people don’t read every article that is printed in the newspaper, they are interested in certain articles that match their interest. This is exactly what Blendle can realize.

* *Is innovation key to maintaining audiences?*

It depends on the form of innovation. When talking about ‘going forward change’, then this is often a key to success and maintaining audiences. Looking at the print media sector a strategy to try and maintain your current position will be of no effect when you see that the digital players are slowly *stealing* your consumers. But then the question arises, how would a print media company make the transformation from the traditional production and distribution, into the unknown digital world. These are often issues for companies and at the same time a reason not to innovate but stick to what they do best.

**Question 2: Various research has shown that the current generation is less likely to consume news by newspaper. Is this occurrence purely a generation thing, or does online news consumption simply has more advantages?**

**Answer:** First of all, most people will always try to find the easy and most accessible way. In the world of media, digital media is normally more accessible and easier to find than print media. Looking at the digital natives, they grew up in a reality which has nothing to do with whatever might have happened before that. So they are familiar with the options they have and they see that as *normal.* Also, the older you get the more difficult it gets to adapt to new products and media. So if you grew up with big media developments, you are used to it and *don’t know better*. Also research has shown that people hold great value to user-friendliness / user interface when it comes to new products. Looking at the *swipe function* on smartphones, give it to an infant and it will soon enough know that moving your finger on the screen creates a pattern.

**Question 3: Nu.nl is the biggest Dutch online (and mobile) news provider. Is this the future of news consumption? Checking it 3 times a day for 5 minutes, instead of going through a whole newspaper?**

**Answer:** There is always a demand for relevancy, this is for instance seen on TV, where the Dutch channel VPRO still feels very strong about channeling certain values to their consumers. And at the moment it can be stated that they are trying to reform themselves to a *smart agent* where they try to supply you with content and putting it into the right context, to make it relevant to you. And I think making news relevant is getting more and more important, also due to the increase in news and information that is provided. I do however think that some people still have a big need for in-depth articles. So the question is how you are going to offer that to the consumer. You can alter the news you provide to the context and the environment of the consumer. Due to the big amount of news that is out there, the question for the providers is *how can I get the information that is relevant for my audience, to my audience?*

One of the ways to make news relevant to your audience is to look at where they live, what they do and what their interests are. And based on this knowledge offer the news that they find interesting. In the end I think that well-researched stories will always stay in demand. An example in ‘’de groene Amsterdammer’’, this is not financed by big conglomerates, but is an independent newspaper. They rely on external investments. Their main focus is on very in-depth articles, they do this because they see the value and relevance of elaborate and accurate information which is, in comparison to newspapers which are part of bigger organizations, unbiased. But using this model they can still generate revenues. By being an independent source of information they rely on consumer dedication for financial aid and subscriptions. This can be considered as a way of innovation.

**Question 4: Many big media companies (such as Sanoma) are adopting a cross-media approach. How important is it to have, next to your traditional print media, a website, a mobile app and possible links to television / second screen?**

**Answer:** That is the general opinion that cross-media is the way to go. The companies who are doing well at the moment, have a well-integrated cross-media approach. However, adopting such an approach is only viable when your consumer wants consume it in that way. If they are happy with solely print media, and have no interest in digital forms, then there is no need. So the first question a company should ask itself, is what does the consumer want? Also looking at yourself, the one time you use a smartphone then a television and some other time your read a book or newspaper. So the content should be relevant to the media the consumer is using, or wants to use for the consumption of your product. Looking at Sanoma, the print sector is only a very small aspect of where the consumer is at the moment. Next to the wishes of the consumer there is also a big technological push in the media field. It’s not about dreaming what technological advances you would like to see, it about dreaming about what you want to do with those technological advances. And in this day and age, the idea is that everything is possible, but people are just not completely sure *what* they can or should do with it. However when considering a cross-media approach, it’s not only about bringing the product to the consumer in the way they want it. You also, as a company, need to ensure that you have the right resources for it (internally) . If all the employees of the company are acquainted with print-media, but have no idea about digital media, then you first need to ensure that you have the right people to guide the shift towards cross media. Because wanting such an approach is one thing, realizing it is a whole different thing.

**Question 5: My research question is ‘’*what changes must traditional print media make to be able to compete with its digital competitors?’’*  From the top of your head, what should print products do?**

**Answer:** Looking at the print media companies, these are often filled with people who still have a very traditional way of thinking. Who grew up with print media, and barely have any affection towards digital media because they are simply not that accustomed to it. In their case it might not be about competing with other firms, but joining those who do have experience in the fields where you as a company are lacking it ( if you can’t beat them, join them).It’s all about strategy, you can also choose to focus on the niche market of print media, but that’s a dangerous choice. But the same goes for a cross-media approach , this is also something that requires a lot of thought. However, looking at the current situation the cross-media approach might prove to be most successfully. Another issue for print media companies is the fact that there are many investments that went into the company, this might also be a reason to stick to their current strategy.

#### Appendix 4 – Interview Daniel Kro

**By means of: Face-to-Face interview**

**Interviewee: Daniel Kro, Graphic designer and content editor at FullHaus.**

**Conducted on: 06-05-2014**

**Duration: 30 minutes**

**Question 1: What can you tell me about the time you’ve worked there? What was your function /tasks?**

**Answer:** At FullHaus I worked as a graphic designer. We had different departments in the company, so I switched every year to a different department to get the full grasp of the company. The first year I worked for the digital department, so I was mainly focusing on creating online content such as banners, newsletters and the creation of website. In the second year I moved to the print department. During my time there I was mainly working on one magazine for our biggest costumer. The magazine is related to in and out-house decorations. It was a lot of work as we did the photo shoots, get information on all the products and put the whole magazine together eventually. What was interesting about this project was that it was possible for people to create their own magazine by going on the website, selecting the products they found interesting and thus create their own personalized magazine. This service got used a lot as we as a company have many other client we work for. These clients could log in to our website, see which products were in their stores and create their own magazine. This also meant that the things they were not selling, were also not in the magazine. Normally when you are under the umbrella of 1 big company, you can’t choose which products appear in the magazine, but with this product it was actually possible.

**Question 2: What is it that Fullhaus exactly does?**

**Answer:** They are a marketing agency with the focus on companies that deal in construction materials and such. Our biggest client is ‘’…….’’ Which is Europe’s biggest supplier in wood used for construction. For this and other companies we produce flyers, magazines as well as banners and setting-up websites for them.

**Question 3: You have worked there for 3.5 year, did you see a shift in media consumption / popularity?**

**Answer:** We could see a shift, but it was not necessarily due to the print versus digital scene. It was at that time the economic crisis which led to less expensive promotion . However, the clients we dealt with as a company were very traditional companies. We often suggested to apply a more digital approach with their promotion, yet they never wanted to and stuck by what they knew ;print media

* *Do you think these traditional companies are in danger if they stick with these traditional media?*

**Answer:** At one point it will become an issue, but I don’t see it happening on the short term. We are not at that time yet where everything is digital, people still read books and newspapers. The problem however is not that they don’t want to gain more revenue’s or increase their reach, but they simply don’t know what digital media can do. The moment the current generation steps down and companies are taken over by the younger generation, we will see a shift in the way companies promote themselves. But at this moment it is really hard to convince traditional companies. I once tried to convince a client so set-up a Facebook page and promote themselves online in the simplest of ways. The client refused as he had no idea what this was, and he thought that it would be a very expensive and intensive means of promotion.

* *Another reason for traditional companies not to shift towards a digital approach is because they find it too expensive. From your experience is this a valid reason?*

**Answer:** Print is definitely the more expensive of the two. If you use digital promotion you have to create the online content, and keep people up to date using social media. However, this can be done with 2 or 3 people. When it comes to printing, you have to create the content, produce it (using raw materials) and also distribute it. Due to the fact that traditional media companies often already own the means to print products, they find it a waste to abandon that.

**Question 4: What is your own media consumption like? Digital or print? Anything hardcopy?**

**Answer:** I always use digital media and actually barely ever use hardcopy products. The only time I am reading something tangible is when I have no option to get to digital content, for instance when I have no access to the internet. The reason for my solely digital consumption is due to the fact that I more or less grew up with digital consumption.

* *Do you think that the way you consume news online, is satisfying your needs?*

The problem with digital news lies in the reliability of the content. People expect news to be reliable, but research has shown that it is not. This especially goes for the internet, that’s why I agree with the statement that everyone can be a journalist these days. If you have a blog, generate some content and promote if via social media you can reach a certain audience whom you supply with news. This would, in this day and age, make you sort of a journalist. Although print media is probably also not 100% reliable, it does have that image and compared to digital news it’s the most reliable source of information we have.

**Question 5: Media consumption among the younger people (16-25) has shifted to solely digital communication? What is, in your opinion, the main reason for it. Is it due to the fact that they grew up with it, or do they simply see more advantages in digital than with print?**

**Answer:** For me the biggest advantage of digital media is that it’s more of everything. Not only do you have access to more content, you can also access it anywhere with nearly any device. I think this is also one of the reason that these days people prefer digital over print. If you look at the courses at the University, you have to carry around several books for the classes you follow. But by using e-books and other online sources, all you basically need is a smartphone , tablet or laptop. It’s just far more convenient.

**Question 6: You worked in a company that adopted a two-media approach, working with both digital and print media. Do you think that a company can be successful with focusing on only 1 type of media? (so no cross-media).**

Even though the audience for printed media declines, that doesn’t mean that they will vanish. I think that for the coming years there will be enough interest still in paper products. However since the market in getting smaller for print products, companies need to adjust their strategy to it . The fact is that newspapers and other print articles will not automatically get picked up anymore. You need to find you audience, know what they are interested in and what they want to read. If you do that, I believe you can still engage them with the more traditional products.

**Question 7: My research question is ‘’*what changes must traditional print media make to be able to compete with its digital competitors’’ .* From the top of your head, what should a company that is solely focused on print media do / change?**

An interesting approach would be to make the newspaper individual. For instance, create it online by stating which topics you are interested in, and then receive it the next day. In that way you won’t have to go through an entire newspaper to find the things you are interested in. I think that people are willing to pay for personalized content as it better matches their preferences.

#### Appendix 5 - Interview Fabian Reiche

**By means of : Skype**

**Interviewee: Fabian Reiche , Journalist at Westnetz and Webdesigner at Backslash**

**Conducted on: 15-05-2014**

**Duration: 30 minutes**

**Question 1. Based on the information you supplied me, you worked at backslash, a company which created and managed websites. You said, this company was part of the Thurgauer Zeitung, a newspaper. How are these two companies connected?**

**Answer:** The company exists since 1996, first it was a branch of the newspaper. For them at that time it was more of an experiment, the internet was quite new so they just tried something. They then got in touch with governmental departments, and they started working on websites for the government. But they started it as an experiment with new media. It had very little to do with the company itself, they just wanted to see what they could do with the internet.

**Question 2. You’ve worked in both print and digital media fields. What is, according to you, the power of print media?**

**Answer:** The strongest point of print media is that the product (newspaper) is read with more engagement and consciousness. With a newspaper you sit down , get some coffee and really consume the news instead of quickly browsing through it. I think print media has simply more soul, you can have it in your hands and it’s more personal. Also the image of the newspaper is a strong point of print media. They have a more trustworthy image among the consumers. But this also depends on what sort of newspaper it is, there is of course a difference between quality and gossip for that matter.

**What’s the power of digital media? And what are the biggest differences between the two? ( more in-depth / user friendly / better image)**

**Answer:** The strongest point of digital media is the fact that it’s fast and accurate. You can also remain very up-to-date, if there is something happening in the world you can immediately put that online and later on edit it with further information about the topic. You can also add video’s and pictures and a comment sector, so there is more to see and get for the consumer in that way. A big difference between print and digital media is the way you consume the information. If you read a newspaper you are often 100% focused, but if you read something online you are easily distracted. And I also think that reading a big article of a screen is not very effective / healthy because it might eventually hurt your eyes. If I go online and open a newspaper website, I also have Facebook open and e-mail and you do several things at the same time, so you are less focused.

**Question 3. Based on previous interviews, the way to go seems to be ‘’cross-media’’. Do you agree with that?**

**Answer:** I don’t. From my point of view, cross-media is overrated. I see it more as a hype at the moment, where every company wants to jump the cross-media bandwagon. That companies think that they have to have social media, a website and what not. I often think there is not really a thought behind it, they just offer the same content in a different medium and there is very little to gain from for the consumers.

* *Do you think that companies who are only focusing on print, are missing out if they don’t apply a cross-media approach?*

That might be true because we do consume a lot online. But just imagine a newspaper with no online content, they can still prove that they are creative. That they can still satisfy the consumer’ needs. If you have something really special, like an elaborate background story. People might find that interesting enough for the newspaper to get into a newspaper. If you only focus on print, you have to focus on what are the people interested in and in what circumstances do they read it, and use that information to bring your product to the consumer as effective as possible.

* *So do you think that the paperback newspaper will eventually become a niche-market?*

I think that it will eventually become a niche-market yes. We can already see that it is getting smaller, and if they just continue with their print product whilst the same information is available online, then the newspaper might die. But if they can manage do something special / stand out, then they do have a good chance ‘to survive’ .

**Question 4. You’ve worked in the field of media and journalism for quite some time now. What can you tell me about the shift in media consumption among consumers? What are the reasons for this shift ? (if any)**

**Answer:** On the one hand it’s the technical advantage and it’s affordable these days. People have IPad’s and smartphones and the internet is everywhere, so people can access it from everywhere. Next to that it’s also about the generation, the digital natives are grown up with the notion that news comes from the computer or other digital device. So why would they pay a lot of money for a newspaper subscription if they can just read it from their screen. It’s just easier.

* *Would you say there is a difference in reliability between print and digital articles.*

When I read something I always have a doubt of reliability in mind. This is mainly due to the fact that a blogger can write something from his own opinion which is not research well, and that is not journalism. Comparing that to print articles, you know there is a journalist behind it who does his research.

* *Do you think people these days are choosing for the speed instead of the quality.*

I am afraid that they are. When I was working as a journalist I also saw what bloggers were doing, and this had nothing to do with journalistic work. As a journalist you need to inform the people based on accurate research, and with the rise of digital consumption there are also more news-sources of which many have a bad quality.

* *Looking at traditional media companies, they are often ran by the older generation, do you think this is also a reason that companies don’t innovate but stick to what they know best?*

It could be very well that this is a reason. From what I’ve seen, the people working in the newspaper industry are often older people. And they are just very used to do things ever since they started, and don’t see a real reason for change. They were sleeping when internet became big, and now new (online) players are on the market which made it difficult for them to compete.

**Question 5.** **Would you describe the media sector as a conservative or an innovating sector? And why?**

**Answer:** It’s a bit of both really. During my years as a journalist I have seen both sides. But in the end I think it’s more conservative. This is mainly due the fact that the people in charge still have a very traditional view of journalism and media. And they are simply not up-to-date with the latest technologies , or don’t want to apply them. They don’t want to adapt because they think they are doing the best they can. However, there is also the innovation side. My current boss used for many big newspapers (print) and now he works as a company which is only bringing online content. But he is very aware of what the company can and should do online and constantly comes up with new ideas.

* *Do you think innovation is important in the media sector?*

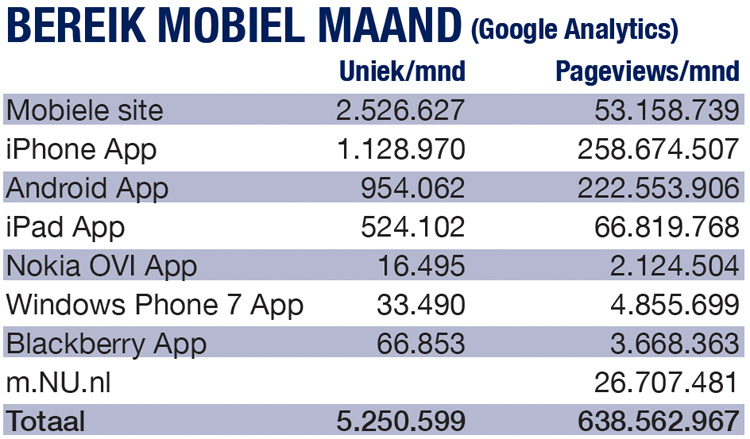
It can be. The important thing companies have to do is look at what the consumer wants. A good example is the tabloid newspaper which was handed-out for free in trains and other public spaces. And in the beginning everyone thought it was weird, and now they are so welded in our daily life that we cannot imagine they are not there. This is also a way of innovation, where the company listened to their consumers , whom in this case wanted to consume the news whilst on their way to work by train.

It’s important for media companies to stay aware of new developments and techniques and not sleep like they did when the internet kicked in. They need to seize opportunities, as long as it matches with the demands of their consumers. This can range from cross media, to more exclusive print media articles.

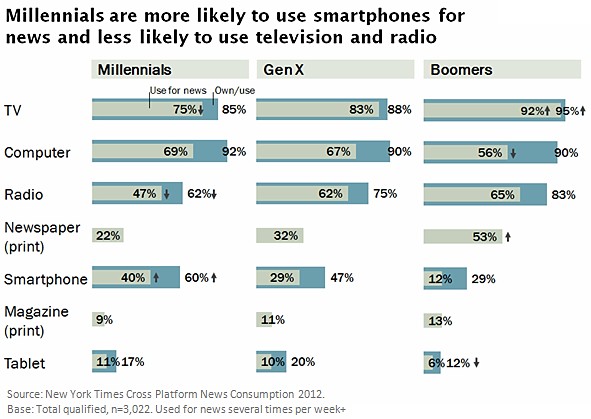
**Question 6.** My research question is ‘’*what changes must traditional print media make to be able to compete with its digital competitors’’ .* From the top of your head, what should a company that is solely focused on print media do / change?

**Answer:** The most important thing they have to do is to diversify themselves. If they don’t want to go online that’s possible, but then they need to find another way to be unique. An interesting example is a book I recently bought, and it has a lot of gimmicks in it like postcards and napkins with phone numbers on it. These are things you can touch. This is something you cannot have online, and the absolute USP of that book. And this is what traditional print media also has to have, something that can only be delivered in a printed form. Like in-depth articles, gimmicks or specified advertisements. Companies should not be scared to stay in a solely print form. They just have to look what their consumer wants, if they want something added to the print product then do that. If they really want something online then deliver that. It’s all about meeting the consumer’s needs and diversify in that way.

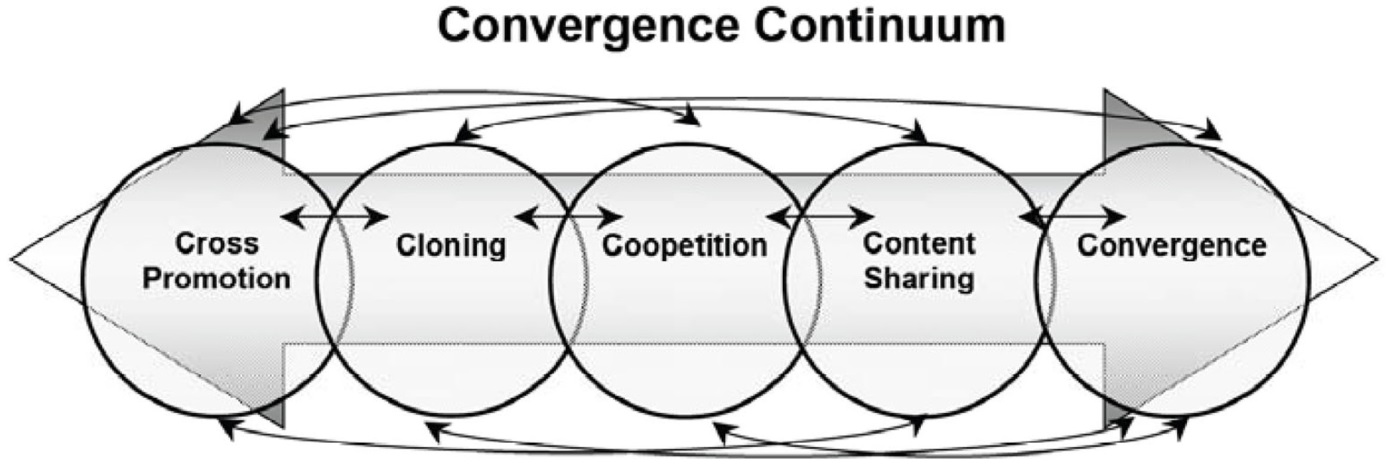
#### Appendix 6 – Figures and tables.



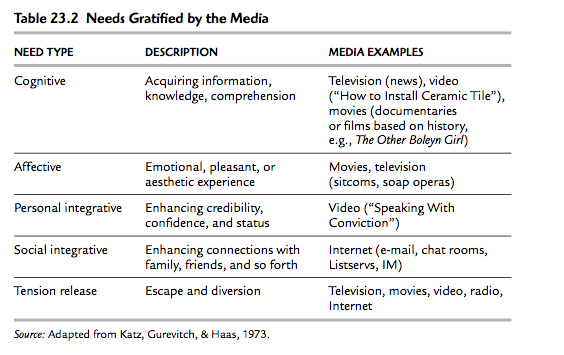
**Figure 1 – Reach Mobile Application NU – Page 7**



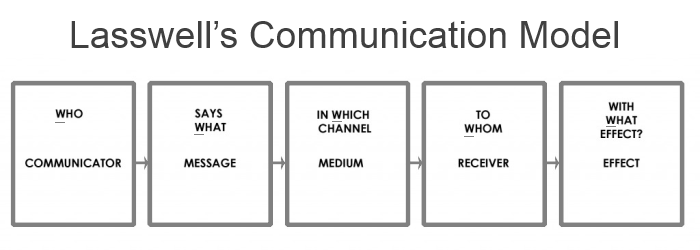
**Figure 2 –News consumption among generations – Page 8**



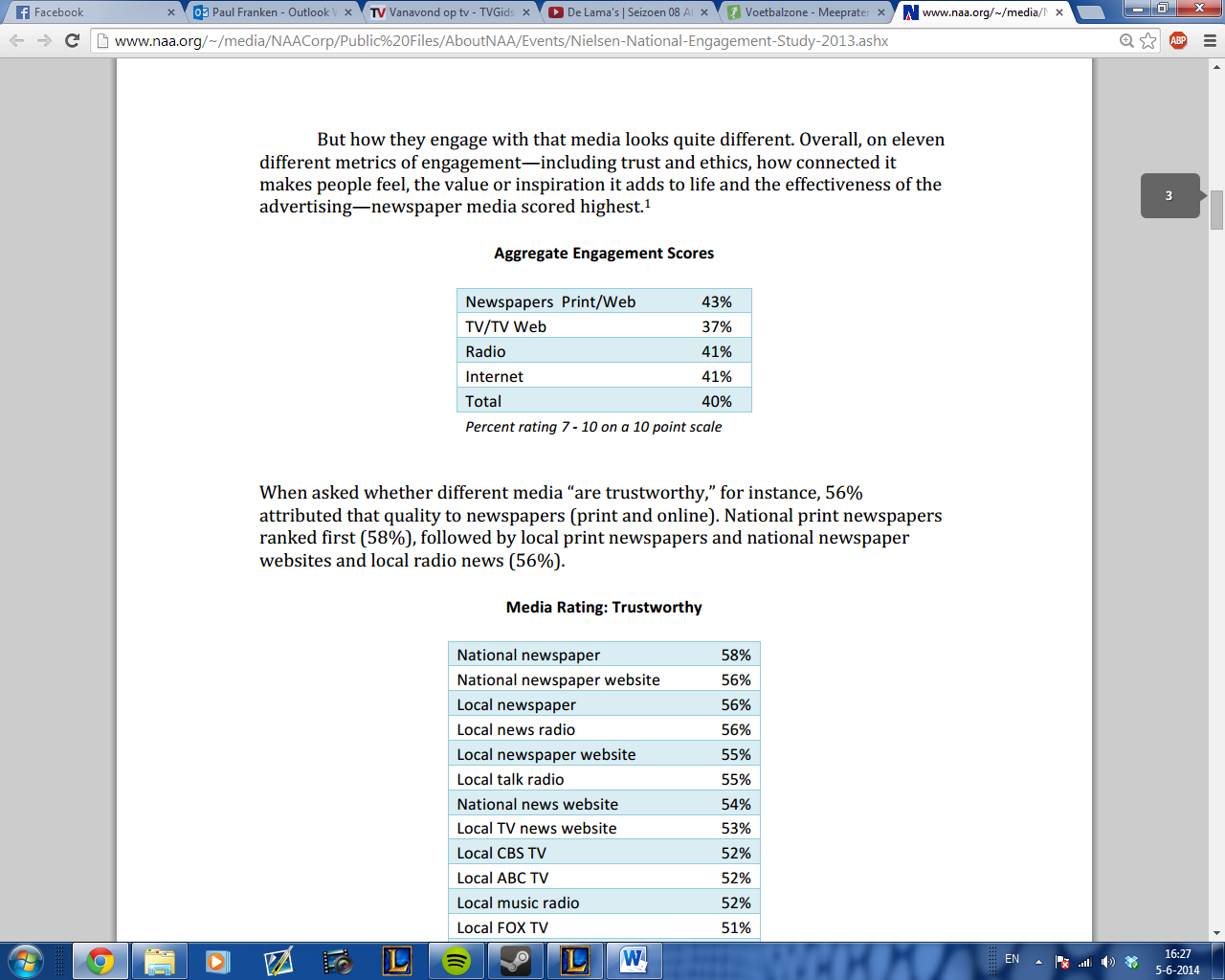
**Figure 3 – Convergence Continuum Model – Page 11**



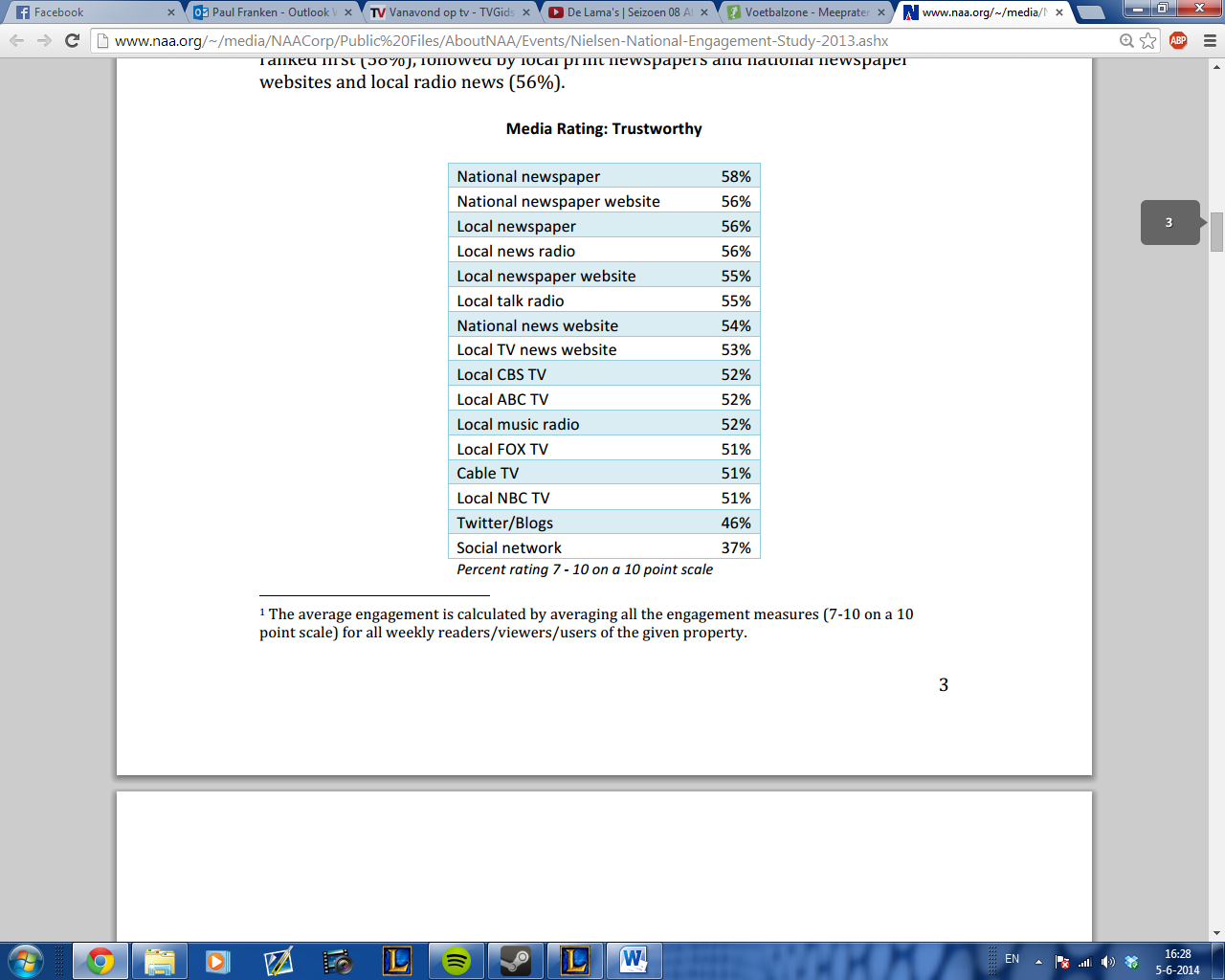
**Fig 4 – Uses and Gratification Model – Page 16**

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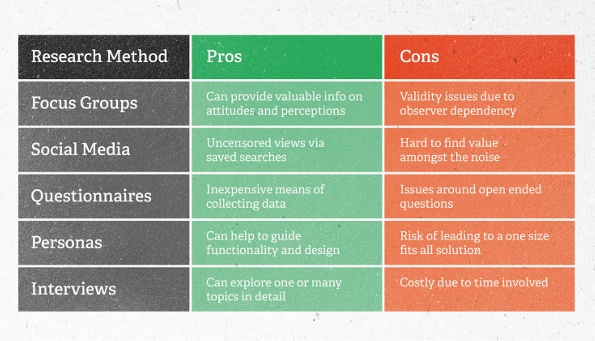
**Fig 5 – Lasswell’s communication Model – Page 117**



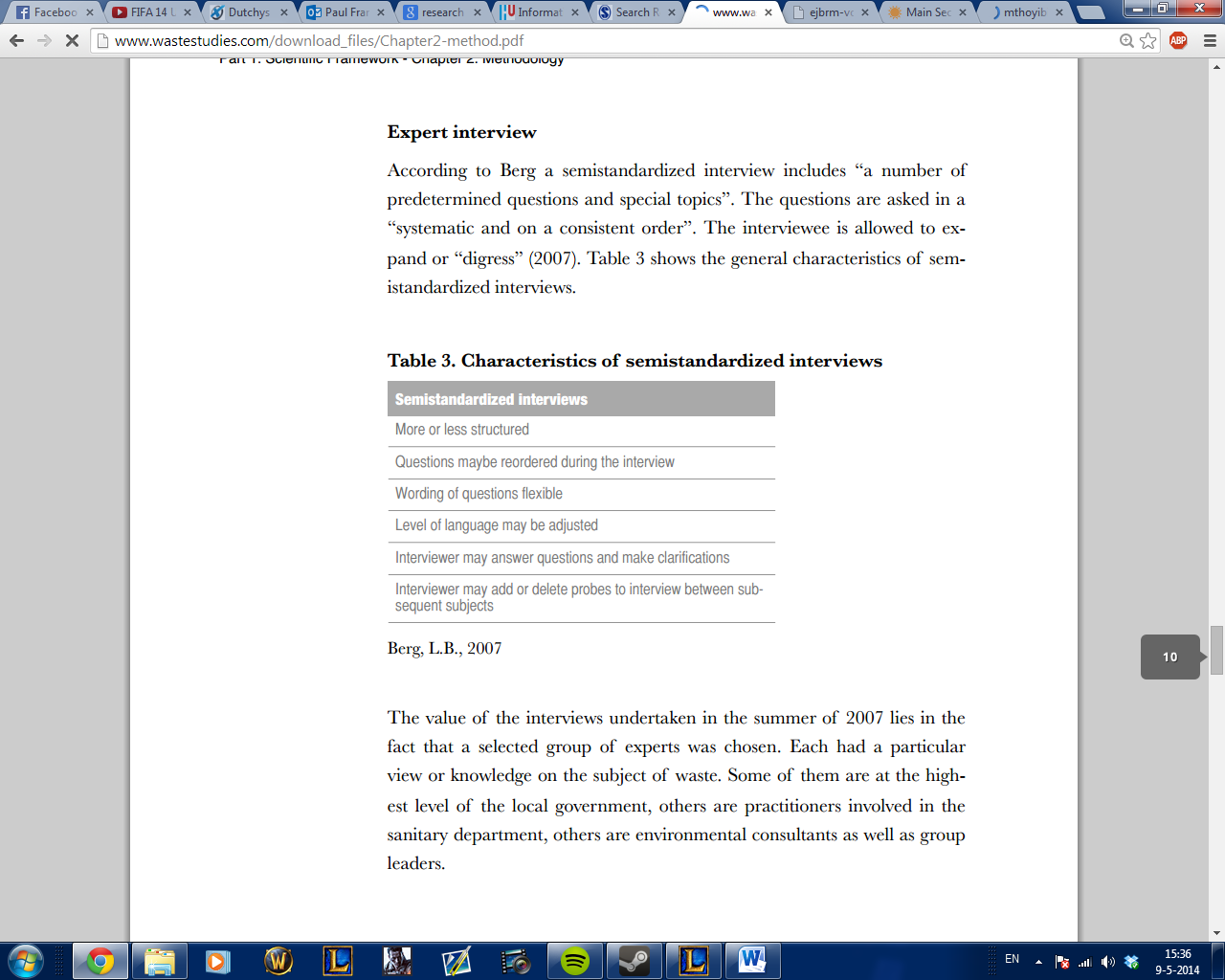
**Fig 6 – Aggregate Engagement Scores – Page 19**



**Fig 7 – Media Rating : Trustworthy – Page 19**



**Figure 8 – Pros and Cons research methods – Page 21**



**Figure 9 – Characteristics of interviews – Page 22**

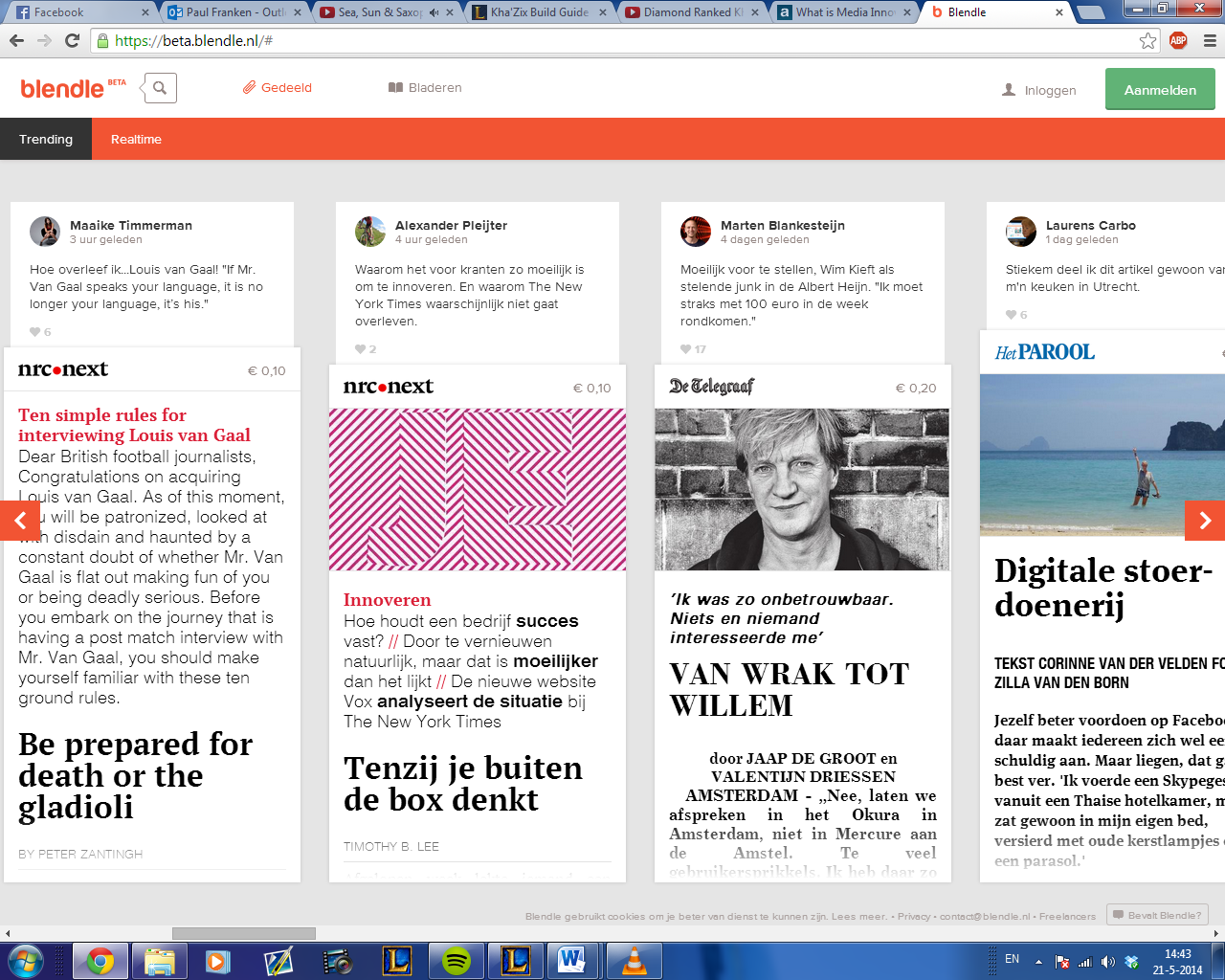
|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Desk research** | **Expert interviews** |
| Free-web | Skype (and recording device) |
| Deep-web ( Via the HU servers) | Telephone (and recording device) |
| Books (HU library and University library) | LinkedIn (approaching media professionals) |
| Articles (HU library and University library) | Facebook ( approaching media professionals) |
|  | Face – to – Face interviews |

**Figure 10 – Tools of data collection – Page 23**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Interviewee** | **Company / profession** | **Date of interview** |
| John Olivieira | Sanoma B.V | 26-03-2014 |
| Peter de Groot | Media trends lecturer | 24-04-2014 |
| Wouter Groot | Research agency - the future now. | 01-05-2014 |
| Daniel Kro | Fullhaus B.V | 06-05-2014 |
| Fabian Reiche | Westnetz | 15-05-2014 |

**Figure 11 – Table of interviewees – Page 23**

**Figure 12 – Flow chart of qualitative data analysis – Page 29**



**Figure 13 – Blendle Homepage – Page 46**

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