

**DIGITAL CONVERGENCE IN THE NEWSROOM:  
EXAMINING CROSS-MEDIA NEWS PRODUCTION  
AND QUALITY JOURNALISM**

By

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## ABSTRACT

This study analyses varied types of cross-media production with the aim of furthering a critical understanding of the factors behind organizational strategies for creating journalistic content, recognizing both opportunities and constraints for journalistic practice across different platforms in Thailand. In methodological terms, the study draws on in-depth interviews with 30 editors and journalists from three different media outlets, specifically: *Thairath*, *Nation Multimedia Group* and *PPTV HD36*. Further, primarily for contextual purposes, the study also provides a textual analysis of news content as well as observations of newsroom dynamics to explore how cross-media journalism aims to achieve its intended quality standards. Findings suggest that the quality of cross-media journalism corresponds to the synergy of cross-media work practices and multiplatform content distribution strategies to create “a long-tailed journalism,” one that extends the scope and depth of breaking news stories. Pertinent dimensions of this process include giving news adequate context, creating multiple stories from different angles, and eventually achieving well-rounded, in-depth coverage.

In the course of adapting to changes in newsroom practices brought about by digital convergence, it will be shown journalists and editors have faced significant tensions and challenges. In coping with the pressures of time management and associated risks concerning the degrading quality of news outputs, a cross-media production strategy was found to be beneficial under certain circumstances. It is based on co-operation, using a new-media team as a ‘bridging’ group between production teams serving ‘new’ and ‘old’ media platforms. It can foster the expansion of news production while enhancing the quality needed for well-rounded news coverage. On this basis, this study contributes to existing knowledge of cross-media production by providing a content-focused strategy of four types of functioning strategies – repurposing, cross-promotional, exclusive/extended and engaging reportage – which together expand stories across social-media platforms, websites and different traditional-media outlets. Each, in varying ways, helps to provide and extend diverse aspects of reportage that, taken together, have the potential to complement one another to provide higher quality news coverage.

The thesis's conclusions pinpoint the important argument that it is through the further integration of cross-media work practice and cross-media content strategies to improve synergies between 'old' and 'new' media that journalists and editors will secure better opportunities to achieve their goal of quality journalism. Four challenges are discovered to be particularly significant: (1) overcoming ethical tensions with due social responsibility; (2) providing reliable, accurate facts with meaningful context; (3) generating significant interest and relevant information in order to reach, engage and inform people; and (4) performing the role of a watchdog in the public interest (making issues known, and using professional power effectively, to raise awareness and stimulate action on social issues). Of critical importance is the need to shed light on practical frameworks to analyse cross-media strategies, ensuring journalism fulfils its responsibilities to the public interest by providing accurate, reliable knowledge and information. It is in this way, this thesis argues, that dialogue and debate about possible solutions to improve the quality of cross-media journalism will be advanced.

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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

Research for this thesis has been primarily concerned with investigating the quality of journalism in the news environment of Thailand, paying particular attention to influential factors arising from news organization policies and newsroom strategies on journalistic practice and content distribution. Precisely what counts as journalistic quality will be explored in detail in later chapters, but briefly, it may be defined here in relation to journalists' and editors' perceptions of the relative value of news coverage, namely the extent to which it provides fair and full information to help audiences comprehend a complex world. In normative terms, it is expected a news organization serves in a watchdog role with credibility, delivers news that inspires conversations and debates, stimulating action to find solutions, tackle problems and make social changes. Moreover, quality news should provide sufficient context, background details, informed interpretation and, where warranted, analysis of underlying factors shaping events (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2001; Schudson, 2008; Vehkoo, 2010).

What counts as 'quality,' it will be shown, is often in dispute across varied contexts. In the course of adapting to changes in newsroom practices brought about by convergence, journalists have faced significant tensions and challenges. These ranged from threats of job cuts to diminishing numbers of staff working for traditional platforms while social-media and digital-platform teams have expanded. Demands for new skills have been compounded by a greater emphasis placed on speed as a vital element of the competitive environment, while personalization has forced a new awareness of audience preferences, sometimes in marked contrast to journalistic priorities. Furthermore, there has been a growing challenge from bloggers, online news curators and citizen journalists, offering audiences alternative sources of information and asking implicitly why people should continue to rely on legacy news media. Journalists have thus been struggling to maintain their work practices and produce news content of high quality.

This thesis's principal objective is to draw on empirical investigations of work-practices and content-distribution strategies across the multiple platforms of

a selection of news organizations to advance debates about how multi-platform convergence and cross-media production are changing the practice of journalism in the Thai context. Case studies provide examples of newsrooms striving to expand their news coverage to reach new audiences on social media, when social-media journalism is challenged by claims that it lacks accuracy, is tempted to use sensational content, or “click bait”, and is over-reliant on user-generated content (and thereby unduly focused on social-media conversations rather than providing information that people should have to be active, informed citizens). The drive for immediacy, reliance on fragmented information and social-media postings of “fake news” are constant challenges to credibility, while news organizations are burdened with the need to provide high-quality content under recently-felt pressures of multiplatform workloads.

The new insights this thesis contributes to the field of journalism and media studies are derived from its investigation into cross-media journalism, namely by unveiling the strategic thinking informing multiplatform journalistic practice and multiple stories distribution. A main argument of this thesis is that to overcome the difficulties arising from the complexity of day-to-day multi-tasking journalism activities (briefly highlighted above), it is necessary to enhance strategic thinking into designing and planning a collaborative workflow to produce quality news coverage across multiple media platforms. The thesis demonstrates that when journalists plan collaboration strategically on pressing issues, they are better placed to develop in-depth stories with topical relevance to the public, and thereby improve the prospect of engaging them to understand what news matters to their daily lives.

The case studies from this thesis illustrate the importance of having what I will call ‘the bridge team,’ who negotiate the varied nature of platforms and help collaborate and develop cross-media content. As will be shown, this ‘new media’ team strives to adapt online media content styles to ensure they are flexible while, at the same time, respecting the professional specialisation of ‘old media’ colleagues. The production practices under scrutiny are shown to be challenged by workload tensions engendered by convergence. There is a constant risk the quality of the news provision will be undermined because of constraints associated with time and resource pressures.

From the perspective of content management, the thesis analyses cross-media coverage resulting from integrated collaboration between multiple platforms teams. A content distribution strategy will be shown to revolve around four functional types – repurposing, engaging, extending and cross-promoting content - to develop multiple stories that expand from breaking news output to more contextualised, in-depth reports. This integrated strategy of practice workflow and multiple content developing strategy extends further aspects of cross-media content narratives, thereby making the goal of “long-tail” journalism achievable under certain circumstances. That is, it has the potential to effectively give a story or subject a more thorough treatment than would be typical under ordinary newsroom conditions.

What can this thesis’s focus on Thai case studies contribute to the comparative study of journalistic convergence in other national contexts? Many Thai media organizations are now in a mature stage of convergence, having been forced to cope with the cutting of jobs by owners’ intent on improving profitability, even when facing complaints about the corresponding impact on news quality because of processes adapting to convergence. The three news organizations in this thesis are now at a stage where individual journalists and editors are trying to innovate with new narrative styles, formats, production processes and workflow strategies to advance multi-platform reporting and find ways back to improve a professional environment where high quality sometimes fails to meet adequate standards. **Thus, in this study, discussions related to the quality of journalism have investigated the relative strengths and limitations of journalists’ work processes in an age of misinformation, competition and distraction. In assessing the normative ideals** of journalistic quality in practical terms articulated by interviewed journalists and editors, this study will therefore discuss the seminal issues arising from cross-media convergence as they relate to two vital areas in which newsrooms are still struggling to formulate strategies: the first is achieving cooperation within newsrooms, and the second is disseminating content across media in order to harness the synergies made possible in multiple platforms to achieve journalism of improved quality.

### **1.1 Cross-media journalism: Constraints and opportunities**

Cross-media convergence has been implemented in many newsrooms around the world since the late 1980s. As newsrooms have shifted the practices of journalism away from dedication to a single, traditional medium towards serving the needs of multiple platforms in a convergent environment, there have been critical debates about how these changes are threatening a news culture that preferred individual experts over teamwork and knowledge-sharing (Singer, 2004). For example, Domingo and Paterson (2011) raised issues of journalistic obligation and “social context of the field” to express concern that a lack of critical understanding of actual developments and the possibility of limitations and evolution of forms of journalistic practice would do harm to society and news organizations.

Related studies of newsrooms transforming to convergence and performing cross-media news production show concerns for the quality of journalism while acknowledging the challenges involved in maintaining standards. These concerns focus on pertinent aspects of newsroom operations, such as: First, workload pressures and the complexity of multiplatform practices hindering journalists' ability to focus on the quality of content. The greater the volume of content and number of platforms for which journalists are responsible, the greater the effect may be on the quality of their work. There are concerns about retraining journalists to become multi-skilled, thereby expecting them to perform more tasks in a limited time. Many studies have voiced concern over unreasonable workload demands and their impact on the health of those people affected, and also the negative implications for the actual quality of ‘multi-skilled’ news reporting. Cottle and Ashton (1999) found that journalists at the BBC's Newscentre were concerned about a ‘homogenised’ form of news called a ‘bi-media package’. They claimed this severely constrained the ability and creativity of journalists in fashioning news items and the content itself lost some quality in the production process because journalists were unable to provide all of the materials needed. Debates about adaptation to multi-skilling and multi-platform reporting around the world have repeatedly stressed the point that journalists working with “overload tensions” from 24/7 news distribution become less able to filter and analyze their sources and detect and remove bias (Rottwilm, 2014). The appearance of “fake news” and the

need for speed in reporting have brought concern to newsrooms around the world, posing a threat to accuracy, and thereby journalistic authority. The same challenges have been faced by news organizations in Thailand, and are still exercising the concerns of newsroom strategists, editors and journalists, even though the state of convergence in these news organizations is referred to here as “mature”. Thai news organizations are focused mainly on social-media platforms to reach audiences and spread news widely – a strategy justified by some because it can help them gain digital revenue. This tends to inflame claims that journalists are losing their authority, which, it is pointed out, embraces ideal-typical values of the journalistic practice, including serving the public with truthful, independent, empowering, engaged and balanced information that makes sense in relation to civic responsibilities (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2001).

A second aspect of newsroom operations that are causing concern is the speed of the Internet and consequent pressure on newsrooms to compete with citizen-generated content and meet demands for real-time information. These pressures sometimes affect the vital verification process, and mistakes can destroy trust and credibility – the main pillars of quality journalism.

Third is the digital culture in which “anyone can tell a story”. Social-media eyewitnesses and user-generated content lessen the authority of professional news reporting and newsrooms find the need to compete with alternative sources of information. In some countries – especially Thailand – “online influencers” have Facebook pages that they use to supply specific information, to follow news conversations and take an authoritative stance in debates on various issues. These individuals have gained audience trust as sources of information, such that they are able to question the need for “mainstream journalism”.

Fourth, the struggle for business survival continues, with no signs of an effective model being created for gaining adequate revenue from cross-media news production. Several questions arise: how can journalistic content make sufficient money to enable a newsroom to survive economically? How can the quality of journalism be maintained in this atmosphere? Sheer business survival is a major factor in concerns over the quality of journalism, with rapid changes to the way it is practised in the age of digital disruption leading to a virtual state of crisis in traditional media. Revenue is declining as audiences are moving away from

traditional outlets (quality journalism being expensive to produce) to new-media platforms where news appears to be ‘free’ at the point of consumption. Competition for survival has forced the need to maximize incomes, cut costs, reduce staff and concentrate on speed and quantity to reach audiences. In this environment, it has been all too easy to marginalize journalistic standards. Both professionals and scholars in the digital transformation of journalism have pointed to newsroom practices as an important reason for the weakening quality of journalism. Snow (2014) argues that in the age of fragmented information and loads of content online, it is difficult for audiences to distinguish between information and content prepared by a professional journalist. This suggests that the profession should be able to create content value from journalistic specialization, and find a business model that gains value from the niche and quality aspects of this content. While struggling to find such a business model, journalists should remember that quality is capable of saving journalism because people still look to them for the kind of information that makes sense of what is happening in the world. If journalism fails to uphold its quality, it risks losing both its authority and the chance to endure (Prasad, 2016; Yoon, 2016; Fernandez, 2017).

Amid the mists of change and the crisis arising from the diminishing role and authority of traditional journalism, numerous studies from scholars have helped to shed light on the opportunities cross-media practices may bring to creating a new future for journalism. One opportunity is for investigative journalism, when integrated with social-media technologies and participatory journalism. The task of gathering news is changing: Nowadays, journalists have a greater number and variety of sources of information, if not always sufficient time and resources to maximise their full potential. They can build connections with people online to create teams to help them when they are crowdsourcing or trying to access in-depth information from sources that might otherwise be closed to them. Collaboration between journalists and online users has been studied as an aspect of news gathering, production and creative storytelling, and these studies have established that social media provide many opportunities for the exercise of good journalism (Arceneaux and Weiss, 2010; Mare, 2014).

Because of the drive of social media, Thailand has been adapting to a full measure of convergence and the cross-media concept for six years, and the process

has rapidly changed news organizations and affected the way news is produced and distributed by journalists and organisations and accessed by audiences. In response to opportunities for growth in online audiences, newspapers go online and build news websites in order to capture larger audiences. More news is being read online, especially by young people (Sripool, 2010; Chuastapanasiri, 2017; Thongthep). Every newspaper now has its own website. Some websites clone content from the parent newspaper and publish it online (Angkulanon, 2009). Others adopt cross-media production and have varied forms of storytelling suited to websites and social media, especially Facebook, Twitter and LINE (Srisaracam and Pornwasin, 2012; Kuljitjuewong, 2015, Areepeumporn, 2018). The content includes repurposed newspaper stories, multimedia stories and content that is exclusive to websites (Lertpaiboon, 2011; Isaranews, 2018). This multi-platform approach echoes that scrutinised in Doyle's (2011) study, which found that the use of multiple platforms was generally about dispersing content across many outlets, sometimes involving the creation of multiple texts to enhance the suitability of content for different modes of delivery. Doyle's study emphasized three aspects of the multi-platform approach: economic drive, content acquisition and exploitation. She concluded that multiple platforms provided a means of remaining relevant to audiences and advertisers who had moved to online and mobile. However, the concept of producing news content for multiple platforms has many objectives beyond the simple economic imperative. The life cycle of news content is extended, to prolong the distribution period and reach a wider audience across platforms; there is the opportunity to create interaction with audiences; and the strengths of each platform can be used to report news of high quality, the impact of which can drive social change. Multiple platforms can also be used to explain issues related to different audience groups, thereby solving problems in a manner that supports democratic principles and civic participation in various issues.

The process in which Thai print publishers have gone online and created websites as additional platforms from which to deliver news was aimed at reaching a bigger audience. It was the same response to the same trends in Western countries, where dissemination of news content was expanded to involve online versions. Bockowski (2004) pointed out that websites were platforms where the news and other contents were repackaged by using the multimedia nature of the outlet. Thus,

news stories were a combination of text, still and moving images, audio and animation. He also confirmed in follow-up research that online news had expanded as a dominant alternative to traditional news production and consumption. Taking the transformation several steps further, journalism via social media has broken new ground in the dissemination of news (Boczkowski and De Santos, 2007). The concept and practice of using social media as platforms for news has been studied by many scholars, and those studies show that this revolution in the practice of journalism came about because technology introduced the innovations of connecting data and information via hypertext, interactivity, multimedia content and two-way communication. This change gave rise to a new spirit of collaboration and participation between reporters, editors and audiences throughout the news-production process (Pavlik, 1999; Deuze, 2003).

Another important area for study is the importance of storytelling in cross-media journalism. Research on this subject has been mostly limited to innovative narratives which expand different stories across platforms, most of them created for online use (Jacobson, 2012; Pavlik and Brides, 2013). Some studies highlight the repurposing of multi-platform content (Bolter and Grusin, 1999; Erdal, 2009), a process in which newspaper and television versions of a story are repackaged from online reports and rewritten in depth, with the addition of documents and details. Franquet (2014) studied cross-media production in Spain's public broadcast service RTVE, where cross-media strategy aims to attract and engage audiences, with each platform playing a different role with different objectives. Stories are mainly featured as television content. Websites and social media are used to drive traffic; and to engage people with the stories. Cross-media production uses an interactive feature on the websites to draw attention to a story and tell it in a more engaging way. The study suggests that the interactive feature is a promotional tool to boost not only the size of the television audience, but also the flow of traffic to websites and mobile devices, while striving to consolidate the brand and gain audience loyalty. Veglis (2012) discusses models for a cross-media concept called trans-media reporting, in which a news organization with multiple platforms can separate a story into pieces, or various aspects, and then deliver them through different channels. A few parts of a trans-media article may first be published in a newspaper, then gradually updated with fresh information in various formats that

will make readers visit the article more than once, to gather additional aspects of the story. Media convergence encourages trans-media storytelling, i.e. the development of content across multiple channels. The more fully consumers exploit the potential of organic convergence, the more the producers of content will use different ways to communicate various types and levels of information, choosing the media that most appropriately present the content and meet the needs of their audience. Online news storytelling is another interesting aspect for examination. From related work I have reviewed, innovations in storytelling styles can be created on websites to help stories reach beyond routine reporting and into in-depth coverage (Tarcia and Marinho, 2008).

To investigate and understand the vital role of storytelling in disseminating news, a researcher must study three issues: the sequence in which stories travel across platforms; the media and methods used to tell stories across platforms; and the focus and objectives of stories as they are told across platforms. Bradshaw (2007) suggests that when online media play an important role in the news-production process, journalists are able to cover news in two dimensions: immediate/fast and in-depth. The sequence is different from the traditional immediate report followed by in-depth reporting and then analysis. In Bradshaw's (2007) case, the Internet goes first and print media follow up. Storytelling involves the integration of audio, video and text. Online news is updated directly, with text, audio and video sent out by short-message service (SMS). A web-first strategy means breaking a story online and leaving the analysis for the newspaper. When news breaks, video reporters, photographers and print reporters attend the scene. Writers first report back by phone and later send photographs and video. Some studies point to the relationship between the social network Twitter and mainstream media, in which Twitter is used to stimulate public participation and engage audiences for broadcast content (Marchetti & Ceccobelli, 2015; Green, 2017). Some studies have examined content-flow strategies, for example, Verweij (2009) studied the convergence of print, radio, television and online newsrooms at the African Media Matrix in South Africa during the National Arts Festival. After exploring newsrooms in Africa he concluded that when newspapers migrated to online media, the web opened the door to multi-dimensional or multi-layered storytelling. Users were thus offered the choice of pursuing various details or

sticking with a general overview of the story and editors could choose which aspects of a story should be published on which platform, according to the strengths of the various media for conveying the messages most impressively. Several previous studies have tended to highlight what are perceived to be the positive virtues of convergence in relation to cross-media journalism without, at the same time, being alert to the downsides, problems and shortcomings. Hence this thesis's attention to issues regarding news quality, and how it is defined differently from varied journalistic and editorial vantage points.

## **1.2 Overview of pertinent aspects of Thai journalism: how it contributes to global convergence debates**

By laying out example of Thai news organisation that testing on workflow and content strategy to fight through convergence barriers, the thesis's result will set agenda on future research on convergence journalistic practice to overcome difficulty and strategically work under limitation. Media organizations have been quick to adapt to new technologies in order to survive in a fiercely competitive market beset by changes in news-consumption behaviour. To give context to the importance of filling the knowledge gap in cross-media practices and producing content for multiple platforms, I will provide an illustrated timeline overview of how Thailand's media landscape has changed and how, in recent years, it has faced digital disruption.

Journalism in Thailand has developed according to political, economic and social frameworks. Although the Thai press had been fighting for freedom from politics before 1992, the events now known as Black May or Bloody May, from May 17 to 20, 1992, brought matters to a head. Thai security forces opened fire on tens of thousands of demonstrators in central Bangkok who were demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Suchinda Kraprayoon, an army general who had led a coup against a democratically elected government in February 1991. In addition to summary executions, human rights violations attributable to security forces included unnecessary and disproportionate use of lethal force. During the crisis, newspapers defied the dangers inherent in the situation and journalists did their best to inform the public. This led to a greater public reliance on information in

newspapers, greater public support for newspaper freedom and the belief that newspapers were “watchdogs” for the people.

Following the crisis, a campaign by the Civic Movement in 1992 resulted in media deregulation. More freedom for the Thai press was provided by the 1997 Constitution, and the first commercial television channel (iTV) was established to offer news and information to the public (Suksai, 2002). Broadcast news provided more airtime for investigative journalism and freedom of the press flourished as journalists were eager to play an investigative role and perform as watchdogs for the people. Throughout the mid-1990s newspaper opinions carried sufficient power to set the agenda for Thai society. Front-page stories had high impact and newspapers enjoyed high advertising revenue. Then came the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997 and many newspapers found themselves in financial difficulties. Economic conditions and investors gathered increasing influence over the practice of journalism as professional voices cried: “we may be free from politics, but investors are trying to invade and get control of the press via ads spending, and investors are becoming the owners of media companies through the stock market”. However, research has shown that Thailand has traditionally enjoyed a free and colourful press. Thai journalists have been catalytic, advocating the right of the people to know (Wongtheerathorn, 2008).

Table 1.1 shows that the number of news media in Thailand has increased in response to new telecommunications technologies, the Internet and the switch to digital TV. It would seem logical that these circumstances would lead to a diversity of journalism, but competition among media organizations is fiercer and conditions are tougher, so the mainstream media are struggling to survive rather than offering a diversity of content. However, some startups operating exclusively in digital media have entered the business as alternative news sources and are trying to offer different content to audiences.

**TABLE 1.1:** Number of news media in Thailand, 1985-1987 and present day.

<i>1985-1987</i>	<i>Today</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 150 newspapers— 30 Bangkok based dailies</li> <li>• 5 TV channels (commercial and state television)</li> <li>• 275 radio stations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 daily newspapers</li> <li>• 26 terrestrial digital TV channels</li> <li>• 400 to 500 local cable TV channels</li> <li>• 200 satellite TV channels</li> <li>• A few Internet TV channels (however, most free-to-air TV and some satellite channels are also on the Internet)</li> <li>• 204 AM radio stations, 334 FM radio stations, and about 4,000 community radio stations</li> <li>• About 400 websites categorized as news websites (reporting, collating and distributing news)</li> </ul>

### **Traditional media begin to embrace online journalism**

When Thailand entered the Internet age and development of telecommunication services improved Internet penetration, media companies found that they could no longer ignore the changing behaviour of audiences, who were moving to online platforms. At the beginning of the 1990s, all newspapers and television stations expanded their services to include websites, which published a cloned online

version of traditional news, after newspapers were “on the streets” and television news had gone to air.

By 1996, newspapers had launched website versions of the news because economic conditions had slowed down and their revenue was in decline. Before this, they had referred to website versions as ‘electronic newspapers’ because the entire newspaper was simply repurposed and published online. This practice then developed when they began rewriting newspaper stories and creating an “online version with pictures”. Research in 2002 found that development of a narrative style for websites was rather slow and stories being published on websites were the same as those in the newspaper (Parnsritao, 2002). Only some news websites had exclusive online stories that were different to the print version. The scope of content that was specially organized and produced for online dissemination was chosen according to audience interest and newsworthiness, in much the same manner as editors may choose stories for print newspapers. However, Manager.co.th showed a significant development of exclusive online content that was different from that of its print outlet, in a response to its policy of moving its entire operation to digital only. Elsewhere, broadcast news was rewritten for publication on websites, along with video on demand. Radio news expanded to a live service on websites and provided on-demand content. In this period, the Internet was seen by journalists and editors as providing supporting channels for traditional media, so content was repurposed for websites (Salaya, 2016).

Manager.co.th had the first news website operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It shifted the mindset regarding online journalism and gave audiences an alternative source of information that responded to the need for speed and immediacy in news consumption. The website offered more content and it was free to access, taking its revenue from advertising. I recall from my own professional experience that during that time, journalists checked the latest news updates every morning on the Manager.co.th website. This echoes the findings of research into Manager.co.th’s success in attracting traffic and an audience to its website because of its variety of content and free access (Kongpradit, 2014). Looking back to the digital transformation of medium-sized newspapers, Kongpradit found that their strategy was to use a website as an extended platform to reach audiences who were not buying the newspaper. They expected to find add-on revenue from website

advertising. However, adaptation to the new medium was slow due to a lack of staff trained in digital technologies and inadequate budgets. The structure of these fledgling operations was a small team working to repurpose content for the website. Most such ventures were not ready to appoint teams for fully operational newsrooms working 24 hours a day, seven days a week. However, journalists were encouraged to become multi-skilled so they could report news across platforms via smartphones and tablets.

The Internet forced traditional journalism to compete with alternative online information agencies that aimed to fill the gap between print and broadcast-focused journalism. For example, [thaipublica.org](http://thaipublica.org) offered data-based investigative and economic journalism; [prachatai.com](http://prachatai.com) focused on alternative aspects of political issues; [tcjithai.com](http://tcjithai.com) focused on investigative journalism and citizenship rights in society; and [isranew.com](http://isranew.com) offered investigative and watchdog coverage of corruption issues. Since 2015, online journalists have also responded to the new culture and lifestyle of 'Net citizens by writing content exclusively for particular websites with a modern narrative style and offering different angles on stories that are mainly focused on younger generations. These websites include [thematter.co](http://thematter.co) and [thestandard.co](http://thestandard.co). Online journalism in Thailand also has to compete with "portal websites" such as [sanook.com](http://sanook.com) and [kapook.com](http://kapook.com), which take news from mainstream news websites and republish it, sometimes attracting more audience traffic than the original stories on mainstream websites.

As well as being driven by emerging technologies, consumers' behaviour has been changed by the need to access real-time information from online platforms in times of political upheaval and natural disasters. When newspapers and television are difficult to access, websites and social media have offered the opportunity for free and immediate access. This has disrupted the role of traditional media and changed the practices of news consumers, who have embraced online journalism when it has responded to their needs.

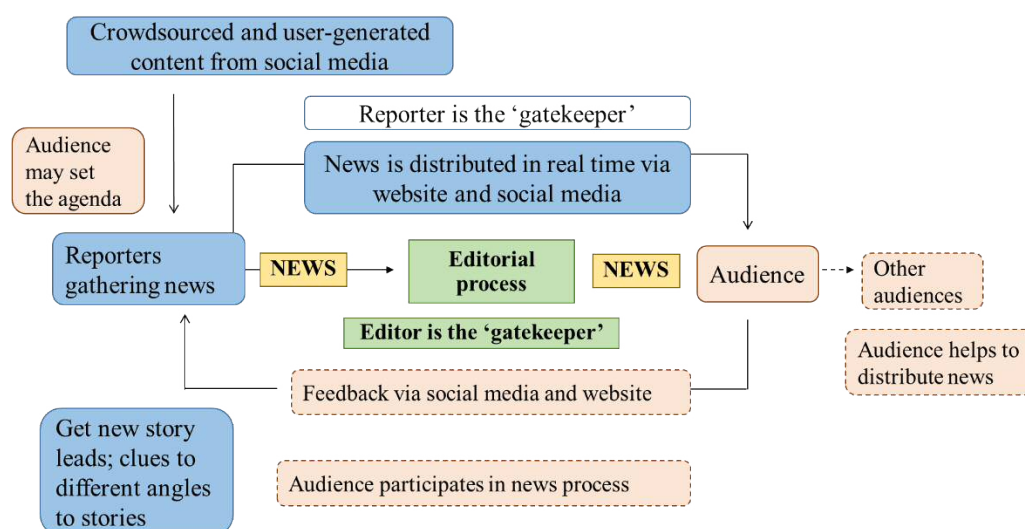
## **Social media and journalism**

Although online platforms had become important for the delivery and consumption of news, the most significant change in the journalism mindset in Thailand was not firmly established until the country's political turmoil in 2010, when social media had a profound influence on information flow and news consumption. Massed political rallies were mobilized by anti-government protesters led by the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD), also known as the "Red Shirts". Central Bangkok was paralyzed for three months, followed by violent clashes between security forces and followers of the UDD. The traditional media were limited in their access to information and it was difficult to report on the situation. But rumours spread like chaotic wildfire across online media. For the first time, journalists began to use Twitter to report news directly from inside the protest areas, while citizen journalists stepped into a new role on Twitter, helping to provide information. The public was able to follow the unrest situation in real-time. This helped to ease public concerns and prepared people to be safe when violence could break out anywhere.

Thai people took advantage of social media outlets to collect information about what was happening (Newley, 2011) and journalists found ways to make real-time reports, stop rumours, engage with citizen journalists and build up their use of eyewitness content to get as many angles to stories as they could. After the unrest, Thai people continued to use social media widely. News organizations such as The Nation Multimedia Group kicked off a social media strategy and implemented a "multi-skilled journalist" concept in its newsroom. Other news organizations were quick to follow the trend. Nowadays it is common for news to break first on Twitter and people follow the situation on Twitter from journalists in the field. The number of Facebook users has also grown dramatically, with recent statistics showing that Thailand has 47 million Facebook users and is ranked ninth in the world for Facebook membership. The LINE social application has 41 million Thai users and the country has nine million active Twitter users, especially teenagers (Fredrickson, 2017). However, people who are the biggest consumers of news on social media say they still trust traditional journalism. Meanwhile, news websites have become dependent on social networks to drive audience traffic to their news content. Statistics show that the top five online news websites (operated by newspaper

publishers) have a higher number of Facebook followers than other websites and audiences travel to the top five from cross-media content on Facebook (Prajongsangri and Duangmanee, 2017)

Social media have become interwoven in journalism practice, amounting to a two-way flow of communication, and the lines between news gathering, news production and distribution had become blurred (Srisaracam, 2011, Figure 1.1). According to this model, professionals can crowdsource information from the public and receive online and social-media feedback.



**FIGURE 1.1: Model of journalistic practice integrating social media.**

However, mastering an all-media format in newsgathering and storytelling has raised debates about “deskilling” and “losing time”. The President and Chief Operating Officer of The Post Publishing Company – publishers of the *Bangkok Post* – Supakorn Vejjajiva, says news organizations are making a mistake when they clone content from traditional media for online websites because, while this may provide an alternative and easier way for people to reach news stories, the practice provides no gain for the organization (Uttamontri, 2013). He also questions the quality of journalism in an environment where cross-media production is seen as a solution for the business travails of news organizations. While people may be offered many more items of information by online and social-media platforms, how, he asks, does journalism on these platforms answer the questions of society and explain this information clearly, as well as provide analysis and offer opinions?

In the review of Thailand's convergent-journalism experience mentioned above, the former Chairman of the *Nation Multimedia Group*, Suthichai Yoon, spoke on the subject: 'The Future of Journalism: revisiting convergence journalism in Thailand'. He pointed out that despite convergence and the increasing number of news media, quality seemed to be declining because none of Thailand's news organizations had invested in training and improving the skill of journalists. There was more news content being published, but it was the same type of content and the expansion of digital television had brought no real diversity or high-quality journalistic programmes.

Instead of gaining advantage from embracing the convergence concept, journalism had been thrown into crisis (Pornwasin, 2015). The dean of the School of Communication Arts at the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, Mana Treelayapewat, expressed concern that editors and journalists still had "old mindsets of journalistic practice", despite the implementation of convergence. Newsroom strategies, work practices and content production had not yet effectively responded to changes in audience behaviour, he said (Isaranews, 2015). Chakkrish Permpool, an editor at Lannapost newspaper and former Chairman of The National Press Council of Thailand, said that the digital transformation had increased the number of journalistic media, but the quality of journalism had not improved as expected. He suggested that during the three or four years of early adoption of both convergent journalism and a multi-skilled approach to news production in newsrooms, when the difficulty of training all journalists to become multi-skilled in a convergent environment became obvious, some other strategy should have been found to cope with the issues involved (Isaranews, 2015). These learned opinions lend emphasis to my assertion that there is a gap in knowledge and understanding surrounding the implementation and achievement of cross-media production which, along with cultural differences and the industry-wide economic malaise, restrains the ability of news organizations to achieve an ideal situation in which journalists produce multiple stories across all platforms.

News organizations in Thailand have been compelled to alter their news-reporting processes and integrate social media and online media into their workflow. The resulting model involves social media in newsgathering, news distribution and the use of user-generated content, and this is helping media outlets

to survive in a changing news culture. Thus, all news companies, both traditional media companies and those focused on digital news alone, have social-media platforms to supplement their existing outlets in order to reach wider audiences and to maintain a lookout for opportunities leading to new business models (Suksai, 2015).

Another unique group that has changed Thailand's media landscape is called "Online influencers" (Auymanachai, 2013; Srisaracam, et al., 2016), who are individuals or groups of people who create Facebook pages to give information and "latest news" reports on situations occurring within society. Some even act like citizen journalists and write news reports. These "influencers" have become a very popular source of information for Thai social-media users. Sometimes, an influencer will break a story before the traditional media. The word spreads quickly as it gains interest from online users and more people join the online conversation. In these circumstances, influencers can set the agenda for newspapers to follow their leads and cover their stories. In a positive sense, some issues that have been ignored by mainstream media gain public attention and awareness in this manner, and some are even driven to the point of achieving social change; where solutions are found to problems. However, there is concern about journalists shifting into "easier ways" of reporting, in which newsrooms simply select stories from social media conversations, report what is happening and what people are talking about, but fail to apply professional journalistic skills to expand upon the stories.

There are also further concerns about the casual use of user-generated content, such as screening clips from closed-circuit surveillance cameras or video generated by social-media users with simple details of an event while failing to usefully expand upon what happened. Audiences are questioning the importance of mainstream journalism when it seems they can get the same information online. There is also criticism of professional practices, such that people's reliance upon and faith in journalism is being lost. The Dean of the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce's School of Communication Art, Dr. Mana Treelayapewat, says that credibility and trustworthiness lie at the very core of journalism, and journalists have a vital role to play in verifying information and data, investigating stories, establishing checks and balances, and upholding fairness for people in the

news. If they do not do this, people will respond by turning to their own media – the social media (Pornwasin, 2015).

Social media are essential for cross-media content because they reach different audiences and can be expected to drive some members of their audience back to traditional media. Journalists may seize opportunities for high-quality news reporting if they know how to use social media effectively (Mimee, 2014). Journalists believe that social media offer the benefit of a story reaching a mass audience, but this depends on the policy of the news organization involved and the degree to which social media are integrated into its work practices. In an earlier study on social media and their ability to set the agenda for traditional media coverage, the process of agenda setting occurred when online users and influencers told stories and explained issues in a manner that lead to both social conversation and collective action (Srisaracam, 2016). Columnists have analysed the disruption situation in Thai media and say that consumers have changed: they can access much free content, become more personalized in choosing what they consume, respond to immediate information and, in fact, can become creators of content themselves (Lertsudwichai, 2016). Restructuring of newsrooms by shrinking those parts that do not generate sufficient revenue has been a strategy for adapting to digital disruption. Although, there has been online journalism in Thailand since late 1900s, convergent journalism hadn't been discussed among researchers, scholars and professional until 2012. During 2012 to 2015, professional journalists and academics began a cooperative effort to develop knowledge and understanding and to encourage the news industry to think about convergence and the future of journalism.

Convergent newsrooms are the current big features of the media landscape in Thailand. The first convergent newsroom in Thailand was launched in 2012, under the roof of the Nation Multimedia Group. This was aimed at controlling costs and raising productivity, so there was a major re-engineering of its management and editorial functions with the convergence of news desks, sales and marketing and management. Study of the early stages of convergence in Thailand in 2012 indicated that newsroom strategies were focused on adaptation to technology convergence, platform convergence, newsroom re-structuring and developing multi-skilled journalists (Srisaracam and Pornwasin, 2012). There was early

discussion on the multi-platform and multi-skills concept, but closer examination showed the need to understand how cross-media production was going to deliver benefits for newsrooms from multi-platform expansion and convergent media business.

The transformation to convergent newsrooms was an adjustment made by media organizations in order to survive. New technologies and changes in audience behaviour had forced them to adjust their patterns of news dissemination. Since their audiences had moved to exist across the media spectrum, from newspapers, television and radio to the Internet, mobile platforms and social media, news organizations were forced to rethink the ways in which they provided news to their audiences (Permpool, 2013). When news organisations have multiple platforms for the delivery of news, the issue of skills convergence gains priority: journalists should be able to use multiple skills to report the news across all platforms.

The Chairman of The Nation Multimedia Group, Suthichai Yoon, says digital media combine traditional broadcasting and social media, and this provides immediate news and knowledge to audiences everywhere (Khamchana, 2013). Thus, editors and reporters of The Nation Multimedia Group use social media as a way to bridge the gap between the traditional media and the public. A senior executive of the Nation Multimedia Group, Thepchai Yong (2012), emphasises the importance of the convergent newsroom as a place where work redundancy is eliminated, multi-skilled journalism is promoted and better, in-depth content is made possible.

### **Digital TV: problems still lie ahead for investors and broadcasters**

Digital TV was launched in Thailand in 2014 after the National Broadcast and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) awarded Digital Terrestrial Television (DTTV) licences through an open auction process in December 2013. The licences were divided into four categories: high definition TV, standard definition TV, children's TV and digital news TV. The problem was that, like all auctions, success was a matter of bidding the highest price for a licence, and the prices were very high because, at that time, investors expected to reap big rewards. But the huge licence fees later resulted in financial difficulties for digital TV operators and the

consequent business slowdown affected the entire media industry (Isaranews, 2017).

After the digital-TV license auction, the number of television channels in Thailand leapt from six to 25 terrestrial digital broadcasters. Among them were publishing companies that were expanding into digital TV, including *Thairath* TV (*Thairath* newspaper); Nation TV and NOW26 (Nation Multimedia Group); Amarin TV (Amarin TV) and New TV (The Daily News newspaper). There were old players – existing broadcasters that were expanding to digital TV – including Channel 3, Channel 7, MCOT (the privatized Mass Communication Organization of Thailand) and TNN (True Corporation). Some were switching over to digital TV broadcasting, including ThaiPBS (public service) and Channel 5 (Military-run television). There were new players from the world of entertainment and other businesses investing in digital television, including PPTV-36HD, Workpoint, GMM25, One31 and Channel 8. Ever since they first began, the new digital channels have been struggling to survive in an environment of economic slowdown where they have lost revenue and profits. Some experts have even forecast that within a few years, only 15 channels will be left in operation (Kitichatpornpat, 2017).

The transition to digital TV in Thailand underestimated the influence of online and social-media platforms and their part in changing the behaviour of audiences in a digital environment. Television is no longer a mainstream medium that enjoys a monopoly, because people can access a greater variety of content online (WP., 2017). Latest reports on media spending in 2016 show it has gradually declined to the lowest level in 10 years for every platform. Advertising budgets are not expected to increase over the next few years and advertisers have tended to move towards digital spending, so the advertising income that was once enjoyed by the mainstream media has been divided into many sectors. Advertising spending on digital TV may no longer be sufficient for its survival, because big budgets for one medium are a thing of the past. The biggest concern is that big-company investors will take over the stocks of digital news television. It remains to be seen how this may affect the standard of journalism.

In these difficult conditions, the struggle by news programmes to survive is exacerbated by audience ratings. Some programmes still enjoy high ratings because

they are known for sensational news. In discussions with journalists and editors, I found that they are struggling, second-by-second, to cope with the “ratings sheet”. They do not deny that they follow social-media conversations because they believe that these will attract people to television news programmes. News programmes, therefore, tend to have more content that discusses user-generated video clips and pictures from the Internet that have already generated public interest. Audience ratings and demand for real-time information have driven broadcasters to concentrate on Facebook Live and social-media content, as well as dramatizing the news by employing dramatic presenters and giving priority to sensational news stories. Under all these circumstances, concern over the quality of journalism has risen among scholars and professionals.

In 2015 and 2016, we have seen print businesses close down and job cuts and voluntary redundancy policies in most big media companies in Thailand because they have been unable to find sufficient and sustainable business models. Some have adapted to change, but others have not. Thus, in some companies a convergence policy seems incapable of achieving either content diversity or quality, and revenue from cross-media operations has yet to reach sufficiency. With the large number of competitors, media companies are losing the strength of monopoly and the authority to encourage brand loyalty and persuade audiences to consume their content. When media companies expanded to become digital TV operators and to launch websites, they expected to reap profits from both media.

However, statistics in 2017 showed that such visions of profitable business opportunities were an illusion. Huge amounts of money were paid for digital TV licences at a time when audiences were shifting away from TV to mobile devices (Frenquest, 2017). The 2017 annual review of the Thai Journalists’ Association (ThaiPBS, 2017) notes that media outlets have been hard hit by the so-called digital disruption phenomenon, which saw advertising revenue, readership and viewership all diminish as consumers changed their habits and shifted to social media and online TV via their smartphones. Although digital advertising has grown and is not without promise of further growth, advertisers are not spending solely on mainstream media anymore; their budgets are being further segmented by spending on micro-influencers and bloggers.

Overall, the value chain of journalism and media production in Thailand has changed. Journalists and news organizations must find ways of overcoming and working with four new media value chains in order to succeed as popular and profitable businesses:

- 1) Consumer interaction: News organizations must seek and understand insights into “personalization” of audiences according to lifestyle, demography, culture and attitudes. Newsrooms should also build strategies around participatory relationships that will enrich news reporting.
- 2) Generating content: News content should respond to both the need for immediacy and in-depth understanding, while offering diversity and niche content for audience groups with similar interests. User-generated content should be integrated into news stories more effectively; to expand stories beyond the level of social-media conversations. The creation of cross-media content is essential if ways to lift the quality of journalism are to be found.
- 3) Cross-media distribution: This involves delivering news content to wherever audiences can be found. But it should strengthen news-media-owned platforms and help news organizations to find business models and build their brands so they will be remembered across platforms.

To summarise, the Thai media landscape has changed rapidly, a crucial feature of which being a widening range of multi-media platforms over the past six years, due to the print-newspaper reading crisis and the birth of 24 new digital TV channels. Moreover, the variety of choices for media exposure has proliferated, with Facebook pages and Facebook groups acting as forums for citizen journalists, giving information and even engaging with online audiences. This has led to a phenomenon in which “social media influencers” began to set news agendas. Many media organizations were simultaneously facing a business crisis as advertising revenue dwindled. Producing news stories became evermore time-consuming and expensive, while competition against online media had to be maintained in order to survive. Editors and journalists were compelled to adapt to cross-platform news reporting, while audiences changed their patterns of news consumption.

Related research in Thailand on this topic over recent years has been mainly focused on newsroom structure and how journalists were adapting to the situation. While there were some journalists who lost their jobs with the shrinking and closure

of newspapers, others managed to continue their work in the new media environment. Some found new career paths on digital platforms and new-media teams, some even left the job and started small newsrooms focusing on reporting niche areas of interest. Academic studies are still lacking where it comes to studying the quality of journalistic work in the changing media landscape.

In terms of the scope of existing literature on news organizations adapting to cross media production and the influences this change has imposed on the practice of journalism, this thesis is situated to examine the changing practices and the efforts of news organizations to solve problems related to the capabilities of their journalists and editors. During the rapid six-year change in the Thai media landscape, some journalists lost their jobs because they were the victims of ‘efficiency gains’ to cut costs by reducing the workforce. In other instances, it was because they refused to comply with changes they regarded as compromising journalistic integrity. For those who stayed on in newsrooms, they were typically made to adapt to new skills, re-locate to positions around the traditional news team or the new-media team, or remain attuned to a journalistic specialization and provide context and in-depth knowledge for the newsroom from their long experience. This thesis focuses primarily on the journalists and editors who adapted in order to hold on to their jobs, finding themselves committed to cross-media journalism and striving to produce quality journalism as it was being redefined in this new environment. In addition, Thai case studies will illustrate how newsrooms have found ways of overcoming the obstacles and constraints of convergence to achieve journalists’ goals of delivering high-quality work.

### 1.3 Research questions

The main research aim is to investigate both cross-media practices and content and determine how these are affecting the quality of journalism in Thailand. Ultimately, the investigation comes at a time when news organizations generally are struggling for business survival as the media environment has changed, audience behaviour has transformed with demands for alternative sources of information, and cash-strapped companies are searching for a way forward through fierce and unrelenting competition. Therefore, this thesis will pursue a set of interconnected lines of inquiry:

***RQ.1 what strategies are being adapted in cross-media newsrooms to integrate journalistic specialisation and multi-skilled advantages in news production?*** This thesis contributes to debates on how to overcome “workload constraints” of cross-media journalism and examines how journalists and editors adapt to changing newsroom routines with a collaborative strategy to integrate work of multi-skilled journalists, specialisation teams, new-media teams and traditional platforms team.

***RQ.2 what are the advantages and disadvantages of the respective news organizations’ content distribution strategy and narrative style? How is news quality perceived and defined, in general, and in relation to the output resulting from integration process of multiplatform distribution and multiple stories production?*** This thesis aims to fill the gap of knowledge on how cross-media content can be planned and managed by focusing on the relationship between journalistic practice and different news products resulting from the process. To explore this research question, the thesis emphasises a holistic perspective on media production and distribution sequences, looking at 1) how multiple stories are organised, 2) how multiple stories unfold from breaking news to in-depth reports, and 3) analysing journalists’ and editors’ self-reflections on the resulting media reporting.

## 1.4 Structure of thesis

The overall structure of this thesis takes the form of seven chapters, illustrating the researcher's determination to fill the gaps in knowledge related to convergence and cross-media journalism in the Thai context. **Chapter 1** discusses the media landscape in Thailand in the era of digital disruption, which has seen a transformation of both the practice of journalism and the conduct of the news-media industry. The background of the media landscape highlights subjects that are relevant to the study and which facilitate a general understanding of the research topic.

**Chapter 2** is a literature review, presenting the theoretical concepts and perspectives relevant to this thesis. It strives towards an understanding of the two concepts of convergence and cross-media journalism. Earlier studies in this field have shown that implementation of these concepts has changed both the structure of news organizations and work practices, narrative styles and content flows across multiple channels, raising interesting points about opportunities for innovative online and trans-media narratives which create different ways of telling the same stories for different groups of people, to make journalism more engaging and invite social participation in important issues. The final part of the literature review concentrates on revisiting definitions of quality journalism in an environment of digital disruption, and examines how a new relationship with the public and changing practices of journalism challenge professional values.

**Chapter 3** discusses the methodology used to explore and gather empirical data for this study, and the specific techniques used to gather data that is reliable. I detail the research approach and procedures as well as the rationale for how the methods of study were chosen. This provides insights into how the thesis developed in order to reach its final results and arguments.

The results and discussions are presented in **Chapters 4, 5 and 6**, to develop my main mode of enquiry into how and why the quality journalism can be preserved with an appropriate strategy on cross-media workflow and content narrative styles. It shows the results regarding both constraints and opportunities in cross-media journalism for the enhancement of the quality of news. This debate and related arguments will continue to strengthen the answers to the research questions in

**Chapters 5 and 6.** Chapter 5 – the second presentation of results – focuses on cross-media models and strategies. It examines the experiences, motivations, policies, strategies, practices and views of newsroom staff of editors and reporters on cross-media journalism. Chapter 6 – the final set of results to be presented – concentrates on cross-media content strategies. This chapter explores narrative strategies for telling one story across multiple platforms. It focuses on content distribution strategy and the perceived quality of news output.

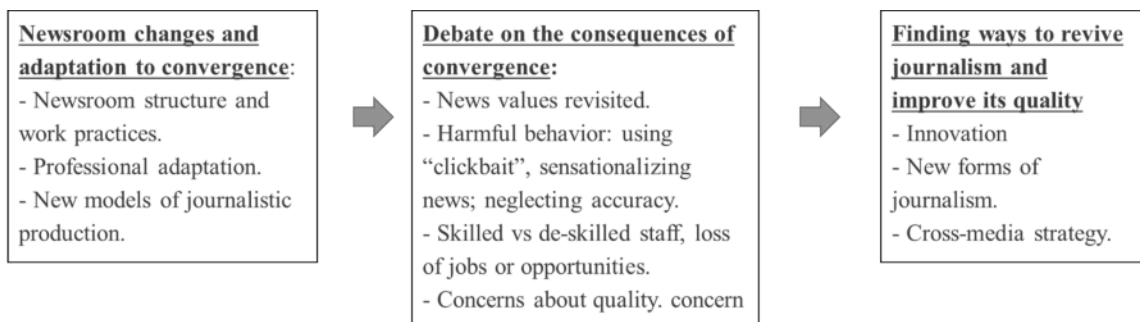
**Chapter 7**, the concluding chapter, identifies a unique model, along with storytelling strategies and practices that is designed to achieve high-quality journalism. It also underlines the ultimate complexity of the processes and outcomes of cross-media journalism and the drive to uphold the quality of journalism. These subjects are worthy of close examination and further attention.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

This chapter aims to point out important findings in previous research, elaborate on relevant theories and define essential concepts that will be used in the following chapters. In particular, it will closely examine different understandings of the relationships that exist between cross-media production in convergent newsrooms, the storytelling aspects of journalism, and the quality of that journalism. Studies of these phenomena revolve around changing journalistic practices, content management and innovative digital narratives. This chapter deals with these questions by trying to map-out and illustrate the scope of current studies on cross-media journalism and to identify the gaps in knowledge that this thesis aims to fill.

This chapter focuses on existing scholarly literature as it relates to three phases of newsroom convergence and cross-media journalism, illustrated below:



**FIGURE 2.1:** Literature review three phrase of convergence

Considering the scope and focuses of past research, the studies for this thesis were situated between changing newsroom practices, the loss of quality consequent upon this transformation, and the need for updated work practices and content strategies to help journalists overcome their problems and enhance the quality of their work. The findings fill a gap in existing knowledge by outlining ways in which newsrooms can formulate strategies to continue their journalistic work with quality standards meeting the goals of both individual journalists and their organizations.

A unique contributing point is the fact that Thai journalism is very dependent upon social-media platforms, so the results show a greater effort to innovate on work routines and the production and distribution of content on social media. The demand for accurate information in near to real time and the struggle with online algorithms are just two of the issues that make social media a difficult environment in which to achieve either accuracy or high quality in journalism. However, having been adapting to full-scale convergence and cross-media journalism over the last six years, the Thai newsrooms examined for this thesis are striving to find ways to uphold (and, where possible, improve) the quality of their journalistic practice for the benefit of Thai news consumers.

The first part of this chapter is concerned with mapping the emergence and development of convergence and cross-media journalism as basic concepts for newsroom transformation. Reviews of previous studies will help to identify the basis for a conceptual framework within which the concerns, constraints, challenges, risks and opportunities brought to the practice of journalism by the advent of cross-media production may be understood. The second part then illustrates different narrative styles in presenting news on digital media, the creation of cross-media content, different types of content and management of this content across platforms. The third part examines challenges to professional values and critical views on the quality of journalism resulting from the move to convergence, cross-media production and transformation of newsrooms to function in a digital environment. Discussions of the quality of journalistic performance in a convergent, cross-media environment, including its values, ethics and final quality, will also consider professional constraints, opportunities, and limitations. These issues will be examined in relation to four areas of particular concern due to their salience in the empirical evidence: integrated production, multi-skilling, multi-platform delivery and audience participation or interactivity.

## 2.1 Mapping newsroom changes and adapting to convergence: structure, work practices, professional adaptation and new models for journalistic production

In order for the research questions of this thesis to be properly understood and utilized, I draw upon Jenkins (2001) for fundamental definitions of convergence. He described five processes of media convergence: **Technological convergence** refers to digitalization of content, enabling words, images and sounds to flow across different media platforms; **Economic convergence** refers to the merging of entertainment industries; **Social or organic convergence** concerns the multitasking strategies of consumers in the new information environment; **Cultural convergence** involves introducing new forms of creativity at the intersections of various media technologies, industries and consumers; and finally, **Global convergence** refers to the cultural hybridity that results from international circulation of media content, in which each culture can influence or shape another culture through its media consumption. Jenkins (2001) goes on to explain that media convergence encourages trans-media storytelling and the development of cross-media content with different kinds and levels of narrative information, gaining the best advantage from each medium. In the early years, newsrooms began to adapt to the structure of convergent news organizations; they began to expand into multimedia operations and at least opted for some form of cross-media cooperation or synergy between different departments or media. Multiplatform delivery is when a newsroom disseminates news via multiple channels. Journalists use new online technologies as tools to extend the depth and breadth of their coverage, to add speed to breaking news, to access information that is otherwise difficult to find, and to identify fresh sources of news (Garrison, 2001). Colon (2000) explained that in the 1950s some newspapers owned television stations and newsroom functions were shared while Quinn (2005, p.3) says that the definition of convergence depends on the perspective of each individual and “the type of convergence that is developed in any company is a product of the culture of that company”. In a later work, Jenkins (2006) identified three major components of media convergence: first, the flow of media content across platforms; second, cooperation between industries; and third, the changing behaviour of media audiences. Since the research purpose of this thesis is to examine relationships between cross-media news production and the quality of journalism, my literature

review focuses on the first component of Jenkins' convergence culture: the flow of media content across platforms.

*Cooperation between media* is an early fundamental concept identified while examining newsrooms' adaptation to convergence, arising out of the belief that to achieve multiplatform ownership, news teams should be capable of working as one hybrid team. This was introduced in the convergence continuum concept introduced by Dailey et al. (2005), with later studies showing its relevance to every model of a convergent newsroom. The *convergence continuum* is a conceptual framework for measuring degrees of cooperation between teams and staff within a news organization. The least degree of cooperation is 'cross-promotion', in which each medium merely tells its audience to consume content on another platform. The next stage is 'cloning', in which content from one medium is republished on another with little editing, and stories are shared only when they are completed for the original medium. The third stage is 'cooperation', where each outlet practises cooperative activities such as sharing information on selected stories, or staff producing or presenting some content for another outlet to expand the coverage while sharing limited resources. At this stage there is still a sense of being in competition, so each medium will hold exclusive content apart from the rest, giving rise to problems in working together, such as questioning the quality of the other's work. 'Content sharing' is the stage in which this distrust has diminished; there is more cooperation and regular interaction, such as joint planning meetings, listening to feedback, deciding how stories should best be told on each platform, and sometimes cooperation on special projects. The last stage is called 'full convergence'. This is the ideal, involving the highest degree of cooperation and interaction. The news team has become a 'hybrid team' working together throughout the whole process from planning to production and dissemination of news. The team decides together on using the strengths of different platforms to better tell stories. This conceptual framework is a behaviour-based model to examine actions occurring during production processes in a convergent newsroom. The questions to be explored are how can newsrooms meld the different work cultures of each medium to encourage cooperative work, and at what level and function of the work process can a culture of convergence and cooperation be truly embraced?

Online media technologies that are shifting the practice of journalism by enhancing news content with deeper contextualization of stories or sometimes influencing news judgments (Pavlik, 1999). Journalists use new online technologies as tools to extend coverage and depth, add speed, uncover information that is otherwise difficult to find and locate new sources of news (Garrison, 2001).

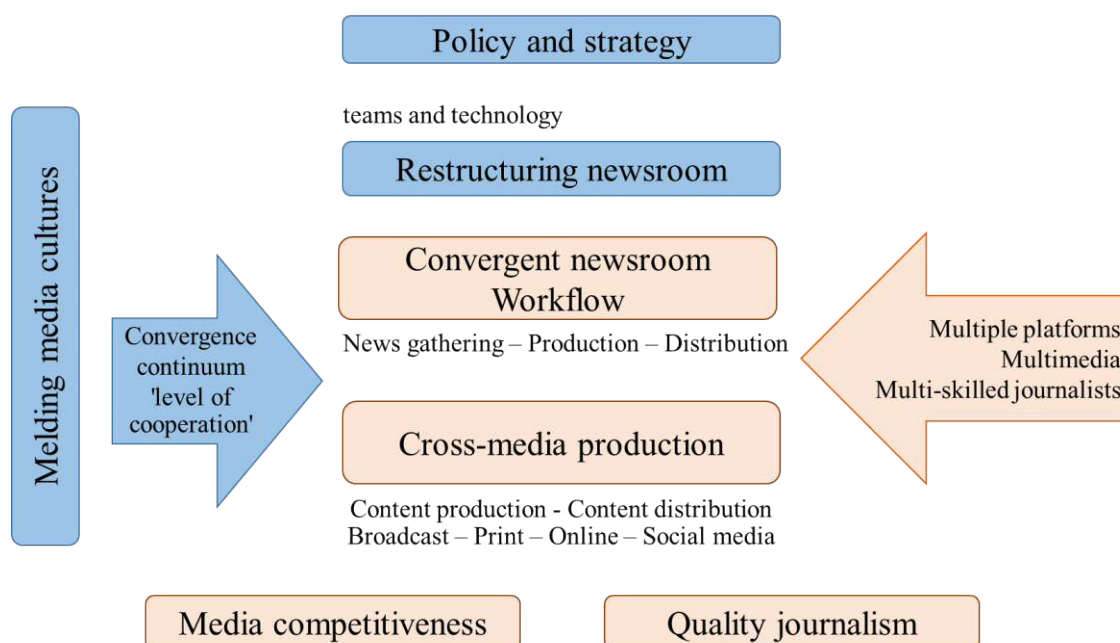
Because of the difficulty in achieving full convergence, as described in the convergence continuum concept, many studies have avoided this and have examined the practice of journalism across multiple platforms and the many different models of convergent newsrooms and cross-media journalism in order to distinguish different methods of practice. Carr (2002) introduced the Tampa model of media convergence, with which he explained the level of cooperation that can occur when teams of journalists specializing in serving different platforms can join to cover stories, especially spot news, enterprise reporting, events and public-service items. This is a 'situational cooperation' type of convergence. However, although there are convergent meetings and cooperation between teams, not every story is suitable for every platform. Carr (2002) emphasizes that 'convergence creates a more powerful form of journalism', where news organisations can reach wider audiences with a potential for greater impact.

Gordon (2003) outlined five important aspects of convergence that could help to fill gaps in understanding how different cultural stances in cross-media newsrooms can be merged: (1) ownership is when a media company owns a multiplicity of news content and multiple distribution channels, with different degrees of synergy and cooperation; (2) tactics involve content, marketing and revenue enhancement by focusing on cross-promotion to drive audiences to various platforms and sell multiple-platform advertising; (3) organizational-structure change is aimed at supporting cooperation and interaction within the organization; (4) information gathering introduces the need for multitasking to gather news sources and produce content; and (5) storytelling implies the adoption of new forms of narrative to tell stories, whether from 'backpack' journalists in the field or through greater collaboration among journalist teams in the newsroom.

Deuze (2003) contends that the unique technological characteristics of online journalism allow for new approaches to producing, presenting, distributing and consuming news, and news companies all over the world are opting for at least

some form of cross-media cooperation or synergy between separate newsrooms and departments (Deuze, 2004, p142). The key to re-structuring cross-media newsrooms is overcoming the cultural differences between workers on different platforms, in order to achieve cooperation (Erdal, 2009; Singer, 2004) and complex changes in the editorial process (Quinn and Quinn-Allan, 2005).

These early definitions of the effects convergence may have on the practice of journalism lead to a visual representation of four dimensions of convergence, thereby highlighting the basis for a framework within which changes to the profession may be studied:



**FIGURE 2.2:** Convergence and cross-media conceptual framework

From all of the definitions and concepts, Figure 2.2 illustrates how newsroom workflows can be adapted to convergence. It demonstrates that after a news organization deploys the convergence concept, it should re-structure its newsroom and begin to meld the different media cultures by introducing increasing levels of cooperation.

*The first dimension is the cross-media and integrated newsroom* the implementation of convergence in this case includes an integration of the news-production process. Using this integration aspect, academic studies have attempted

to illustrate and classify models of convergence. Deuze (2004) and Gago et al., (2009) argue against the inferred linear process of the convergence continuum concept. They say that development towards convergence can be different, generating different outcomes in the process. Quinn (2005) and Gago et al. (2009) divide the convergence issue into two aspects: content and professional. In the case of the former, integrated production is when independent newsrooms collaborate by channelling their content through a coordination desk; in the latter, integration of all journalists into one newsroom produces content for different outlets. Adding to this, multi-skilled journalists can produce news for any medium (Domingo et al, 2007).

Domingo et al. (2007) suggest operational frameworks based on four dimensions of convergent journalism. The first is 'integrated production', or convergence in the sense of a newsroom being reorganized and professional roles redefined, along with innovative technologies to support the production process and development of news content. This dimension outlines the structure of multi-outlet newsrooms and the required level of collaboration and work integration between media. Some news organizations choose to meld all staff and desks in one newsroom with the aim of achieving full convergence, while others separate their media outlets but develop a cooperative system to integrate the production workflow. The study suggests that no matter what path is chosen, there should be content planning for delivery by every outlet to achieve more efficient production.

García-Avilés et al. (2008) discuss three types of newsroom convergence: (1) Full integration, which is the most difficult to achieve, is found in a newsroom that combines architecture an infrastructure for multi-channel production and is controlled by a central system; (2) a cross-media model that seems to be the most comfortable approach for newsrooms, enabling the restructuring of teams to create cooperation between separate platforms by coordinating work routines and multiple-platform content production. This strategy is implemented at managerial level to engage different platforms in communicating their content. Journalists work for specific platforms and multi-skilled journalists are exceptional; and (3) co-ordinate of isolated platforms when a newsroom expands to embrace multiplatform new dissemination, but each team works independently.

Harking back to Figure 2.2, all of these factors are related to ‘re-structuring the newsroom’ and ‘policy and strategy”, with particular reference to work practices and content. As they appear in blue boxes in my conceptual framework diagram, the application of these factors will differentiate between various types of models of cross-media journalism, perhaps providing researchers with a framework within which to understand different newsrooms.

Deuze (2008) studied developments in the practice of journalism within a conceptual framework of media logic. He pointed out that reporters were now able to perform more general work with fewer specialized staff and resources, so the channels and modes of production of journalism were converging. This institutional change to news production arose from managerial strategies to accelerate workflow, especially through online platforms. While technology can bring benefits and opportunity, it can also build workloads and constrain skills when journalists are expected to perform more jobs at the same time. Culturally, the professional ideology within a new media environment shapes the performance of work. These are factors to be considered in the different case studies undertaken by this thesis in an effort to understand how each model of cross-media journalism is shaped and how it influences the practices and attitudes of journalists, leading to decisions on the values of journalism and the quality of cross-media production and news distribution.

*The second dimension is that of ‘multi-skilled professionals’*, focusing on the role of professional journalists and the new skills they need to adapt their stories to the language and narrative styles of each medium, to become flexible in the topics they cover, and to be empowered to maintain control over their end products. Stevens (2002) gave the name ‘backpack journalists’ to those working in a convergent news-production environment who put together multimedia stories, including video and audio clips and still pictures grabbed from the video, as well as text, and distributed this content across multiple platforms. Stevens (2002) also mentioned two types of multimedia production: (1) producer-driven stories, where a producer in a convergent news operation sends out a team of reporters to hunt down the story and materials are sent back so the producer can put it together in different ways for each medium; and (2) report-driven stories where an individual journalist or a small team of reporters controls production of the story from

beginning to end. This kind of model reflects a multimedia newsroom concept suggested by Stone and Bierhoff (2002), in which a news organization sees the opportunity for efficiency when stories are created just once but are published many times and are expected to help improve the quality of news because of the use of creative journalism on the most appropriate media, while users are left to decide for themselves which media to consume.

Domingo et al. (2007) name three types of multi-skilled journalist: media multi-skilled, who are capable of producing content for different media; issue multi-skilled, who are able to report on news in different thematic areas; and technical multi-skilled, or reporters who can perform most of the production tasks. In discussing multi-media journalism, multiple platforms, multi-skilled journalists and cross-media news, Doyle (2011) explained that multi-platform journalism generally referred to the dispersal of content across multiple outlets and this sometimes entailed the creation of multiple texts to enhance the suitability of content for different modes of delivery.

*The third dimension is 'multiplatform delivery'*, in which newsrooms are expected to reach new audiences, increase the visibility of content and respond to 'anywhere, anytime' news-consuming behaviour. Technology, software and content management are important elements in this dimension. The public-service role of journalism has changed, with journalists embracing convergence to achieve their professional goals of adding quality to this public service. Singer (2004) says that in the early stages of a newsroom's transformation to convergence, print journalist may find it difficult to 'socialize' and adapt to the time pressures of a '24/7' news environment. But as the process goes on, print journalists learn about the other media, expand their perspective of professional practice and adapt to cross-media production. Mitigating the sociological barriers in an increasingly convergent newsroom calls for essential management actions, including training, employing technology to support new processes, and designing flexible and cooperative workflows.

Domingo et al.'s (2007) study of a Spanish news organisation found that more than 85% of content was repurposed for multiple media rather than different stories with expanded content being created for each. It has now been well established by a variety of studies that convergence is a multidimensional process involving the

technological, managerial, professional and editorial spheres influencing the production by journalists of content that is disseminated from multiple platforms, each requiring a specific style and language (Salaverría & Negredo, 2009). Notably, Kolodzy (2006) emphasizes the point that convergence of news industries involves the consolidation of businesses and companies producing and distributing news, while Domingo et al. (2007) suggest that digitalization has facilitated the development of multiplatform-delivery strategies, with projects requiring multiple skills commonly occurring between traditional media and the web, and ideally involving the work of one reporter across all platforms, to increase efficiency, and some studies argue that a convergent culture shapes various practices of journalism (Erdal, 2009; Kaltenbrunner, 2013). Some organizations, such as a Spanish newspaper that was under study, expected to reach younger audiences online and establish a cross-media advertising model (Carvajal & García-Avilés, 2008).

Multi-skilled journalists who are capable of multitasking and who provide news reports across different media usually direct their work towards online and social-media audiences throughout the process of news gathering, reporting, distribution and relating to end users. Social media become channels for gathering information and news sources, distributing news and engaging with audiences. There have been many studies of the usefulness of social media from a journalistic point of view. Twitter and the practice of journalism was the centre of interest in the early years of social media because of its speed, engagement, encouragement of debate and real-time exchange of information. These days, journalists concede that they use social media to conduct research, break stories as they happen, to distribute various stories, and to engage with audiences and discuss with them the issues involved.

For example, Hermida (2010), examining Twitter as a form of ‘ambient journalism’, suggested that within the social medium’s fragmented and overloaded flow of information, journalists should have a system that enables them to verify collective knowledge and bring meaning to data for audiences, as well as to make them personally aware of situations. In their regular use of Twitter, journalists also engage their followers by sharing opinions, talking about how they do their jobs, retweeting information, and engaging in general discussions (Lasorsa et al., 2012). Australian journalists use Twitter for disseminating breaking news stories and later discussing them, as well as for covering foreseeable events in politics and other

fields (Bruns, 2012) Twitter has become a system where news is reported, disseminated and shared online in short, fast and frequent messages, alerting journalists to trends or issues.

Some studies have also investigated the ways in which social media and social-media users become sources of news and information, by sharing and recommending stories to friends, family and online networks. According to Paterson's study of international news on the internet (2007), it illustrated that various 'ratings' reports of online use, most of the online news audience spends most of their time with a small number of websites, mostly in the guise of news aggregators. In a 2010 study, Lenhart et al. found that 75 per cent of news audiences in the United States consumed news online via email and posts on Facebook. As Hermida (2010) points out, social media are becoming central to the way people experience news. Twitter was the first social medium to stimulate change in audience engagement with news. Marwick and Boyd (2011) explained that Twitter users exchange news content according to a 'many-to-many' model and then create their own content by giving feedback and exchanging information with others. Social media function by encouraging users to 'like' or 'tweet' stories within their networks (Hermida et al., 2011). Journalists have therefore adopted the use of social media as tools to promote their content by posting brief news announcements accompanied by links back to a website where the full story can be found (Lasorsa et al., 2012).

Bro, Hansen and Andersson (2016) studied a news workflow called 'the news engine', implemented by the Danish Broadcasting Corporation. This embraced a concept of multiple-platform collaboration in which all stories had to be suitable for all platforms through a content-sharing system. No one 'owned' a story because it was produced by an 'assembly line' workflow, which began with live-reporting teams consisting of a reporter and a photographer gathering news materials and information throughout the day, as well as making live reports. These teams were supported by office-bound reporters and media specialists who selected materials, edited, wrote scripts and produced end-products for multiple-platform distribution. The important factor in this workflow was collaboration and communication between teams. Although it proved to be successful in terms of speed and the quantity of news covered, there were concerns about the loss of the creative process

when one journalist produced the whole story. This practice was a combination of multi-skilled journalists working in the field supported by teams in the office working together with editorial teams to create a shorter, more time-efficient process.

*The fourth dimension is 'active audience'.* It is focused on the relationship between a news organization and its audience and how news production can be opened up to processes of audience participation, including user-contributed content. Journalists should be able to benefit from networks of sources and audiences to bring new perspectives to news of local and global relevance (Bardoel and Deuze, 2001; Deuze, 2003; Heinrich, 2012). The newspaper becomes more of a portal, and this raises concerns about the effects on political and civic life arising from the role of newspapers being reduced to digital news (Nerone and Barnhurst, 2003). Bardoel and Deuze (2001) contend that journalists no longer work in 'splendid isolation' because members of the public are capable of accessing news and information for themselves. They say journalists should position themselves to add more value and show much more proactive responsiveness towards their 'clients'. This results from a changed relationship between journalism and the public (Pavlik, 1999). Where once journalists found news sources and the audience consumed their reports, there was now audience participation, and more of a two-way relationship involving interactive communication (Pavlik, 1999; Livingstone, 1999; Bruns, 2005). Gillmor (2004) emphasizes the role of citizen journalists who become sources of news via social networks. Journalists should adapt to the new participatory nature of their profession and listen to citizens more carefully to get a chance to produce deeper reports. In addition to the changing relationship between journalists and their audiences, Boczkowski (2004) says that one aspect of effectively creating online news content is working out how a newsroom can position its work to reach different types of users, such as consumers and producers.

Participatory journalism is studied in many countries, for example, Social media create the opportunity for audiences to participate in the production of news content by observing, selecting, filtering, distributing and interpreting news events (Hermida et al., 2012) or by creating their own content, which brings us to the role of citizen journalists and the issues surrounding the use of user-generated content in news reporting (Bruns, 2008; Lewis et al., 2010;). Paterson and Doctors (2013)

address the phenomenon of participatory, non-professional and non-commercial informational communications in Mozambique during social unrest in 2008. He concluded in his study that “blogging provided immediacy, detail, eye-witness reporting and a critique of the causes of the rioting and the violent police response which also fed into the news coverage of non-state media”.

The flows of content on social media and the behaviour of audiences in interacting with both news content and information available online have shaped a new form of journalistic practice in which social media are embraced and content distribution planned in order to engage with audiences and extend the reach. I agree with an argument put by Olmstead et al. (2011), that creating successful content is a matter of understanding what users want to consume, how to put stories together and how to cover stories and distribute them to audiences. The old paradigm according to which journalists served society has shifted to one of participatory and connective storytelling between journalists and citizens, in which online media play an important role based on interactivity, hyperlinks and multimodality. Vivo et al. (2013) suggest that the change in audience behaviour, from inactive to participatory, should enable creators of cross-media content to construct experiences involving audience interactivity because online technology can facilitate personal or shared experiences.

According to Jacobson’s (2012) study of the New York Times, social media provide an alternative space for discussion by allowing audiences to comment on news stories. The study contends that across multiple channels and platforms, more stories every day are designed to be edited, shared and distributed by their audiences. There are academic studies that give examples of such open online interaction between journalists and the public. Users are said to have a ‘greater direct effect on news in the online journalism environment. Content trends are moving towards more ‘user-centred online news’ and this could deepen ‘civic or public movements’ by the participation of citizens in the editorial process. Reid (2014) gave an example of the BBC using WhatsApp and WeChat during elections in India, and argued that engaging with the audience and sourcing user-generated content was important for modern-day journalism. The BBC says it sees the need to experiment on many social-network platforms in order to connect to people wherever they are and find ways of effectively communicating with them.

Audience engagement and participation is shaped by two-way communication on social networks, so the role of journalists has shifted; they are adjusting to a more collaborative style of news reporting. Green (2017) examines a new way of reporting court news by using social media to engage audiences in live chats on Twitter and Facebook. Journalists recognize the benefits of social networking and understand that different audiences want different content. The new process is also more open to allowing people to pitch story ideas and question journalists who are working in the field. Social media also have an important function for producers and journalists by monitoring trends and audience responses to stories in real-time. This gives journalists a ‘feel’ for what they should be focusing on to meet audience demands. Although newsrooms set an agenda for covering various issues, public discussions on social media and audience responses to the issues can reshape understandings and approaches (Bloom, Cleary & North, 2016).

The four dimensions of convergence described above all emphasize the need for **cross-media production** to be conducted strategically. No matter how intense the levels of convergence may be in these dimensions, the question that demands inquiry and examination is what strategies should lie behind all the decision-making and practices. I have narrowed down the dimensions of convergence to make them applicable to modern news production and to illustrate relationships within the structure of a newsroom shifting to embrace a culture of convergence.

Based on the review of literature, this study defines media convergence as the process by which a news organization integrates media of the same and different ownership in order to expand the number of platforms while minimizing the resources needed to produce additional content. This process of adaptation to convergence introduces a convergent-newsroom workflow and cross-media production, where editors and journalists work together to gather, produce and distribute news. Journalists are trained to become multi-skilled, enabling them to report multimedia stories across multiple platforms. The concepts of convergence and cross-media production are seen at an industrial level as keys to media competitiveness and the upholding of high-quality journalism (Cottle & Ashton, 1999; García-Avilés, 2009). **Schantin (2009) identified newsrooms falling into three types on the basis of their multiplatform working process. A parallel platforms newsroom is one in which each platform produces raw content and passes it to**

production journalists, who prepare material to be delivered through multiple platforms. A cross-media platforms newsroom is where cooperation occurs but is limited to the content gathering process. A full-integrated platform newsroom is one in which each platform cooperates to gather and edit content for final publication. Erdal (2012) suggested that investigating organizational strategies for dealing with convergence and how journalists adapt to these strategies in their daily work is essential for cross-media production research. In his study, he has purposed four different forms of cross-media practice: single reporter multiplatform journalism (one reporter producing a story for more than one platform), hard-drive journalism (reporter produces a new version of a story for a different platform), intra-platform coordination (journalists or editors share information about a story across platforms), and intra-platform production (reporters from different platforms cooperating in the coverage of a story). These four forms help to explain how cross-media production involves diverse strategies of cooperation and negotiation between reporters and different teams within a media organisation's platforms.

There are further studies focusing on examining and defining types of convergence, or cross-media newsroom models, warranting close attention for our purposes. For example, Sehl et al. (2018) analysed how public service media in six European countries have reorganised their newsroom and restructured workflows, revealing a greater emphasis being placed on cooperation across platforms. This study discerned different internal and external factors affecting how newsrooms adapt a bespoke strategy on integrated newswork between different platforms. The evidence considered in this study shows that the relationship between platforms could be limited to just cross-promotion or might encourage cooperative solutions, either option depending on how platform culture informs news production. Hassan & Elmasry (2019) studied convergence between platforms at Al-Jazeera Mubasher, an all-Arabic television channel based in Doha, showing how editors handled cooperation across cross-media platforms in the newsroom without a central desk to manage all works.

According to these previous studies, there are many different types of integrated or cross-media models in newsrooms, thereby making the key point that it is important to investigate further what can be a transition of editorial and journalistic practice strategies to encourage suitable collaboration in journalistic workflow to get the most advantage of each platform. Vital to understand is how each newsroom

tries to overcome workload pressures and tensions between platforms and teams. Thus, this thesis is not just defining types of cross-media journalism models, it is also examining newsroom strategies to embrace particular approaches to convergence and cross-media journalism, for better or worse.

Given that many newsrooms have been slow to adapt to convergence and cross-media production processes, some studies investigate cross-media strategies to better understand if the newsroom staff and journalists involved have adequate guidelines or frameworks for cross-media production that could help them organise their work more effectively. Cross-media strategies include coordination between platforms, editorial coordination to give direction to journalists and news production process, and distribution and use of multiple platforms. Specific examples include examinations to understand how journalists handle such fundamental changes in newsroom practice (Ibrus, 2014; Menke, Manuel, et al., 2018); strategies on developing multi-skilled journalism and collaboration between platforms and cross-beat teamwork (Lischka 2015; Grubenmann, 2017); and strategies on multiple platform distribution (Doyle, 2011; Veglis, 2012).

Newsroom workflows and cross-media production are therefore the focus of this study in order to understand how these concepts may influence the practice of journalism and ultimately affect the quality of news. The newly-developed relationships embodied in social-media journalism emphasize the importance of new media in the cross-media journalism process. Although many studies have sought to explain the new journalistic practices using social media, and how they change both the work of journalists and relationships with traditional platforms, there are still gaps for further investigation. For instance, how is this content produced? How do journalists tell one story on multiple platforms? How does the integration of cross-media content between the old and the new media impact on the quality of journalism?

When conducting a research exercise involving the mapping of the cross-media journalism concept, I compared previous research into the situation of Thailand's news industry with the industry's current status, and found that Thai news media are facing a decline in traditional audiences and revenues, and that this transformation in news-consumption behaviour is being driven by technology, especially online and mobile technology. News-media companies are therefore

expanding their businesses to become multiplatform organizations and are eagerly embracing online media in an effort to recapture their lost audiences and to enlarge them. This raises the vital importance of this thesis examining two questions: what types of cross-media content occur at different levels of convergence and how is it produced and distributed across platforms? At this point in my review of other studies, it is clear that the inquiries of this thesis must go beyond the routine practices of cross-media production in order to find arguments on the effectiveness of its implementation; it must also strive to understand the decisions that direct, and factors that influence, different types of cross-media production. It should investigate how newsroom staff adapt to this method of producing and delivering news stories – not only how individuals adapt to become a multi-skilled journalists, but also how they adapt to the changes required when moving from one platform to another. The obvious organizational challenge is to get as many departments as possible involved in cross-media production to make a cross-media strategy succeed. However, economic issues must also weigh heavily on such a strategy. In practice, an organization must focus on how to create the widest possible access to its news content by spreading it across platforms, rather than creating new content to make individual platforms more popular. This study will focus on explaining how this strategy is affected by newsroom workflows and the roles of staff.

## **2.2 Cross-media content type and distribution flow**

When an organization decides to embark upon multi-platform news dissemination, it is the content they examine when it comes to considering a platform's performance and the advantages it has achieved, including greater reach, engagement, audience participation in reporting news and ease of time and space limitations. The production of multi-platform content extends the life cycle of news content, prolonging the distribution period, reaching wider audiences across platforms, creating interactivity with audiences and allowing the use of the strengths of each platform to create better stories. Simple cloning and reproduction of content is a practice occupying the lowest level of convergence, according to the 'convergence continuum' concept.

Content strategy is the way in which journalists tell a story on each platform and in different situations. A ‘content-management system’ as a set of tasks and processes for storing, managing, publishing and repurposing digital content in many forms, and say it can expand the lifecycle of new content and enhance its value (Harris-Jones, 2000; Poulter, 2003). Bradshaw (2007) suggests that when online media play an important role in the news-production process, journalists are able to cover news in two dimensions: immediate/fast and in-depth. This view supports a suggestion made by Ford (2007), that trans-media journalism focuses on a story and how to best report it. By empowering a complementary expansion of stories using the trans-media concept, it can be expected that readers will be informed in the best way possible, using a combination of media forms. Thus, ‘news organizations will be best served if they focus on stories, and not on delivery platforms’ (Ford, 2007). The use of hypertext generates complex organizational content structures and narratives, possibly providing depth, documentation, antecedents and context to issues (Ureta, 2011).

Shao (2010) studied the coverage of breaking news by Al Jazeera English, specifically the relationships and workflows involved in a broadcast newsroom that was producing breaking news stories for broadcast and online outlets. The result made the interesting point that even though the newsroom reported breaking news on both platforms, content analysis showed that there was not much cooperation or interactivity between the two outlets. Cross-media practices were not fully implemented because of unclear corporate commitment to convergence, different journalistic values for news, ignorance and suspicion between newsroom cultures, and insufficient training and investment. Thus, there were not many professional cross-media practices in the Al Jazeera English newsroom. After examining the aspects of interactivity/multimedia, liveness/updatedness and sources of the breaking news coverage, there were no signs of content being shared between the television outlet and its online counterpart; no video clips were attached to the online coverage of the three breaking news stories; and no user-generated content was aired on television. These all called for decisions to be made on storytelling and what should be delivered on which platform. The author suggested that Al Jazeera English was developing convergence in product rather than convergence in production (Shao, 2010).

This echoes the idea of the ‘spreadability’ of media, adopted from Jenkins (2010) by Moloney (2011), who wrote that there were many forms of narrative with which to expand news coverage. At this point, I must point out that news coverage of planned events can vary in all dimensions and the concept of trans-media coverage may be adopted as a strategy that possibly leads to good journalism. I explored ways of adapting the methods of trans-media storytelling to journalism, particularly its objectives of reaching for and engaging audiences with stories that have a compelling narrative style. If such a strategy were adopted, journalists would have to adapt to finding ways of telling stories that offer deeper and more valuable participation and interaction; that deliver complex stories with deeper context to differentiate them from those on other media outlets (Moloney, 2011). Much previous research into trans-media journalism has focused on the function of content to tell of issues while creating the opportunity for participation, thus engaging people to consume all related content on multiple platforms, where it has used to full advantage the characteristic of each platform to tell different aspects of the issue.

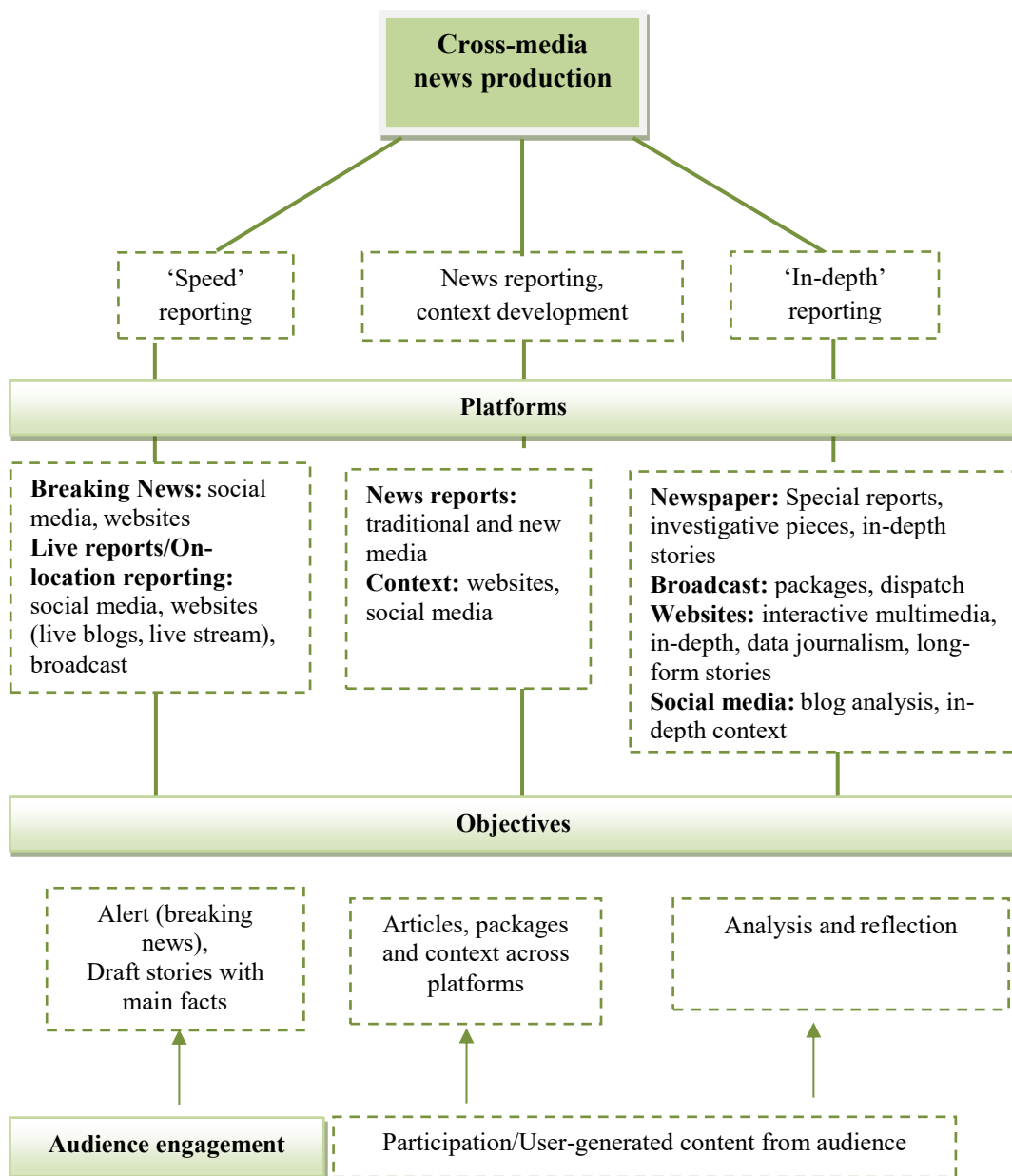
Veglis (2012) discusses models of trans-media reporting in newspaper organizations, using multiple platforms. Trans-media storytelling involves separating a news story into pieces and delivering different pieces through different channels. The audience has to follow every channel to gather all of the information related to the story. In this case, channel categorization is important for delivering different messages across platforms. The main channels, or primary sources of the story, include websites that are accessed via tablets or smartphones. These are the ‘entry points’ for the news story, where audiences gather the main elements of information. There are also links to supplementary stories on info-alert channels including SMS, RSS, e-mail and social networks such as Twitter. These are the channels relaying breaking news, so they present only a basic description of the story and a link back to the main channels. Supplementary channels are webcasts and blog channels. These are used to present additional aspects of the story. Trans-media articles may, on first publication, have only a few details, and these are gradually updated with fresh information in various formats that make readers visit the article more than once.

On multiplatform content distribution systems, an editor has the important role of controlling the flow and deciding which content goes to which platform, and in what order (Mare, 2014). Storytelling has become the art of integrating audio and video components along with text. The sequence varies from the immediate reporting of breaking news to in-depth reports and analysis. The Internet comes first and print follows. Online news is updated directly, with text, audio and video delivered directly to newsrooms by SMS. Later, all these aspects will be printed. The web-first strategy means that stories break online and newspapers will follow-up with analysis. When news breaks, video and print reporters and a photographer go to the scene. The first reports come in by phone and photographs and video are added later. The newspaper repackages the online story, rewriting it in depth and adding documents and details. Using the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia, as a case study, Gambarato and Tárcea (2017) sought models of trans-media strategies in journalism, and suggested that in planned events, a strategy for trans-media journalism should be developed around news storytelling, and this should continue and expand in various forms across platforms, to attract audience engagement.

Similarly, Franquet's (2014) study proposes that the interactive-media feature is a promotional tool to boost the television audience and traffic on the website and mobile devices as a means of consolidating the brand and gaining audience loyalty. This echoes a definition of trans-media journalism by Renó (2014), who said it was a form of journalistic language that included, simultaneously, different media with several languages and narratives for several users, with the distinctive key of interactivity to engage audiences with stories. Renó's study examined the possibility of trans-media news content being used in a new-media environment, and suggested that in such an undertaking, content with the same basic theme must be produced on distinct platforms in a complementary way, without repetition. From experimenting with story-flow models for developing multiple stories in this study, it must be pointed out that social networks, especially Facebook and Twitter, are able to spread information quickly and attract audience interest.

Building upon these previous studies about cross-media production and storytelling, I have drawn a process model of cross-media content flow (Figure 2.2)

that will act as a guide to examining this process when it arises later in interviews and observations of work in newsrooms.



**FIGURE 2.3:** Cross-media content types and flows in multiplatform news production.

The model in Figure 2.3 heightens my determination to uncover the strategies, motivations and reasons behind editorial decision-making in distributing news across platforms, the work processes involved, different storytelling styles

and now these issues affect the quality of journalism. Studies from other countries have clearly indicated the existence of a relationship between platforms and how editorial decisions are made on cross-media news production.

Collectively, these studies outline a critical role for content design as a strategy on where, how and in what sequence multiple stories are distributed. This leads to another vital consideration: content narrative, and the use of different narrative styles in a bid to engage people with stories. It cannot be denied that traditional media have to embrace online journalism and compete with native online alternative sources of news. The key issues found in most studies of online journalistic narratives are first, the ways in which traditional media expand their content to online platforms; and second, innovative efforts to adopt new narrative styles, using new technologies, to tell stories.

The most common type of content in multi-platform practice is that which has been extended between platforms by processes described by many studies as 'repurposing' or 'remediation'. Scholars studying multiplatform or cross-media content refer to remediation as it is defined by Bolter and Grusin (1999), as the representation of one medium in another. Remediation can vary from print-media content being refashioned and expanded by new-media technologies to the creation of new content that is less dependent on older versions. Digital media can repurpose old media into forms unique to the digital world. Deuze (2003) proposes that journalistic organisation should consider implementing new strategies to create content that connects with audiences. For instance, journalists should emphasize their role as 'professional monitors', where they allow citizens to voice their opinions and ask questions. Dialogical journalism, or news presented in the form of dialogues, is where journalists embrace the concept of 'prosumers' to cooperate with their audiences when producing news.

Boczkowski (2004) looks at three content innovations on online platforms and his analysis shows that online news services can embrace some creation of innovative content, including the use of multimedia components and user-generated content. He points to three factors that he believes are affecting the adoption of innovative content by organizations that have expanded from print to online news services: (1) relationships between the print and online newsrooms; (2) the role of users as producers as well as consumers; and (3) the ambition of online

newsrooms to take over the editorial gatekeeping role of the newspaper, or find an alternative to it. Boczkowski (2004) emphasizes the need for researchers to understand the production dynamics between old- and new-media. He also questions how the issue of newsroom processes can influence a product as an outcome of convergence.

When examining the content of traditional media and its expansion to online platforms, studies discern the best ways of transmitting content to users and when this should occur (Ureta, 2011), as well as examining how journalists apply digital skills to tell stories in ways that meet the needs of particular platforms and the ability to integrate the viewpoints of others to extend perspectives on news issues (Singer & Quandt, 2009). Previous studies in this field suggest that storytelling innovations can be devised in various styles on websites, and these help stories to go beyond routine reporting to become in-depth coverage.

Erdal (2009) focused on repurposing content for cross-media distribution, and adopted the concept of rhetoric, i.e. the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing as it applies to each platform, to identify three types of repurposed content: (1) the rhetoric of augmentation, reminiscent of ‘cloning’ content, as described by Dailey et al. (2005), where content is republished in an edited form, or with a just a few features added, to fit the rhetoric of the platform; (2) the rhetoric of re-versioning, in which journalists apply more effort in editing and revising the narrative of one platform to provide content for another – for example, a website team rewriting radio and television news scripts into online news format; and (3) the rhetoric of recombination, in which the preparation of content is supported by a sharing system within a newsroom, where journalists and editors can share and select raw materials from other platforms to re-make it in any context for presentation on specific platforms. Erdal’s (2009) study shows that in cross-media practice there is ‘relationship between medium specifications and platform adaptability’.

Unique storytelling forms emerge in a convergent environment (Pavlik and Bridges, 2013). Hartley (2010) explained digital storytelling as an emergent form of journalism, a new media practice, an activist/community movement and a textual system that challenges the traditional distinction between professional and amateur production and reworks the producer/consumer relationship. In an earlier study of

The New York Times website from 2000 to 2008, Jacobson (2012) found evidence of new-media technologies being integrated with print to create multimedia packages that extended the primary format of the newspaper into a website version, likening the outcome to sidebar stories in the newspaper. Major native website multimedia narratives included data visualization techniques, hypertext links, digital games and integration of social-media tools to let audiences share photo slideshows and video packages on social networks. Moloney (2011) put it more simply: multimedia is ‘one story, many forms, one channel.’ He gave the example of a New York Times’ web-based story *Snowfall: The Avalanche at Tunnel Creek*, using text, photographs, videos, maps and interactive features to tell the story and engage the audience. Cross-media is when one story is produced, but it is told differently on various platforms (Moloney, 2011). Studies of cross-media content centre around how it is produced and distributed across multiple channels. Its production may include repurposing the content and extending it with special features best utilized by each platform.

Trans-media is when a story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole. In the ideal form of trans-media storytelling, each medium does what it does best. If combined with the goals and ethics of journalism, trans-media could create a new genre of documentary storytelling that would attract readers to deep and compelling stories with more context and complexity. Jenkins (2010) introduced the trans-media concept in relation to a participatory culture that responds to changing ways of people consuming media, while some academic studies use the trans-media concept to develop proposals for new forms of journalistic narratives (Moloney 2011; Veglis 2012; Gambarato and Tárca, 2017). There are five characteristics of trans-media content that suggest a potential benefit to journalistic storytelling.

**Spreadability** enables a journalist to find ways in a publishing network, using platforms such as websites and social-media networks, to spread a news story across platforms to reach a wider audience. The important aspects are spreading the story, sharing it, and helping audience members to contribute to the story.

**Drillability** enables a journalist to help the public dig deeper into information and context. Hyperlinks on a website platform is one method of storytelling that makes content “drillable”.

**Continuity and serial usage** describes how a story can continue across platforms and maintain the same focus of message to the public with a different storytelling approach to suit each outlet. There are also some styles of storytelling from the entertainment genre that can be adapted to serve the journalistic purpose of providing facts and information, such as cartoons and interactive storytelling. This will help journalists to reach wider and more diverse audiences, and when used in a series, keep them intrigued and engaged over time.

**Use of diverse and personal viewpoints.** This can be achieved by engaging the public to interact with a story, integrating user-generated content, and even changing to an “open newsroom” concept, to work with citizen journalists and members of the public.

**Immersiveness** comes from creating a storytelling experience in which an audience can become immersed. In an extreme sense, it is a quality attributed to virtual reality, but a lesser application of similar technologies can help the public to more rapidly understand facts and information.

The interesting point that some studies make in connecting the trans-media concept to the practice of journalism is the perceived links between investigative journalism, in-depth coverage and the ‘storyworld’ of expanding different aspects of stories using the trans-media principles. It would be quite a challenge for journalists to spend the time and resources needed for a trans-media project, but the prospect nevertheless creates the impression that journalism could be more exciting and create a greater impact if it employed this experience-based trans-media strategy. For instance, when discussing trans-media journalism, Alzamora and Tárcea (2012) wrote of ‘new forms’ of journalistic narratives that could create experiences and forms of participation, as well as expanding stories across platforms. Immersive journalism allows people to experience situations or events described in news reports as protagonists. Interactive graphics allow users to change both data and results in reading, understanding and experiencing various aspects of news. All of these attributes may be combined to create ‘new narratives’, compelling media organizations to adapt traditional narrative styles and expand their operations to embrace digital storytelling, not only to meet changing audience demands, but also as a new format to reach wider audiences.

Franquet and Villa (2012) explain that cross-media content is the consequence of hybridizations between media, a process during which the content loses part of its individual identity and acquires the characteristics of other platforms. In addition, they found that there were two ways of producing cross-media content: depending on a multi-tasking professional to produce the content for all platforms, or using multidisciplinary teams working together across platforms. It is my intention in this study to research how repurposing content can help to generate traffic back to a traditional medium, and how newsrooms plan to repurpose content for multiple platforms.

In considering innovative online narratives, there are studies that have examined how newsrooms go about integrating new technologies and new forms of content. Included among the new forms of multimedia on websites are interactive infographics, audio slideshows and some elements of game-like interactive features (Jacobson, 2011); native online features such as video packages and photo slideshows (Ureta, 2011); live blogging (Thurman & Walters, 2013); interactive Web features (Moloney, 2011); augmented reality technology and immersive storytelling (Pavlik and Brides, 2013); and data visualization. Thurman and Walters (2013) suggest that live blogging is new form of online journalism that allows media organizations to respond to the increasing displacement of news consumption from print to online outlets.

Jacobson, Marino and Gutsche (2015) suggest that while multimedia narratives lie at the heart of long-form journalism, journalists should understand the Web's potential for dramatic and immersive journalism. They say that integrating a traditional literary style of journalism with multimedia and digital technology could be a challenge for journalism in the digital age. Studies of data and long-form journalism narratives on digital platforms thus far provide a glimpsed opportunity for the practice of high-quality journalism using new digital storytelling techniques, especially where complicated and difficult issues can be explained in ways that make them easily understandable and enjoyable. This opportunity will be raised in my in-depth discussions with interviewees for this thesis.

Digital storytelling using augmented reality has a significant potential for engaging audiences and providing contextualized information by immersing audiences in events and issues. Such a storytelling style has a first-person narrative

and aims more to engage members of the public. Immersive journalism, for example using VR 360 (virtual reality) technology, offers viewers the opportunity to become reporters; to become immersed in a news event and make their own decisions about what they see and hear (Pavlik & Bridges, 2013; Jones, 2017). Data storytelling also a growing trend in studies of online journalism because people readily consume visual content and data (Ojo & Heravi, 2017), and some scholars believe that this form of storytelling can make investigative journalism more appealing, so that it reaches wider audiences.

Some studies have investigated how narratives are produced, and have revealed links to audience values and economic, political, industrial, and transcultural pressures. (Entman, 1993; Barnhurst & Nerone 2001; D'Angelo, 2002) Work-practice routines have proven to affect both decisions on narratives and how creative journalists are capable of being, while some studies suggest that newsroom office staff should support field reporters with multimedia teams to repackage journalist's narratives to suit various platforms and audience groups. However, scholars studying news-text narratives emphasize that journalism represents facts and reality, and this can influence audience understanding of an event through the storytelling experience.

Innovative on narration may give journalists a new way of dealing with tensions between their professional core values and market pressures, because the format appeals to the mass public while journalists are still able to do their jobs. The results of reader surveys show that live blogs on public affairs are more popular than live blogs covering sport and soft-news topics. This contrasts with the traditional belief that soft news stories get more views than hard news. Therefore, could this be another audience choice for the style of storytelling on web news? But big questions remain: What choices do newsrooms have? What are factors in their work practices and how do they make decisions on implementing new technologies in their cross-media products? These issues require more investigation. Some studies imply that not every technology is suitable for application to journalistic narratives and the training of journalists; and there are lingering ethical issues and concerns about distortion of facts (Neveu, 2014). However, every media company is testing new ways of integrating technology into news production and varying storytelling styles in different forms of content in order to engage audiences. In Thai media,

newsrooms extended content to online platforms and are quick to embrace all new technologies. However, there has been relatively little study of several aspects of cross-media strategy and innovative ideas for journalistic narratives.

These studies of new innovative narrative styles have attempted to evaluate how digital technology can help the art of storytelling by improving ways of reaching audiences and using different formats to explain issues. Other researchers have examined news narratives as text, in an effort to understand news values, the selection of news and story patterns that can imply the journalism values held by various news outlets. (Buoziš & Creech, 2017).

However, those studies that have been undertaken have been narrowly focused on decoding the narrative element of stories, and this reveals a gap in understanding between content flow and content narrative. What lies behind decisions and plans to incorporate digital technologies, as part of a strategy aimed at achieving newsroom practices that amount to a multiplatform environment? Another issue worthy of investigation is the apparent dichotomy between a journalist's need to purposefully cover cross-media news and maintain his or her core professional values and a news organization's ambition to achieve quality in its work practices and content.

Journalists in Thailand have embraced social media as tools with which to gather and report news, while audiences follow the news and information via social-media streams. This thesis will explore the many possible ways of planning the distribution of news content so as to gain benefits from social media in terms of news gathering and reporting. By reviewing previous case studies, I have found that in order to understand content strategy, researchers should study three aspects of cross-media content: the sequence in which stories travel across platforms, the media and methods used to tell stories across platforms, and the focus of stories' objectives when presented across platforms. Many studies of cross-media journalism have also looked closely at the practices of journalists and the news-production process, and have found that content must be well planned if it is to be distributed across multiple platforms.

However, Thailand is still in the process of understanding convergence and cross-media practices, so there appear to have been no previous in-depth studies of

content strategy and there is a consequent lack of knowledge. In the professional context, directions on how to produce content across platforms are unclear, although they are known to be important. Therefore, several aspects of cross-media content strategy and ideas related to narrative innovation remain to be investigated, revealed and developed as areas of fundamental knowledge for both academic and professional purposes. This thesis will explore both narrative structures and content strategies across platforms, in order to understand the relationship between work practices and end products, which may then lead to rethinking about the quality of news.

Previous studies led me to recognize an opportunity to look beyond repurposing and examine the content repertoire; to investigate the function of content when it is distributed across platforms. This was supported by the notion of expanding stories across platforms and the accompanying argument that disseminating content across various media could lead to an improvement in the quality of journalism – if it was backed by an appropriate strategy and done effectively. The question was how this could be achieved in a newsroom environment that was suffering constraints arising from the different cultures and mindsets of the teams of journalists that had to work together.

## **2.3 Debates on the consequences of cross-media news production and challenges to the professional values and quality of journalism**

The second phase of convergence and cross-media journalism (see Figure 2.1) comes after many news organisations have adapted to the process and studies are able to focus on perceived consequences of multiplatform news production and distribution. These consequences are seen from at least two perspectives. The first involves the constraints inherent in cross-media production, which are seen to stand between the practice of journalism and its professional values, to deny the attainment of quality; and the other recognizes opportunities for journalists to grasp advantages from the efficiency of multiple media to inform and educate society on important issues.

This thesis used definitions of quality journalism gathered from previous studies to develop a framework within which individual journalists could reflect upon their inner goals of achieving high quality in their professional practice, and to evaluate their relative success (or otherwise) in this regard. Theories of journalism as a professional practice framed discussions on defining “quality”, based on the internal core values of individual journalists and the aims of news organizations to serve society. MacIntyre’s (1994) practice-institution schema and Breit’s (2004) argument, based on a theoretical framework for the practice of journalism, both described what journalism should be: an exercise defined by internal goods which give rise to excellence in practice. MacIntyre’s definition of practice holds that it is a cooperative human activity with intrinsic goods or outcomes related to performance of the activity that go beyond profit; and in which participants must strive towards excellence, both in product and performance, while maintaining a sense that the goal will continue to evolve. When journalists face conflicts between their personal values and those revealed by their practices, they should resolve these conflicts in favour of the overall aims of journalism, to ensure professional excellence (Breit, 2004). Based on MacIntyre’s concept of practice theory, Breit (2004) explains that the practice of journalism will be weakened if its quality is determined by the extent to which it produces audiences for commercial purposes, that is, for attracting advertising strictly for purposes of financial profit. Based on this normative theory, Breit (2004) emphasizes the importance, when conducting research into journalistic practice in a convergence and cross-media environment, to examine the process by which journalists should carry out what amounts to a human cooperative activity to successfully realize shared professional aims and objectives.

Another dimension of the normative conceptual framework for quality journalism is highlighted by the concept of “media performance” developed by Denis McQuail (1992). In recognising transversal parameters capable of accurately evaluating news quality, it helps to reveal how aspects of journalistic quality relate to social quality; that is, where news media supply information that is crucial for citizen’s participation in social, economic and cultural life. The point made by Picard (2000), that the quality of journalism can be measured by the journalistic activities involved in producing it, raises questions about workloads and practice

strategies in newsrooms where more tasks must be performed across platforms, and whether the demands of cross-media practices affect journalism in way that promotes good quality. The quality of journalism is generally a reflection of the time, resources and audience-engagement activities invested in its production. Journalism should be both credible and capable of exerting a good influence over changes in communities, as well as supporting the participation of an active audience (Merrill, 1968; Picard, 2000; Bogart, 2004; Meyer, 2010).

As citizens become more proactive consumers, journalism must help to equip them for that role and not continue to see them as a passive audience. Offering a benchmark for journalistic quality, Scheuer (2008) said journalism should be capable of giving context to the issues and events it reports so that people are well informed. Shirky (2009) assert that the privileges inherent in journalism should engender a watchdog role, with accurate investigative reporting and an ability to frame debates and set agendas as well as maintaining the gatekeeping role of journalistic practice. Journalism must also serve a core democratic function of informing people about political issues and officialdom while providing a forum for public debate (Schudson, 2008; Vehkoo, 2010).

In McQuail's (2010) Mass Communication Theory, criteria of quality are applied to the operation of a mass medium by the public, as the audience, and by professionals working within the media organisation itself. The criteria include freedom, equality, diversity, truth and information quality, and social order and solidarity. Quality indicators derived from these five criteria include:

- journalism should provide reliable and relevant information with a diversity of opinion and information;
- journalism should carry out an investigative and watchdog role on behalf of the public;
- freedom of the press should lead to originality, creativity and great diversity;
- equality will support an expectation of fair access for alternative voices;

- journalism should provide diversity of access to channels of publication that offer direct benefits to audiences in society that decide which values should be upheld by a media system;
  - diversity also means opening the way for social and cultural change, especially where it takes the form of giving access to new, powerless or marginal voices, enabling minorities to gain adequate recognition in a larger society;
  - diversity limits social conflicts by increasing the chances of understanding between opposed groups and interests. Journalism should integrate and harmonize society.
  - journalism should provide access to dependable knowledge or information from trusted sources; that matches the reality of experiences and is relevant and useful in various applications.
  - mass media should provide a comprehensive supply of relevant news and background information about events in society and the world at large.
  - information should be objective, in the sense of being factual in form, accurate, honest, sufficiently complete and true to reality, reliable in the sense of being checkable and separate from opinion.
- (McQuail, 2010: 191-214)

In a 2010 study, Vehkoo suggested that researchers should examine the issue of journalistic quality from three main perspectives: the view of the public, and whether journalism can serve to inform, educate and entertain; the quality criteria and code of conduct of news organizations; and relationship between newsroom investment and quality. Thinking back to how scholars define journalism, it is regarded as a profession for which independence is a central issue and whose role is seen as supporting democratic and civic values in society and providing education and well-rounded knowledge that helps to make sense of what is happening in the human environment.

In some studies, diversity has been seen as one of the keys to defining the quality of news. Lacy and Rosenstiel (2015) explained that diversity included (1) the number or range of news sources cited, the viewpoints and story topics; (2) the diversity of storytelling styles, including narrative, non-narrative and multi-media,

to show how journalism was making use of technology to be creative in telling stories; (3) diversity in story length, demonstrating the publication's ability to broaden its appeal with a variety of coverage and content; and (4) diversity of outlets, showing how well journalism is gaining benefits from multiple platforms and numbers of outlets, to reach different levels of communities.

The quality of journalism may also be defined in terms of how well newsrooms meet expectations for maintaining its core values. Huang et al. (2004) listed a number of factors, questions and definitions involved in assessing a newsroom's performance. Enterprise, they said, was the effort made to disseminate news to audiences of a maximum size, in an informative and expressive way. Does a newsroom develop its own stories rather than depending on news agencies? To what extent is cross-media reporting undertaken, as well as cross-media promotion? How many stories are packaged? (The authors define packaged stories as groups of news items that contain at least two stories or at least three forms of news, which call for greater effort and show more sophistication in reporting). In measuring significance, do stories touch on underlying themes, ideas, trends or issues? How many sources are cited in each story, as a measure of fairness and balance? Finally, the issues of authoritativeness and localization: Does the newspaper use anonymous sources only, person-in-street and/or anonymous sources only, or expert, authoritative or first-hand sources, while maintaining its ability to tell local stories?

Expectations of quality also come from the public, members of which perceive good journalism by evaluating the performance of news workers in relation to the content reaching them. A survey conducted by Heider et al. (2005) found that the public strongly believed that the journalistic role of providing a community forum was more important than more traditional roles, such as performing as a watchdog for the public or reporting news with speed. Chung (2009) reported that online news audiences viewed the populist mobilizer role and the civic journalism function to be more important than the interpretive disseminator or adversarial roles. According to Vos et al. (2019), expectations of journalism can also vary according to age group. These authors found that older citizens assigned more importance to the "detached observer" role of traditional journalism, while younger citizens were more likely to expect journalists to set agendas and perform as agents of change.

These criteria arise from the realm of public responsibility, and the belief that media organizations are social institutions with a commitment to fulfil certain important public tasks that go beyond their immediate goals of making a profit and providing employment (McQuail, 2010). Building upon these questions and definitions, a major issue for investigation is the extent to which cross-media practices in journalism and the need to supply content across platforms have challenged the quality of journalism or created concern for its quality. **This thesis will seek every opportunity to understand how journalists and editors reflect their work processes, including in the light of perceptions that this quality is faltering or underdeveloped.** Therefore, concerns for social responsibility and the professional functions of journalism have formed the key definitions of “news quality” for this study.

***Concerns over issues of quality relate to the quality of work practices and the qualities inherent in the ways in which content is distributed to audiences.*** Rapid changes to the practice of journalism in the age of digital disruption has led to a virtual state of crisis in traditional media, with revenue declining and readership or audiences moving away from traditional outlets to new-media platforms. Competition for survival has forced the need to maximize incomes, cut costs, reduce staff and concentrate on speed and quantity to reach audiences. In this environment, it has been easy to marginalize journalistic standards. Both professionals and scholars in the digital transformation of journalism have pointed to newsroom practices as the reason for the weakening quality of journalism. Studies of newsrooms transforming to convergence and performing cross-media news production show concerns for the quality of journalism while acknowledging the challenges involved in maintaining standards. Some studies have found that cross-media publishing has not brought any decline in the quality of journalism. These concerns focus on four aspects of newsroom operations: First, workload pressures and the complexity of multiplatform practices have hindered journalists’ ability to focus on the quality of content. The greater the volume of content and number of platforms for which journalists are responsible, the greater the effect may be on the quality of their work. There are concerns about retraining journalists to become multi-skilled, thereby expecting them to perform more tasks in a limited time. Many studies have voiced concern over the workload of, and quality of

production from, journalists who have become ‘multi-skilled’. Cottle and Ashton (1999) found that journalists at the BBC’s Newscenter were concerned about a ‘homogenised’ form of news called a ‘bi-media package’. They claimed this severely constrained the ability and creativity of journalists in fashioning news items and the content itself lost some quality in the production process because journalists were unable to provide all the materials needed.

However, a study of journalism quality at The Tampa Tribune by Huang et al. (2004) found by analysing content over time that the quality of the Tribune’s reporting had remained comparatively stable in terms of being fair and balanced in sourcing, using authoritative sources and localizing stories. However, the study found that content was still being packaged and repackaged from other platforms. In the long term, there should be further studies to explore how newsrooms can sustain the whole quality of journalism in the process of creating multiplatform content, and particularly how quality may be affected if there was more variety to content and it was produced independently for various platforms. One study in 2006 found that untrained journalists in convergent newsrooms could be responsible for reducing the quality of news. However, with training in multimedia production, they were able to master news production for multiple channels and perform high-quality reporting, having learned how to write (Huang et al., 2016).

The second aspect of newsroom operations that is causing concern is the speed of the Internet and consequent pressure on newsrooms to compete with citizen content and demands for real-time information. These pressures sometimes affect the vital verification process, and mistakes can destroy trust and credibility which are the main pillars of quality journalism. Third, the digital culture of ‘anyone can tell a story’; of eyewitnesses and user-generated content, lessen the authority of news and newsrooms find the need to compete with alternative sources of information. In some countries – especially Thailand – ‘online influencers’ have gained audience trust as sources of information, such that they are able to challenge the need for ‘mainstream journalism’. Fourth, the struggle for business survival with no signs of an effective model for gaining adequate revenue, and how the quality of journalism can be maintained in this atmosphere.

Serious concerns have arisen over challenges to the quality of news coming from workloads, availability of time, and non-professional participation in the

news-production process. Paulussen et al. (2011) studied two cases of Belgian newsrooms that experimented with collaborative practices in cross-media news production and “hyperlocal” citizen journalism. It was found that online journalists were concerned about the availability of time, resources and manpower, with some saying that their workload did not allow them to do anything beyond their core tasks. Journalists in one of the case-study newsrooms expressed concerns about struggling with credibility, values, and the relevance of user-generated content in a professional-amateur collaboration regarded as “participatory news making” (Paulussen et al., 2011). Robinson (2011) studied changes in the practice of journalism at *The Capital Times*, a United States print newsroom, and found tensions concerning the ability of people to perform their new tasks of producing news across different platforms, as well as the new relationship with audiences, including user-generated content and comments published on the website. The journalists claimed to be in fear of losing their identity because of the need to perform many tasks. However, they slowly adapted to new routine practices and found that multiple platforms and cross-media production helped them to determine what information was useful to people and how best they could deliver information to the public in the role of “community storytellers”. Snow (2014) made a good point in saying that in the age of fragmented information and loads of content online, it was difficult for audiences to distinguish between information and content prepared by a professional journalist. This suggests that the profession should be able to create content value from journalistic specialization, and find a business model that gains value from the niche and quality aspects of this content. While struggling to find such a business model, journalists should remember that quality is capable of saving journalism because people still look to them for the kind of information that makes sense of what is happening in the world. If journalism fails to uphold its quality, it risks losing both its authority and the chance to endure (Prasad, 2016; Yoon, 2016; Fernandez, 2017).

The perspective of opportunity is also one that has been identified and discussed among scholars, especially in terms of how the cross-media environment offers new ways of using narrative styles and different forms of journalism to enhance the relationship between journalists and the public. Amid the mists of change and the crisis arising from the diminishing role and authority of traditional journalism,

some studies and comments from scholars and professionals have shed light on the opportunities cross-media practices may bring to create a new future for journalism. One opportunity is for investigative journalism, when integrated with social-media technologies and participatory journalism. The task of gathering news is changing: Nowadays, journalists have a greater number and variety of sources of information. They can build connections with people online to create teams to help them when they are crowdsourcing or trying to access in-depth information from sources that might otherwise be closed to them. Vehkoo (2013) explained that in a “breaking news” situation, crowdsourcing can be used to find out what happened and insightful information can be gathered from people at the scene of an event. In investigative journalism, crowdsourcing can help journalists to dig deeper into events with the help of eyewitnesses. Crowdsourcing is a method by which journalists can gain information quickly, from a large number of people. It requires journalists to “open up” the practice of journalism, enhancing their knowledge of issues, strengthening the audience relationship and providing journalists with the perspective, experience and knowledge of non-professional contributors (Aitamurto, 2017). While crowdsourcing may help journalists to gain more voices from within a community, there is often difficulty in analysing and evaluating input from a crowd, as well as verifying its accuracy. Collaboration between journalists and online users has been studied as an aspect of news gathering, production and creative storytelling, and these studies have established that social media bring opportunities for good journalism in many ways (Arceneaux & Weiss, 2010; Mare, 2014).

Producing multiple stories and continuously distributing them to different audiences on different platforms led to Anderson’s (2004) “long-tail theory”, related to media production, content management, and the point that on digital platforms, consumers are able to find and use niche content. Pursuing this issue, Stanic (2018) explained that long-tail content was that which generated traffic more than three days after publishing; it was “everlasting” content for which time was not important and readers could come back to it anytime. Content-insights laboratories researching this type of content found that it continually drove relevant traffic to a website and, for some months, held a valuable position in search-engine rankings. These stories include content that can be described as “detailed

explanations of some occurrence, or how-to guides”. Also among these articles are “big stories” that discuss important issues. This is echoed by the content strategy of the *Forbes* website, for example, which urges the production of long-tail content that is based on the editorial pillars of context, relevance and analysis. Significantly, about 50% of the website’s monthly traffic is said to seek out articles that are at least 30 days old (Bartlett, 2013). Digital long-tail stories are usually intended to develop niche perspectives of content that has already been distributed to different audiences across multiple platforms. According to Slocum (2009), Nieman Lab gave an example of long tail journalism by referring to Ron Sylvester’s Crime and Courts Report, in which the journalist uses his blog to publish multiple stories in series form, to give context and details of real-life situations from the courthouse. He explained in the articles that “The essential skill of multimedia reporting is knowing how to match content, medium and audience. Twitter requires brevity. Long-form print and web demand context. Blog posts, particularly those driven by video, need to be short and engaging.”

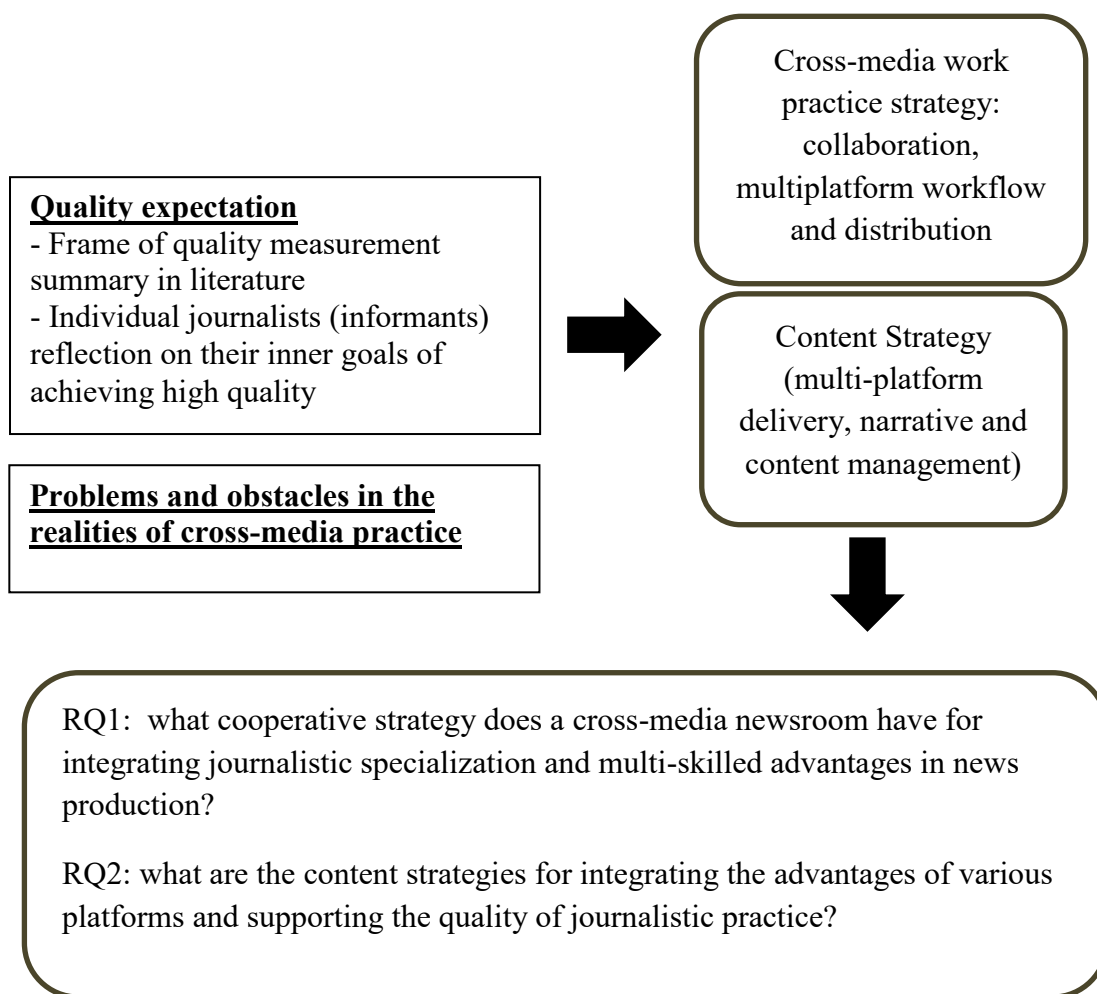
In the Thai newsroom case studies, there are occasional discussions about how news content may be developed so it is visible on social media, search-engine friendly, and relevant and engaging to different niche audiences according to the personalization characteristics of online platforms. A related aspect of using social media and undertaking cross-media production and distribution is the strength of integrated platforms in creating an impact when reporting important issues, because good journalism is all about networking to access information, reach people and gain participation from citizens to tell stories. Such an impact comes from integrating the strength of traditional media and the networking nature of social media when reporting stories (Alejandro, 2010; Lasorsa, Lewis & Holton, 2012). Producing news that is more relevant to audiences and creating audience experiences to engage people and communities to stories and issues is, as mentioned earlier, the essence of the idealistic concept of cross-media and trans-media narratives. It also reflects suggestions from some studies that audiences should be able to participate and see for themselves the value of quality journalism (Meijer & Bijleveld, 2016).

Some research studies have examined the use of the “transmedia” concept, which offers a method and opportunity for long-tail distribution in which multiple

stories are developed in order to extend audience attraction to an issue or event. Transmedia contents are planned with an exploration of the characteristics of the media involved, using formats and languages that better fit the story and the platform, and enabling users to engage in the interpretation, change, and distribution of the contents (Canavilhas, 2018). Moloney (2011) proposed an application of Jenkins' core principles to journalism, providing an opportunity for journalistic practice to achieve a viral spread of a news story through sharing by users. In this way, more details about the news could be provided and official content expanded, while maintaining continuity and exploiting public interest on each medium. Audience attention could be held for a longer period, stories given diversity by adding other points of view, and alternative forms of storytelling used to encourage the public to delve deeper into the story. Thus, content could provide information that audiences could apply in everyday life; it could also inspire the intervention of the public in real actions that seek solutions to social problems. Therefore, studies of multiplatform strategies may shed light on opportunities to embrace the advantages of access to multiple platforms and the use of innovative narrative styles, in order for newsroom practices to ultimately achieve quality of content.

Studies of Thai journalism over recent years in which news organizations adapted to media convergence have focused mainly on newsroom adaptation and re-structuring of work practices. Some research has focused on the use by news reporters of new media, as this illustrates a change in the news-reporting process by Thai news organizations and shows a significant characteristic of Thai journalists, who have embraced online journalism, especially on new-media platforms, as a main function of adaption and relocating staff in newsrooms (Sangrungrueangroj, 2011; Srisaracam, 2012; Phanomphu, 2013; Akudompong and Kanthanurak, 2016; Wattanachaipon, 2017). Wattanachaipon (2017) found that news reporters used traditional news-gathering processes, except that high-quality digital cameras had become part of their routine equipment, to take photographs and send news through social-media platforms. At the same time, editors have been compelled to exercise more care in releasing content through online social media in order to maintain a level of audience trust. According to Benjarongkij's (2017) "World of Journalism" report, written after interviewing 374 Thai journalists, the

importance of their use of online search engines and their freedom to make editorial decisions had changed dramatically over the preceding five years. A majority of respondents not only saw an increase in the use of search engines and freedom to make editorial decisions, but reported an increase in technical skills. A decrease in the credibility of journalism and time available for researching stories was reported by almost one out of ten respondents, and the report suggested that competition, audience feedback, advertising considerations and profit-making pressures had increased and journalists viewed these changes as affecting the ethical standards of journalism (Benjarongkij, 2017). Research on news narratives in Thai research conducted between 1991 and 2014 focused mainly on the way in which stories were told on each platform, such as radio news, newspapers, television and online news. However, this research lacked academic studies of cross-media and multiplatform narrative styles. There are widespread debates on how journalism in Thailand can be “saved” from the innovative new workflows of multiplatform and cross-media journalism. On the other hand, there are also discussions about creative content and innovative strategies for content delivery using the synergy and advantages of multiple platforms. These put Thai case studies among others in phrase three of convergence, as defined in Figure 2.1, in which ways are being sought to revive journalism and maintain its quality. This thesis, therefore, will add to existing knowledge of work practices and content strategies in cross-media news production that can enhance the quality of journalism.



**FIGURE 2.4:** Conceptual framework.

The conceptual framework in Figure 2-4 represents the thesis's approach to investigating perceptions of quality in multimedia performance, and relates to in-depth interview questions and observations during the gathering of information for this thesis. Chapter 4 will discuss journalists' definitions of quality and show their individual desires to strive for quality in their work by using a cross-media strategy. Analyses in chapters 5 and 6 will further an understanding of work practices and content strategies in which the case-study newsrooms are moving towards quality journalism. In light of this chapter's literature review, discussions throughout thesis will privilege, in particular, three aspects of news production on which the pursuit of quality is focused: cross-media practices, multi-skilled journalism and multi-platform delivery.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Methodology

The preceding chapter provided an overview of some of the literature relevant to convergence, cross-media journalism and digital storytelling. I have developed arguments in this thesis by exploring three aspects of the practice of journalism in cross-media newsrooms:

First, this study focus on newsroom strategy and cross-media production. The concept of convergence has not yet been fully implemented, but every organization in this study is found to be developing a cross-media strategy. How is that defined? How it is implemented differently, according to different factors affecting different organizations? ‘No model fits all’, but this thesis tries to identify similarities while describing unique tactics, as bases for further studies and adaptations.

Second, this thesis explores content distribution strategy and narrative across platforms in response to the need to be competitive while upholding and improving quality and the strategic use of content across platform sand advantages gained in terms of competitiveness, on one hand, and good journalism, on the other.

Third, this thesis seeks a practical model for how cross-media production meets the need for good journalism and quality of content by studying relationships between workflow and content strategies across multiple platforms to sustaining or improving the quality of journalism

This chapter outlines the methodological elements of qualitative case studies. It also discusses some challenges related to data gathering and analysis of cross-media news organizations, cross-media production processes and storytelling across platforms. The chapter is broken down into two sections:

Background and research design: this section contains an overview of research methods, the research philosophy and a justification for the chosen methodological approach.

Research methodology and procedure: this section elaborates on the practical processes of the various phases of research, including details of data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations and research challenges.

### **3.1 Background and research design**

This study adopted a qualitative research methodology that was based on my engagement with journalists in Thai newsrooms, to examine cross-media strategies and storytelling in the coverage of news. I will discuss briefly my rationale in considering a methodological approach for this study. In order to find a suitable method of study, I reviewed literature concerning both cross-media production and storytelling published over the past 10 years to explore various fields of study and examples of methodology.

#### **3.1.1 *Qualitative or quantitative research?***

Qualitative methods offer an effective way of understanding experiences. According to Merriam (2009), qualitative researchers are more interested in uncovering the meaning of a phenomenon for those involved, while Schwandt (2003) suggested that to find meaning in actions required that the context of a system be interpreted. Qualitative study is a method for investigating ‘the making of meanings’, and it can explore and explain human situations and actions (Pauly, 1991), so qualitative studies are suitable for examining the process of human creative activity (Christians & Carey, 1989).

Coffey and Atkinson (1996) suggest that qualitative methods differ from quantitative analysis not only in counting numbers, but also because researchers identify and reorder data in new and different ways to interpret ideas and concepts. Moreover, a major advantage of qualitative methods of analysis is that they notice relevant phenomena and collect examples in order to find commonalities, differences, patterns and structures of phenomena (Seidel & Kelle, 1995). Additionally, Sarantakos (2005) suggests that qualitative methods enable researchers to create and understand meanings with rich and deep descriptions of the subject under study.

Researchers in the media field have adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods for their studies, but for different propositions and objectives

of research questions. Pauly (1991) explains that qualitative researchers study media to find processes of products, practices and commentaries that ‘make meanings’. He explains that to study products is to ‘explore deep meanings and interpret text rather than coding it for the presence of certain topics, phrases or themes’. Qualitative researchers who study media practices aim to understand how groups of people perform their work and the consequences of this performance. Those who use qualitative methods to study media commentaries want to explore in-depth how the media culture shapes reality and society.

Some previous studies on convergence and cross-media journalism show that researchers have tended to adopt qualitative methods to find meanings behind changing practices in newsrooms, in order to draw a picture of journalism in the digital and convergence era. In an ethnographic study in 2013, Tameling and Broersma observed meetings, analysed documents and conducted qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews with 37 people from top management to reporters. This method was used to examine a strategy of de-convergence and policy implementation in a newsroom, and how it impacted on the daily practice of journalism, at the Dutch national newspaper *de Volkskrant*.

Doyle (2011) studied the multi-platform strategies of television broadcasters in the United Kingdom, and to what extent digitization, convergence and multi-platform approaches were enabling broadcasters to operate more efficiently and effectively. Her study method was an exploratory investigation based on analysis of reports and financial statements, along with in-depth interviews with key television executives of the BBC, Scottish Television, ITV, Channel Four and MTV. Doyle’s findings and analysis were focused on three main issues: motives for adopting a multi-platform approach; impacts on conceptualization and exploitation of content; and implications for costs.

Quantitative, as opposed to qualitative, research focuses on facts, measurable behaviour and cause and effect. In media studies, quantitative researchers tend to see communication as a behavioural science, and use scientific methods to measure the effects of different types of communication on various social groups (Brennen, 2013). Some studies have adopted quantitative methods to study changing practices in newsrooms, but the studies have focused on ‘what’ happens, and have classified numerous examples of text into themes to measure

actual results from products arising from the ‘new way’ of journalism. However, when they want to explain ‘why’ or ‘how’ decisions are made and how journalists have adapted to the new process to achieve their classified examples of text the researchers have resorted to qualitative interviews and observations to add meaning to their quantitative data.

Menke et al. (2016) conducted a comparative survey on convergence strategies among newspaper journalists in managerial positions in newsrooms from Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Spain and Portugal to gain insights into the strategic approaches being applied to implement newsroom convergence. The study questionnaire consisted of four main areas of unit analysis, aimed at capturing the different strategic attempts at convergence: strategies concerning channel priorities and time budgets, policies and editorial routines, content production, and journalistic skills and motivation. The study shows differences and similarities between newsrooms in the different countries. However, the researchers saw the need for further studies to investigate journalism: how it is practised in the environment of overall change and how the changes have affected its traditional function. Johnston (2016) explored how BBC journalists changed their practice when embracing eyewitness or user-generated content (UGC). Quantitative content analysis showed data detailing UGC usage by newsrooms, while qualitative ethnography and interview data showed the roles, attitudes, challenges and practices involved in integrating UGC content into news stories. In attempting to understand exposure to news and its social effects, in order to map or predict audience behaviour, other studies of cross-media journalism have adopted a quantitative approach rather than focusing on audience studies and news consumption. These studies usually employ a survey method, along with analysis of the genre and aspects of content. However, scholars researching audiences and media consumption suggest that a qualitative approach can investigate why people find these news media worthwhile, and typologies of news consumers can be built from insights found in qualitative data (Schröder, 2011).

While quantitative research can produce facts and reliable information, it sometimes neglects the involvement of participants in a real-life context. Qualitative methods of study, on the other hand, go beyond numbers to identify the meanings of data, enabling researchers to interpret phenomena related to the topics

of study in order to draw conclusions. In the field of media studies, the advantage of qualitative research is that it responds well to the need to gather a deep understanding of the realities of what is happening in a social environment. It allows for a rich and deep description of the study subject in the course of understanding the meaning of data (Sarantakos, 2005). Brennen (2013) found that qualitative researchers were able to consider the diversity of meanings and values created in the media, rather than focusing on the causative effects or influences of the media. They were thus able to conduct quality research on the attempts of media to understand the relationship between them and society; an assertion that supported the arguments of Jensen (1991) that ‘quantitative methods cannot help them with answers regarding the role of communication in the social production of meaning’. For example, the qualitative methods of a study by Saltzis and Dickinson (2008) within the changing newsrooms of the *Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, BBC News and Sky News were able to illuminate what was happening inside news organisations and explain the rationale for work practices and their perceived impact on newsroom practices.

The adoption of a qualitative research approach in this study is justified by the need to understand ‘how’ and ‘why’ as a principal focus of the research questions. It follows the reasoning of Marvasti (2004) when considering research methodologies in a sociological context. In his opinion quantitative research involves the use of methodological techniques that represent the human experience in numerical categories, sometimes referred to as statistics. Conversely, qualitative research provides detailed descriptions and analysis of the quality, or the substance, of the human experience.

A quantitative approach may provide the fundamental facts of the production models and the structure of narratives for news across platforms in comparative ways, as some previous studies have done via surveys and analyses of content. However, this thesis aims not only to know ‘what they do’, but also aims to explore the attitudes of professional journalists in order to understand possible areas of discord between managerial strategies and the real-life practice of journalism. In terms of studying that ‘practice’, which is a cross-media product, the researcher intends to investigate and gain insights into the decision-making and strategies involved, beyond simply stating its routines. In studying the ‘product’,

this thesis aims to examine the practical styles of storytelling that newsrooms are testing and evaluating to keep abreast of the changing dynamics of cross-media practice. Furthermore, this thesis sets out to interpret both practices and storytelling styles to measure the implications cross-media strategies have for the quality of journalism and its benefits to society. Attitudes, experiences and practices all need to be investigated in order to find these answers, and that investigation will involve a relationship between researchers and participants in which exchanges of knowledge will follow the nature of a qualitative research approach. The advantage of qualitative research is that the researcher will explore the issues from the participants' perspective. Data of cross-media production and storytelling strategies, gathered by a qualitative method, will enable the researcher to explain meanings behind the practice of journalism and interpret this work in the context of quality journalism and the expectations of society towards journalism. This will eventually lead to a meaningful conclusion concerning the cross-media concept and its effects on the quality of journalism, beyond what might be expected from the numerical or statistical data of quantitative research.

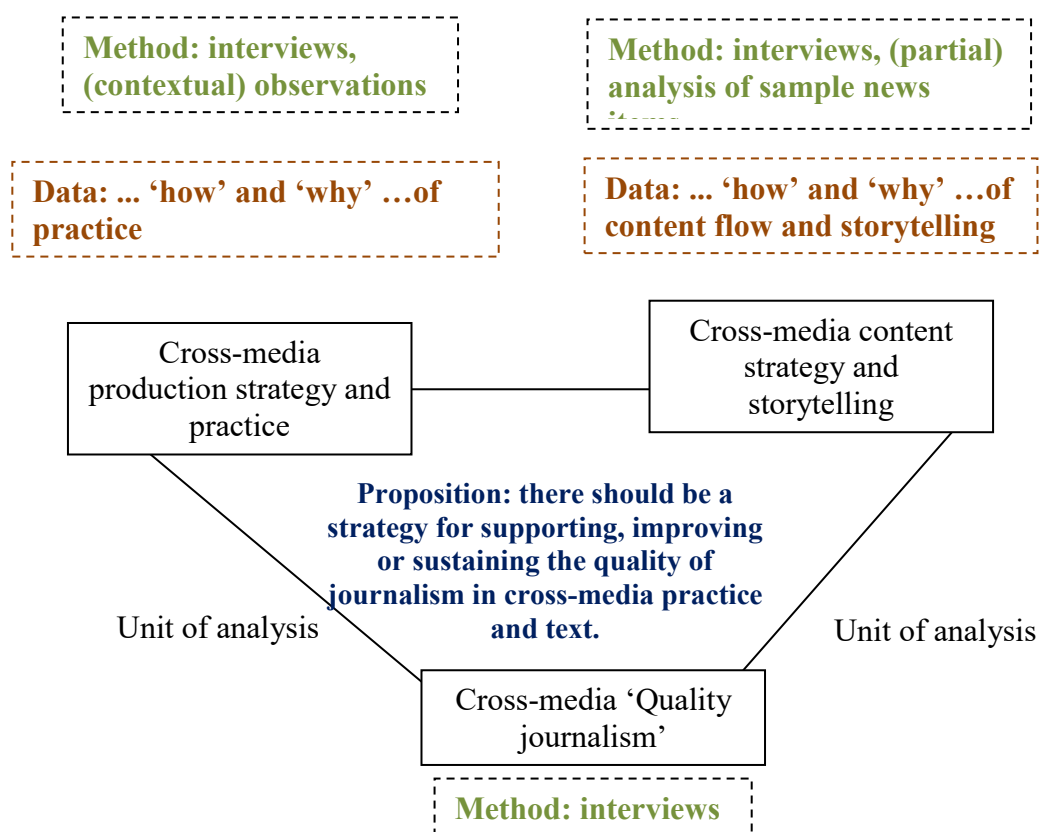
### **3.1.2 Case study approach**

I have studied previous research and acknowledge the argument that points to the need to fill a gap in existing knowledge (mentioned earlier in the Literature Review chapter). This study sets out to focus on content strategies across platforms, establish models of workflow, define the opportunities and challenges of a cross-media newsroom and investigate the development of different storytelling styles for multiple platforms in news production. It will simultaneously consider ethical and quality issues across the entire news-production process. All data are intended to generalize upon similarities while finding differences between news organisations operating within the context of the Thai media landscape, and identifying cross-media strategies that are unique to one or another of the studied newsrooms. The ambition of this study is to find a solution to the creation of quality cross-media journalism, rather than just explaining workflow routines, so that society's expectations of quality journalism may be met by drawing a big picture of how cross-media production can be planned and strategically implemented.

Undertaking a case study is a strategy for investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. It is often seen as an approach best suited

for understanding complex social and organizational issues (Erdal, 2009). Yin (1994) suggests that the case study approach helps researchers to make direct observations and collect data in natural settings to illuminate a particular situation and to get a closer understanding of it. This supports the assertion of Zainal (2007) that the advantage of a case study approach is the ability to explain the complexities of real-life situations, which researchers may not be able to capture by using surveys or experimental research. My focus is on understanding specific cases in depth, rather than generalizing to develop a conceptual model, and a qualitative research approach responds best to the nature of this endeavour.

Choosing case studies from the many newsrooms in Thailand's media landscape that would provide insightful findings required considerable care. Advice from Zucker (2009) emphasized the need to carefully consider the research questions in designing the case studies, while Yin (1994) wrote that the case study approach was a good way to explore 'how' and 'why' questions in a more explanatory manner, because the advantage and strength of this method was its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence in examining contemporary events. When considering the adoption of a case study research strategy, I considered relationships between research questions, the units of analysis, how these data would be linked to the proposition, and criteria for interpreting the findings.



**FIGURE 3.1:** Components of the case study design and method.

The components of the case study design, as shown in Figure 3.1, indicate the need for case studies that exhibit both similarities and areas of uniqueness, in terms of cross-media production and storytelling style, to enable an investigation of the relationships between these strategies and the achievement of quality journalism. To understand these issues and to be able to generalize the data to suggest a conceptual model for the Thai media industry, data had to be gathered from different newsrooms with different contexts and strategies.

In media studies that examine aspects of news, information and journalism, qualitative methods allow a consideration of the diversity of meanings and values created by the media, in an attempt to understand relationships between the media and various factors in society. Some earlier research papers in similar fields of study also chose qualitative methods to study changing practices and workflows in convergent and cross-media newsrooms. Reviews of methodologies used in studies of cross-media journalism strategy, cross-media storytelling, and the quality of

journalism, support the adoption of several methods used in earlier studies. The case study approach of qualitative research was the main approach found in earlier studies that were focused on convergent newsrooms and cross-media workflow. They examined the complex phenomena of implication, attitude and practice in news organizations in their approach to convergence and cross-media practices.

García-Avilés, J. A. & Carvajal, M. (2008) used a case study research strategy to draw two different models from two Spanish multimedia Group – a cross-media model and an integrated model – from workflow practices, degrees of multiple skills, and integration between different media cultures. Case studies were also used as a research strategy by Erdal (2009) in which he explains that case studies are a method for investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, and are often seen as best suited for understanding complex social and organizational issues. His case studies involved a single news organization, but a comparative examination between a central newsroom and a local newsroom. The method incorporated field observations and qualitative interviews, with two weeks of field observations in the central newsroom and a further two weeks in the local newsroom. He interviewed journalists and editors, observed work processes, and joined in editorial meetings. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 45 journalists and editors during and after newsroom observations.

In their 2010 paper *Innovation Processes in Online Newsrooms as Actor-networks and Communities of Practice*, Schmitz Weiss and Domingo adopted a case study strategy and an ethnographic method of observing, interviewing and studying documents to understand how journalists adapted to the innovation process. Case studies of four newsrooms helped to explain different newsroom dynamics, roles and relationships between actors, and obstacles in newsrooms to innovations in news production.

In their paper *Media Convergence Revisited: Lessons Learned on Newsroom Integration in Austria, Germany and Spain* (2014), García-Avilés et al. focused on professional practices in three media organizations undergoing newsroom convergence in Austria, Germany and Spain. The case study method was used and data gathered from direct observations, interviews, written records and other documents. Interviews with editors and journalists were conducted over several days, along with direct newsroom observations and studies of relevant

documents providing data on website traffic, revenue streams and advertising rates. The study compared findings on the development of newsroom convergence models, the adaptation of journalists to cross-media convergence, and issues in the context of multi-platform production.

These examples of previous research justified their use of case studies as a research strategy to focus on answering the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions related to media production and organizational adaptation to cross-media and convergence culture. A case study approach in qualitative research was used to conduct in-depth investigations in newsrooms with a ‘similar but different’ media context in order to understand cross-media strategies including cross-media types and content strategies. This provides a rationale for the choice of research design for this study, as shown in Figure 3.1, in acceptance of the point of view of Stake (1995) that case study research is bounded by understanding a specific case, rather than seeking to generalize beyond that case. In order to allow the generalization of findings to a wider population, this study uses collective case studies so it can draw thematically from several cases. The advantage of collective case studies is that this method is suitable not only for answering the research questions, but also for achieving the research objective of creating a conceptual model for cross-media journalism in Thailand. Despite the advantages of using case studies to answer my research questions, I nevertheless had to consider some criticisms of the case study approach in the process of research design. Yin (1994) pointed out his concerns about sloppy, equivocal evidence, biased views and small sampling numbers in case studies that could diminish their effectiveness in generalizing concepts. To avoid this problem, I planned a system of categorizing qualitative data to make it clear, concise and directed to points related to answering the research questions. In the first year of developing research ideas and designing the methodology, I conducted a pilot study to identify the types of data I should be gathering, from whom and where this information could be retrieved, and how the data should be cross-checked.

The case study approach, as explained by Yin (2003), often relies on multiple sources of qualitative data, such as documentation, archival records, interviews and direct observations, to provide corroborating evidence. Thus, I applied a combination of qualitative methods for gathering and analysing data, incorporating qualitative interviews and analyses of media texts. As suggested by

Cottle (2003), these methods serve a researcher well, when seeking to understand the processes of media production and the views, experiences and awareness of media producers. Therefore, the case study research concept was chosen for this study, and the cases of three different newsrooms were selected for three vital reasons: (1) to cover the complexity of unique cross-media strategies in each newsroom; (2) all three newsrooms have implemented cross-media production and have been involved in convergence and de-convergence under clear direction and policy; and (3) there was the possibility of a comparative perspective, by assessing the similarities and differences between the different newsrooms.

## **3.2 Research methodology and procedures**

### **3.2.1 Decision of method of study**

The research process for this study was separated into three phases, in order to gain the most reliable and valid data upon which to base conclusions. Phase 1 was a pilot study, in which I developed relationships with journalists and news organisation in Thailand with the objectives of gaining access to information, building trust and developing the ability to recognize similarities and unique aspects of cross-media strategies in each newsroom in order to choose the most suitable samples to answer my research questions. I also conducted 6 pilot interviews during first year on my research on general ideas, situations, and opinions regarding changes to the practice of journalism resulting from convergence and digital transformation. I was thus able to digest my research questions into categories of data, allocate codes for gathering data, and plan qualitative data analysis. Most importantly, this phase allowed me to successfully gain trust and co-operation in the newsrooms I wanted to study. I was invited to access data, arrange interviews and expand my network of interviewees to cover as broad a range of informants as I needed.

At this stage, I decided to employ semi-structured interviews as my main method of gathering research data because I was allowed access with trust and authority in each newsroom and interviewees also raised topics for discussion that reflected the nature of their work. I questioned them about their everyday

negotiation of these processes, the strategies they employed in their newsrooms, to determine relative strengths and weaknesses.

The shift from traditional newsroom practices to a convergent environment was clearly a period of change for the journalism profession; it was a time when professional journalists were keen to seek knowledge from scholars. This opened a door of opportunity for scholars to enter newsrooms and understand their practices more closely.

In the first year of my research, I spent time working for both The National Press Council of Thailand and the Thai Journalists' Association, and this brought two benefits in the approach to formal studies. First, developing relationships and close connections within the profession helped in gaining access to newsrooms and, importantly, easing limitations on the gathering of data. The intimacy and trust I built with journalists encouraged their willingness to talk about the details of their work. During this stage, I also did some research studies to fill gaps in my knowledge of convergent journalism in Thailand. Although everyone recognized the trend of adapting newsrooms to the new media landscape, there was a lack of precise evidence or solid studies that gave structure to the 'new landscape'. Media professionals themselves wanted to gain a closer understanding of the convergent transformation, and this encouraged them to participate and help me through the processes of data gathering. The second benefit came from pilot interviews that clarified the situation in Thai newsrooms and helped me to classify different newsroom types and to sample them as case studies.

During the pilot interview period, I consulted journalists and editors from many news organizations in Thailand. This convinced me that Thai media believed that convergence and communication across news platforms was important. However, there was no model for cross-media practice that fitted all, and each newsroom had to undertake a trial-and-error process of testing workflows and storytelling styles to find those best able to reach audiences and strengthen the value of journalism. In this atmosphere of uncertainty in the changing media landscape – while some journalists have been losing their jobs, some newspapers have closed down and others are struggling to find ways to work across platforms and survive in the business – this thesis will strive to contribute to knowledge of cross-media journalism in Thailand.

Ethnographic research in newsrooms has the advantage of enabling a researcher to see how the production process unfolds over time, through multiple methods of data gathering, especially observation and interviews (Cottle and Ashton, 1999). An ethnographic approach entails studying people within their own cultural environment through intensive fieldwork. The researcher approaches the data with a primary aim of describing what happens in a particular setting, considering how the people are involved and the contexts in which actions take place (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Lindlof and Taylor, 2002). Paterson (2016) argues that systematic observation of the process of news production by engaging with the ethnographic sociology of news production can lead to an understanding of why journalism is ‘manufactured’. In this study, I followed a framework suggested by Singer (2009), in which data should include evidence of meaning, extracted from the usual patterns of social life exhibited by those being studied, and contextualization of those patterns. Domingo et al (2011) emphasizes that ethnographic research on online news should investigate the tension between technological innovations and the social context in which they are adopted, while always remaining aware of journalism at large and the specific settings of the media organizations where decisions are being made. Paterson (2016) also explains – in the context of newsroom research – that such research can be done by noting and exploring moments of tension in the news production machinery.

Relationship-building with the Press Council Association during the pilot study gave me the cooperation of three news organisations and access to their newsrooms, meetings and documents, all of which had relevance to the information I gathered during interviews and observation. I had limited time to spend, however, working for two weeks each time in each newsroom, and revisit newsroom for observation 2 times each. a. On the basis of this first-hand experience, I settled on my choice of methodological approach in designing and implementing my research agenda and priorities. Questions for in-depth interviews and focal issues during observations came together as complementary stimuli to provide rich reasons and evidence for why and how news production was undertaken and how decisions were made on content strategy. When it came to conducting the interviews, I found that I was able to follow how they performed their work, so I extended the period of interviews up to two weeks in each newsroom, and every time I attended an

interview, I stayed in the newsroom and observed how each team and platform was working, may aim being to discover the links that connected their cross-media production. In addition to building a clear understanding of cross-media content strategies – and to cross-check the interview data – I chose to observe newsroom meetings and work practices during days on which interviews were scheduled and I partially analyzed examples of text from the news coverage, in order to enrich my discussions with interviewees, including the identification of tensions, problems and concerns. I also returned to each newsroom after analyzing the text of news-coverage examples mentioned in the interviews, for discussions and observations to find evidence of the context in which content was produced. I am aware that this does not represent a longitudinal ethnography study of a newsroom, but during my observations I endeavoured to gather as much pertinent data as possible, as it related to the research questions.

After pinning down and finalizing my research approach and methodology, I began phase 2: the collection and analysis of data. The data covered four areas of research: different models of cross-media workflow; types of cross-media content; cross-media adaptation and content strategies; and definitions of, and opinions on, the quality of journalism.

Following the analysis of data and generalization to form the concept of an optimal cross-media model, I followed with phase 3, in which I drew conclusions and proposed a conceptual model of cross-media journalism in Thailand that made best provision for the maintenance of quality journalism.

The following section will be discussed further in sampling, data gathering method, data analysis process and methodological challenges to studies of complex media organisations.

### **3.2.2 Selection of case studies and interviewees**

From the results of the pilot study, I was able to finalize the choice of three newsrooms as case studies, to examine cross-media practices in routine workflow. The three case studies were chosen as a purposive strategy of critical case sampling, since the cases are dramatically important in their ability to contribute to the development of knowledge (Patton, 1999). Patton explains that purposive sampling

logic lies in selecting information-rich cases to gain insights and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Purposive sampling is used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources. Thus, the different cross-media strategies and organizational cultures of the three chosen cases will give both similar and contrasting results from the unique models employed by each newsroom. As Yin (2003) points out, studying multiple cases can draw cross-case conclusions that modify theory. It is expected that results from the three case studies will help the creation of a practical, flexible and adaptable model of cross-media journalism for the Thai media context.

This thesis's study used a purposive selection of converged news organizations matching the definition of "convergent and cross-media newsrooms", in which each organization has five common characteristics: integrated production, cooperation between media, multiplatform delivery, multiple professional skills, and sharing of facilities between teams (Dailey et al., 2005; Quinn, 2005; Domingo et al, 2007; Jenkins, 2006). In order to examine similarities, differences and unique approaches to cross-media practices and content strategy, the chosen news organizations were also selected for compliance with the following criteria:

- The organizations had to be integrating news production between traditional media and digital or online teams.
- They had to have multiplatform delivery on more than three platforms.
- The organizations had to have implemented a convergence policy and cross-media strategy at least two years before the study, in order to enable an evaluation and review of the consequences of the process.
- The sample convergence newsrooms had to be owned and managed by commercialized media organisations in order for the study to show how economic factors are a main reason driving convergence transformation in Thai journalism, in turn affecting work practices and content strategies.

During the pilot study, I gathered information on many news organizations in Thailand by discussing them with journalists and studying articles and documents about media convergence. Most of these organizations were expanding from

traditional media to launch a website. However, there were three organizations that met all the criteria for the purposive scope of this study. They were:

**Nation Multimedia Group** was the first company in Thailand to announce a policy of implementing a convergent newsroom. The group has various types of media with different positioning – a business newspaper, an English-language newspaper, a popular newspaper, digital television channels and radio programmes. It is the type of convergent newsroom that tries to centralize and build cooperation between all platforms. Nation Multimedia Group is a media company that not only produces news in newsrooms catering to multiple platforms (i.e. newspapers, television, radio, a website, apps), but also for multiple brands.

**Thairath** is a popular newspaper with Thailand's highest daily circulation. Its website is among the five most popular news websites and the company has also expanded into digital television, where it is trying to introduce innovative storytelling as a state-of-the-art form of journalism. *Thairath* chooses to limit cross-media production to specific occasions, and even then, only between specific platforms. It considers the cultural obstacles between newspaper, television and digital-media teams too constraining to impose cross-media practices on a routine basis. Each *Thairath* medium works in isolation, with its own separate team, to create content. However, on special occasions the organization establishes a unique cooperation process that involves pre-planned integration of work by the different teams, so that all *Thairath* outlets benefit.

**PPTV HD36** is a small organization that was originally based on digital television. The PPTV news team is small group of people who set out from their formation to design a convergent process for journalism and news production. It is representative of small outlets with small numbers of news staff. PPTV's main platform is digital television, with online and social-media outlets as additional platforms. Cross-media journalism occurs when a news organization integrates news production for multiple platforms in one newsroom to create a strong multimedia brand.

Research participants were generally selected because they were not only willing to articulate their experiences, but they were also able to provide rich descriptions of their experiences, thereby providing information that was strong and able to challenge and enrich the researcher's understandings (Crabtree and Miller, 1992; Hutchinson and Wilson, 1991). I deliberately selected interviewees who would be able to contribute to the research topic and would be willing to share their experiences in the cross-media production process. This was done by actively selecting interviewees who met the criteria for inclusion in the study (Marshall, 1996); i.e., who were working in cross-media production at a management level and were making decisions, or were journalists and members of production crews such as photographers and graphic designers who were operating at a practical level. Snowball sampling techniques were also used as a combination method; i.e. the first interviewee recommended the next interviewee, who had strong knowledge of convergence and cross-media news production and who met all of the criteria for inclusion in the study. Thirty interviewees selected from each newsroom met at least one of the following professional descriptions:

- management staff responsible for editorial decisions on each platform and whose functions involved cooperative work with other teams. Top-level managers responsible for policy and editors who deployed the work-practice policies of their organizations.

- reporters working for all platforms in a newsroom, and sample interviews with specialized reporters (working specifically for one platform or covering a single and specific area of news) and multi-skilled journalists (producing news content for distribution on more than one platform).

- members of social-media teams, website staff and production crews.

Interviewees were selected for responsibilities incorporated within cross-media production. It was not possible to identify those journalists who had left the news organization due to the factors discussed above and in the previous chapter. Therefore, this thesis recognizes a limitation in its data gathering, namely that it focuses on the experiences of those who have adapted to the changing news environment, or who have been hired more recently (and for whom this environment is 'normal' to them).

In the opinion of Bloomberg and Volpe (2008a, 2008b), the basic tenets of qualitative research are that each research setting is unique in its own mix of people and contextual factors. In this study, thus, interview informants were selected from managerial level (Chairperson, Director, Editor in chief, Editors) and practising level in newsrooms (journalists, camera operators, members of social-media teams, graphic designers). Special care was taken to include journalists and editors from newsrooms of various sizes in order to draw on their diverse experiences and environments. I set the number of interviewees at 30 people, covering all levels of news organizations from top management to reporters. Respondents were selected on the basis of their contributions to the news process and their involvement in news convergence.

Most of the interviewees remain anonymous to protect their privacy. They were informed that they could claim anonymity at the beginning of data collection, and where anonymity was requested, it was always respected by me. Although some interviewees allowed their names to be used in this thesis, others expressed concerns about being identified. Thus, quotes or observations from interviews are identified by the role of the interviewee and his or her position in a newsroom, e.g. ‘assignment editor’ or ‘TV reporter’. This use of positions was also useful in identifying their roles in relation to cross-media strategy. The interviewees are listed in Table 3.1 (below), along with the roles they fill within their organizations and period of interview sessions.

**TABLE 3.1:** Interviewees, their roles, and the dates and location of interviews for this study.

Interviewees	Roles within organisation	Time and place of interview
<b>PPTV HD36</b>		
News Director	Decision making on news direction, news program, strategy planning with other teams, announcer or flagship news program	Since PPTV HD36 is a small team, I meet and discuss more detail for interview in both period of field visit.
Assistant New Media Business Strategy Direct	New media content strategy and production New media photographer training	
New Media Director	New media content strategy, business and news marketing strategy	First period: 13-30 January, 2016 Second period:
News Reporter Supervisor	News reporting Training and quality control of reporter	15 June – 30 June, 2016
Assignment Editor	Editor, decision making on big story, news documentary, investigative news. News reporting	Revisit to final check with information 29-30 September, 2017
Website Editor	Producing news coverage and other online narrative for website and social media	
Reporter	News reporting across platforms	

THAIRATH		
News Director Thairath TV	<p>Set direction of television news team</p> <p>Daily news issues, direction to cover every-day story.</p> <p>Joint-meeting with other platforms</p>	<p>First period: Thairath TV</p> <p>13 – 26 August 2016</p> <p>Second Period: Thairath Daily and Thairath Online</p> <p>6 – 15 January, 2017</p>
Assignment Editor Thairath TV	<p>Editor, decision making on big story, news documentary, investigative news.</p> <p>News reporting</p>	
Social Media Manager, Thairath	<p>Responsible on news and marketing content on social media platform (exclude website)</p> <p>Joint-meeting with other teams.</p> <p>Plan repurposing content of every platforms to distribute on social media</p>	
Television Reporter, Thairath TV	Reporting news for Thairath TV	
News program producer, Thairath TV	Producing news program for Thairath TV	
Head of Provincial News, Thairath Daily	<p>Responsible on managing all local newspaper working for Thairath.</p> <p>Direction of local news coverage</p> <p>Reporting local and community news for daily newspaper</p> <p>Joint-meeting with other teams</p>	

Editorial Advisor for Thairath Online and Director Information Center, Thairath Daily	Direction for Thairath online. Policy meeting in managerial levels at Thairath Daily (newspaper)	
Business reporter, Thairath	Writing news for Thairath Daily (Newspaper)	
Online assignment editor, Thairath Online	Special report, big issues, investigative news for Thairath Online (Website)	
Online News Producer, Thairath Online	Special report, big issues, investigative news for Thairath Online (Website)  Joint-meeting with other teams, policy and direction deploy to online team	
Website rewriter	Write news for Thairath online (Website)	
NATION MULTIMEDIA GROUP (NMG)		
Nation Multimedia Group Chairman	Policy direction  Head of convergence newsroom	First period: The Nation and Nation TV, Convergence Newsroom  1-10 February, 2015
Editor in Chief of Nation TV	Responsible on Nation TV policy  Joint-meeting to make decision at convergence newsroom  Announcer of news analysis program on Nation TV	
Nation TV reporters	Multi-skilled journalist reporting news mainly for Nation TV, personal social media account,	

	nation TV website. Alternatively, published news report in newspaper.	Second Period: Kom Chud Luek, NOW26, Bangkok Biz News  27 January – 10 February, 2017
Web Editor	Responsible with website content and OKnation website (citizen journalists and blogger web blog)	
Kom Chud Luek News Editor	Responsible on news direction, news coverage of Kom Chud Luek newspaper	
Kom Chud Luek Online Editor	Responsible on news direction, news coverage of Kom Chud Luek website, which act as a hub of all news materials	
Kom Chud Luek reporter	News report and writing content for Kom Chud Luek newspaper and website	
Bangkok Biz News reporter	News report and writing content for Bangkok Biz News newspaper and website	
The Nation technology Journalist and social media editor	News reporting for The Nation newspaper and website  Responsible on social media content and strategy	
The Nation graphic designer	Responsible of designing infographic and newspaper layout	
NOW26 News Editor	News direction for NOW26 (another TV channel of NMG)	
NOW26 Reporter	Reporting news, announcer of investigative news program on NOW26	

The units of analysis chosen for partial textual analysis in this study were the news programmes, news stories and social-media reports that were produced and published by journalists of the three case-study news organizations. They were examples of news production and content strategy mentioned by informants during interview sessions. Readers should be aware that this study did not conduct full-scale content analyses. Rather, partial textual analyses were aimed at shedding light on the relationship between platforms, the roles of informants in cross-media production processes and the way in which cross-media news is strategically distributed across multiple platforms, so that they could be identified and explored through my interviews and observations.

### **3.2.3 Data collection and analysis**

The main method of gathering research data will be semi-structured interviews, complemented by partial analysis of examples of news text mentioned by interviewees to cross-check the data, and observations on interview days.

#### **3.2.3.1 In-depth interviews**

In-depth interviews have been called ‘one of the most powerful methods’ in qualitative research because they allow investigators to ‘step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves’ (McCracken, 1988). In-depth interviews will enable a better understanding of cross-media strategy and workflow practices in the newsrooms via informants’ stories and discussions about their involvement in the process.

According to Fontana and Frey (2000), unstructured interviewing can provide a greater breadth of data than other types; they regard traditional unstructured interviews as ‘open-ended, ethnographic (in-depth) interviews’. I decided to adopt semi-structured interviews as my method of data gathering. Semi-structured interviews integrate the characteristics of both structured and unstructured interviews and can be expected to involve some characteristics of intensive interviewing, such as a smaller sample of respondents (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000). Semi-structured interviews are more flexible in the asking of questions, and fall more readily into a feeling of participation; of exchanging

information, knowledge and context, consistent with Mason's (2002) belief that 'relevant contexts are brought into focus so it effectively produces construction or reconstruction of knowledge'. During qualitative interviews, meanings and understandings flourish in the interaction between interviewee and researcher. This means that in the interview process, both participants can learn different aspects, exchange ideas and meet the challenges of pushing the interview information forward to meet the focal point of the study. My decision to adopt semi-structured, open-ended interviews to explore the responses of Thai journalists to cross-media journalism found regular rewards during interviews with editors and reporters. Sometimes we discussed narrative examples until both interviewee and researcher realized the core issues of cross-media challenges, obstacles and advantages.

A flexible questioning structure helps the researcher to generate more questions according to the responses of the interviewee, and this leads to an in-depth understanding of contexts in which perspectives and ideas are framed. Semi-structured and open-ended interviews allow questions about specific experiences and enable the interviewee to explain not only processes, but also his or her judgments of subjects or events, and this helps a researcher to connect informants to situations and subjects (Mason, 2002). Edwards and Holland (2013) also suggest that on some occasions, qualitative interviews have the power to encourage emotional dynamics between a researcher and the interviewee, which can be good for the production of knowledge. This supports the contention of Dearnley (2005), that the open nature of semi-structured interviews encourages 'depth and vitality, which help new concepts to emerge'.

As this research must glean insights into 'how' and 'why' newsrooms implement cross-media production and different storytelling styles – in the course of understanding their content strategies – semi-structured interviews are a suitable method for creating intimacy and allowing interviewees to talk and explore their own minds about issues. As qualitative interviewing is an active process in which the participants come to know others and themselves (Fontana and Frey, 2000), I prepared lists of open-ended questions solely as a guideline to help me focus on data that had to be collected. Other questions arose during the interviews, making them more like discussions, which helped interviewees to talk more freely about their decisions, obstacles, challenges, failures and successes. I allowed interviewees

to share their opinions, motivations and experiences, in line with the belief of Tracy (2013), that interviews are especially valuable for providing information and background on issues that cannot otherwise be observed or efficiently accessed.

I developed a list of open-ended questions for the in-depth interviews. These dealt with: cross-media journalism strategies, e.g. ‘For how many platforms/media channels does your newsroom produce one news story, to be used across all platforms?’ ‘What is the process of cross-media news production in your newsroom?’); changes in newsroom practices and culture, e.g., ‘What benefits have you experienced since you began working and distributing news across platforms?’; workflow processes, e.g. ‘who makes decisions on topics, issues and storytelling styles for single news items across platforms?’ ‘Is every news story produced across all platforms?’ ‘How is cross-media news planned and organized?’; storytelling strategies and design, e.g. ‘How does your newsroom repurpose content for each platform?’ ‘How is one story told across various media channels?’; and open discussions on how cross-media production effects the quality of journalism. Semi-structure interview was conducted with open-ended questions prepared before schedule dates (table 3.2 show translation of set of questions) and with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee.

**TABLE 3.2:** Lists of semi-structure interview questions

<b>Cross-media work practice:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is organisation convergence and cross-media policy?</li> <li>2. How policy deploy to practice in routine workflow? How each platform cooperate their work with other teams?</li> <li>3. What is the process of news gathering, production and distribution on each platform and across platforms?</li> <li>4. What is the role of your team to support news production process and multiplatform strategy of the organisation?</li> <li>5. What are factors of success and failure, obstacle, opportunity, challenge of cross-media journalism?</li> <li>6. Opinion on multi-skill strategy, how journalist and editor adapt to this policy and what is the results from the process?</li> <li>7. How organisation prepare journalists and staff towards convergence and cross-media strategy?</li> <li>8. What are results and consequences of cross-media journalism?</li> </ol>
<b>Content strategy and storytelling:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is policy and strategy on cross-media storytelling? How journalists and each platforms team implement it into practice in every news production workflow?</li> <li>2. What is the process of testing, developing, planning and designing content distribution and storytelling on each platform and across platforms? Remarks on decision making, obstacle, problem, challenge, opportunity, expectation and example of storytelling implemented and developed at news organisation.</li> <li>3. How you distribute and report news across platforms?</li> <li>4. What is your role on producing cross-media content? How you do it and how it affect your work practice?</li> <li>5. What are the results and consequence of cross-media storytelling?</li> </ol>

<b>Quality journalism:</b>
----------------------------

- |  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is quality of news? How can you define quality in today journalism?</li> <li>2. What are obstacle or challenge in achieve that quality journalism?</li> <li>3. How convergence and cross-media affect quality of journalism?</li> <li>4. What are errors the traditional media seems to be making when newsroom embracing multi-platform and multi-skilled strategy?</li> <li>5. What is your view on journalistic content produced in cross-media production process?</li> <li>6. How you evaluated your work in term of quality?</li> <li>7. What news organisation do to achieve mission of quality?</li> <li>8. What is your role, duty and skill to achieve quality expectation of organisation, yourself and society?</li> <li>9. What is feedback of audience on your news quality?</li> <li>10. What could be possible future scenarios of quality journalism and journalistic practice in your organisation and the whole industry?</li> </ol> |
|--|

The interviews lasted from 45 minutes to an hour and a half, with the average length being around an hour. They normally took place in the meeting room or the informant's closed-door office, allowing an uninterrupted conversation. However, there were times when interviews were disrupted by work-related telephone calls, but I was able to get the conversation back on track and continued with data collecting. During the interviews, the informants also showed samples of their work, related documents and audience-insight and feedback reports, which were fruitful for my understanding of what we discussed. I collected and sought copies of news stories and documents for further analysis.

The interviews were recorded on an mp3-recorder, transcribed word-for-word for the purpose of analysis, and then translated to English for quotes. The interviews were based on an interview guide containing a list of defined questions and follow-up questions were added as the interview proceeded. The questions were both cognitive (about factual circumstances, e.g., organisation, work tasks and

everyday routines) and evaluative (based on opinions towards cross-media practices and the quality of journalism).

### 3.2.3.2 Observation

To contextualize data from the semi-structured interviews, short, informal periods of observation were undertaken along with partial textual analysis of sample news stories. These data collection methods were intended to complement the main research method, and were conducted in a partial fashion solely to give context to the responses of interviewees. These were neither full scale nor primary methods of research in this study.

Because informants might want to ‘prove’ that their strategy and practice was working, their interview responses could be biased, for example referring only to perceived benefits and neglecting the obstacles. Opinions on the quality of journalism could come from the ideas and concepts of the individual, rather than arising from the real consequences of the practice. Every effort was made to design questions and conduct the interviews so that there would be minimal bias. I rechecked the workflow process via non-participant observation, in which the researcher remained an outside observer. I joined editorial meetings and sat in newsrooms to watch journalists, editors and staff at work during the days of my interviews with editors, so that I could directly observe what occurred during the routine practice of journalism. Informal observation helped me to see the news-production process clearly, and how decisions on news agendas and production were discussed and made.

Paterson (2016) suggested in *The Ethnography of Digital Journalism* that researchers should engage with the ethnographic sociology of news production to observe these processes and understand 'why' journalism is manufactured. I agree with him that an over-reliance on interviews poses risks, including falling into a trap of subjective interpretation of journalists' practice, so I employed an observation method to observe newsroom discussion and journalists' cooperation (or otherwise) with the new-media team. Also, I analyse news text to understand the context of news narrative construction. When I have monitored newsroom production, I was able to return several times to ask questions and observe work

practices, helping me to gather rich detail and to triangulate the comparison of data analysis.

As Gorman and Clayton (2005) suggested, the observations provided the opportunity for the researcher to gain ‘useful insights into unconscious behaviour’. It helped in understanding and interpreting attitudes and assessing the influence of strategic decisions on the process of cross-media production. During the interviews, respondents had given insightful information about workflow practices: observations at editorial meetings and during routine work in a dynamic multi-platform newsroom brought a sense of reality to the work practices. This confirmed the contention of Gorman and Clayton (2005) that a researcher can verify reality by watching what people actually do. In the study newsrooms, observation showed interaction and co-operation between different platform teams and discussions between them about story angles, product flow and narrative styles. It also provided evidence of influences that could either support or obstruct the achievement of quality in the process of cross-media news production and distribution.

Data were collected by note-taking about the processes that were performed, interaction between workers in different parts of the production process, technologies that supported this interaction, and decision-making processes. If situations were unclear and something needed to be explained in context, I went back to editors and journalists to ask contextual questions to clearly understand the observation data. Sometimes, editors showed documents related to various actions or gave examples and explanations of what they did. For example, the assignment editor at PPTV HD36 directed me to a notice board in the editorial meeting room so I could see how they discussed and planned the coverage of the big story of the day. New media teams also showed me how they worked, with insightful analytical data from social media and websites, which their newsrooms used to plan content. I presented myself clearly as a researcher who was willing to learn from their processes in order to draw a useful model of a cross-media newsroom that news organizations could implement in the future. As a result, journalists and editors of the three news organizations were quite open-minded, allowing me to follow their work routines and giving detailed explanations.

The two principal periods of observation in each of the three newsrooms were agreed after having made appointments for interviews and observation (as

listed in Table 3.1). I was not involved in the news-production processes. However, during my observations I discussed with interviewees their opinions on actions and decision-making and sought their self-reflections on facing, negotiating and attempting to overcome the constraints inherent in convergence and cross-media production. My observer role was clearly open; I presented myself as a researcher and both interviewees and newsroom staff were aware of me taking field notes. I ensured they understood the purpose of my presence and the objectives of my study. I experienced a high level of openness from reporters, desk editors and managing editors because they were eager to take part in any effort that sought solutions to the problems obstructing cross-media production. Most of the people I spoke to expressed interest in the study and were willing to discuss their everyday routines and share their opinions on cross-media production, relative opportunities and constraints affecting the news industry, and personal and institutional adaptations to change in newsrooms.

Prior to the observation process, I prepared semi-structured guidelines for my field notes to ensure that I gathered specific and essential data. The guidelines were developed from the research questions and were designed to relate to the interview questions, but with an emphasis on material actions, decision-making in real situations, and opinions that reflected on the cultural context of the news-making process. Silverman (2006) highlighted a number of different questions to be considered when conducting observations and writing field notes, so I followed this method and designed field-note guidelines to avoid taking too much time and ensuring that I kept strictly to the point of my investigations.

**TABLE 3.3:** semi-structured topics for field notes

During editorial meeting	<p>What are people discussing?</p> <p>How are they discussing these issues?</p> <p>Emotion, expression, negotiation</p> <p>Multiple platform strategy discussions</p> <p>Roles and contribution of each person</p> <p>Framing of debate, setting of agenda</p>
During routine work – news gathering and production process	<p>How, exactly, do they perform this news gathering process?</p> <p>When, where, why and how cooperation occurs.</p> <p>Constraints and problems that arise in the process: how these affect their work and how they overcome or solve them. Ask for opinions on facing constraints and overcoming them.</p> <p>Expressions used and the emotional atmosphere of the newsroom</p> <p>How is multiplatform content produced?</p> <p>How does each platform negotiate to meet its special needs and provide for tasks that require multiple skills?</p>
During routine work – news distribution process	<p>How is news content distributed across platforms?</p> <p>How are decisions related to content distribution negotiated, within the context of ratings and viewer/reader expectations?</p> <p>Reflections upon limitations, challenges, successes and product quality.</p>
End of the day	<p>Expressions used, emotions and reflections on the day-to-day processes in a cross-media newsroom</p>

Observation data provided empirical material that gave me an increased understanding of the complexity of cross-media news journalism and related aspects regarding how each newsroom, each team, and each individual journalist approached the process in practice. When observation data was used as a supplement to interview data, it helped to achieve fruitful analyses and to further my understanding of cross-media journalism within the context of daily work routines.

### 3.2.3.3 Textual analysis

In trying to avoid the trap of encountering bias when gathering journalists' interview data, I analysed story text to deconstruct and decode storytelling styles as individual stories were repurposed and used across various platforms. This method was used to cross-check factors of innovative narrative style, strategy and quality mentioned by informants during in-depth interviews.

According to Frey et al. (1999), textual analysis is a method used by communication researchers to describe and interpret the characteristics of a recorded or visual message. Qualitative text analysis is used to identify and analyse the narrative in specific messages to understand characteristics that link them to practice strategies in cross-media news production. In a 2007 study, Philo argued that textual analysis alone was incapable of revealing what had occurred and there was no way of understanding this until the journalist was consulted. However, when talking to journalists about their product and narrative style, researchers should also go back to textual analysis of examples of their work to search for links, as Philo (2007) also suggests that textual analysis should be used as part of studies of the total system of news production, news content and the process from which it is received. There are many factors—sources, news ratings, audience expectations, limitations in newsrooms and market pressures—that influence the news production process and understanding the relationship between practice and product is important in identifying cross-media strategies. Textual analysis was employed in this study as a supplementary method for understanding journalistic strategy.

I listed all examples of news coverage mentioned during the semi-structured interviews. Then, I searched news-archive databases and online platforms to gather data from those examples of news coverage. The relevant news output of traditional media was uploaded in digital form, for example, video clips from Youtube and pdf files of newspaper stories from news clipping services. Online materials were accessed from Facebook, Twitter and websites. When I could not find some new stories from these sources I asked the journalists involved for copies and they were eager to support me with more material. Tracy (2012) point out that the use of multiple methods to explore research subjects enables a researcher to gain

information from different kinds of media products and people involved. This contributes to the interpretation of research findings, which broadens the understanding of cross-media journalism in each newsroom.

I gathered five examples of news coverage from each newsroom, which mentioned by interviewees during interviews and observation. The unit of analysis was individual news stories that were produced and published by each newsroom. The stories were created across platforms, meaning that I analysed the media text and compared the narratives used in presenting one story across platforms. In this way I was able to identify storytelling techniques and narrative flows across platforms. As this study focuses on how news content travels across media and how stories are told, it was necessary to explain and identify the distribution process, news angles and narrative elements used to tell the stories. After close analysis of the visual, sound and text elements used to tell stories, I was able to summarize the general ideas of storytelling across platforms and specifically some unique techniques discovered among the media samples.

The study used analysis of news text as a supplement to interview data, especially as a prompt to discover issues worthy of questioning. These analyses focused mainly on four issues, in order to understand content strategies resulting from cross-media work practices. (1) The flow of content: how news content is produced and distributed across platforms; (2) The function of communicating the messages and issues of news content in multiple-platform distribution (this was also compared with interview data to reveal the reasons behind decisions to use certain types of content on different platforms); (3) To discover how an individual news story was expanded across platforms; and (4) To compare the narrative styles of different platforms. This study did not conduct full-scale analyses of large amounts of news text published over time. Rather, the analyses involved samples of cross-media text that were purposely selected from the cross-media content that was discussed during interviews and seen during observations, to cross-check between data sets and to strengthen the aspect of context in searching for meanings in the production and distribution processes.

During second period of newsroom visit, I went back to interviewees to ask further questions on storytelling styles and content strategies across platforms to clarify my findings from analysis of the news coverage, and to ask ‘how’ and ‘why’

journalists think as they do when writing news stories. Through analysis of both storytelling styles and interview data about cross-media production, conclusions were able to be drawn about models for content strategy and cross-media approaches to news production in the context of Thai media newsrooms. This helped me when challenging interviewees on ‘quality of journalism’ issues. I asked them about their coverage and their expectations of achieving high-quality journalism, and this really opened up discussions in advantageous ways. The journalists and editors were given opportunities to reflect on the quality of their work and both the opportunities afforded and the constraints imposed on their work routines by convergence factors.

### 3.2.3.3 Data analysis

Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) both agree that data collection and analysis should occur simultaneously. Merriam also suggests that analysis – involving the consolidation, reduction and interpretation of data – becomes more intensive as the study progresses. Case study research also aims for generalization of theories, or, as Yin (2009) called it, ‘analytical generalization’.

The collection of case study data from multiple sources is intended to enable data triangulation during analysis. Stake (1995) describes two strategies for case study analysis: categorical aggregation and direct interpretation. In this study, data were categorized according to cross-media production workflow, cross-media storytelling and opinions towards quality journalism. Data analysis sought to find patterns of cross-media content strategy in Thai newsrooms and to understand relationships between journalistic workflow, the design of storytelling styles and the quality of journalism. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) explain that categories of data are created in order to define and generalize common elements and to perceive particular relationships or relations between particular topics and issues. I established patterns that enabled me to draw models of each organisation’s cross-media strategy, and I used these to generate ideas that were thoroughly analysed both during and after the collection of data. I did some coding of similarities and areas of uniqueness that I found in cross-media production and storytelling that helped to define types of cross-media content and strategies related to the quality

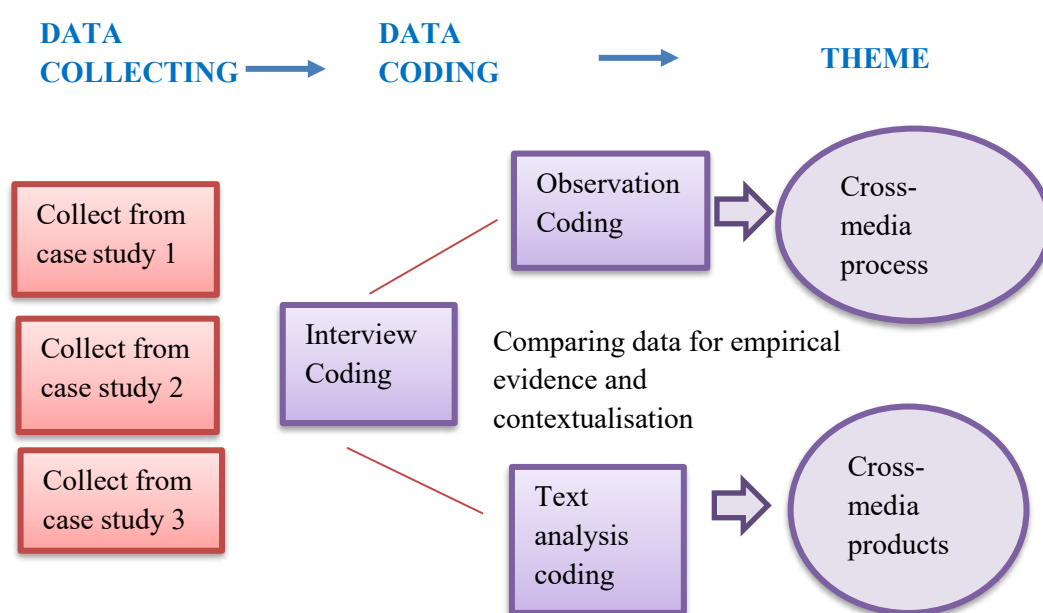
of journalism. This also helped to give me a clear picture of the data and enabled the drawing of meaningful conceptual models from the case studies.

The interview transcripts, field notes and relevant media texts were subjected to qualitative thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006). All of the data were read several times to gain familiarity and then topics were identified into processes, forms and storytelling strategies of particular media platforms. Assembling tables and charts assisted with clustering of concepts to data mapping, discussions and arguments on cross-media production, storytelling styles and the quality of journalism. My efforts were focused on drawing comparisons between the three cases, so similarities and unique practices were identified and grouped to conceptualize ideas.

The use of multiple sources of evidence helped to build validity during the collection of data. Throughout the data collection process I attempted to cross-check between interview data and news coverage to recognize all aspects of the process and its results. I avoided both confusion of data and giving emphasis to categorized data, so as to reinforce the reliability of the data. During analysis, I built explanations from the data to validate the result by grouping it into work practice process and content strategy or narrative and distribution flow. This helped me to draw a model which, when presented to interviewees and informants, they confirmed and accepted. The triangulation of data during collection and analysis was intended to validate it, and to enable the creation of a conceptual cross-media model from the results that was practical and able to be adopted by news organizations in Thailand. The challenge of this study is that newsrooms chosen as case studies were developing and experimenting new narrative so it strategy change from times to times. I overcome this challenge by keeping close contact with all interviewees and go back to confirm and update their new experiment and confirm the result with them. When my analysis found fundamental of work practice and content strategy of each case studies, I found that even though they experimented new narrative and ideas of content, they still follow in the fundamental model.

Figure 3.2 shows how data were collected and analysed simultaneously throughout the research process. When collecting data from the three case studies, I examined and categorised it into models of cross-media practice and storytelling styles for each case study. I returned to the data-collecting process from time to

time to gather more evidence, after which I revised the models. After finalizing the models for each of the case studies, the data were analysed again by employing cross-case analysis and an explanation-building conceptual approach. This compared the three case studies in order to find particular phenomena in cross-media practice and content strategy that bore a relationship to the quality of journalism.




**FIGURE 3.2:** Process of data analysis.


The data collected through interviews, observations and text analysis were coded within two themes: cross-media process and cross-media product. Observation data were coded according to cross-media processes to supplement interview data about work practices and strategy; and text analysis was coded in terms of cross-media product, to supplement interview data about content strategy.

When I transcribed the interview data, I highlighted information according to code guidelines, categorizing data into themes for inductive analysis. Data were sorted into comparative categories of ‘facing constraint’ and ‘overcoming constrain’, to systematically analyse patterns emerging from cross-media journalism and movement towards higher quality.

**TABLE 3.4:** Work practice strategy: Cross-media process coding and themes

<b>Work practice strategy: Cross-media process coding</b>		
<b>Descriptive details</b>	<b>Facing constrains</b>	<b>Overcome Constrains</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of workflow</li> <li>• Policy VS Implementation</li> <li>• Cooperation with other teams</li> <li>• Role in newsroom</li> <li>• Role in cross-media production</li> <li>• Multi-skilled VS specialisation</li> <li>• Reporting news across platforms</li> <li>• Opinion on cross-media process (success, challenge, factor, obstacle)</li> <li>• Why newsroom should continue on cross-media? How?</li> <li>• Individual effect from cross-media process</li> </ul>	<p>Reflection on what are problems, concerns they are facing throughout process</p>	<p>Newsroom policy</p> <p>Individual adaptation</p> <p>Reflection of what they overcome constrains</p>
		
<b>Themes for pattern conclusion</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Co-operation and integrated workflow strategy</li> <li>2. Multiple platform workflow strategy</li> <li>3. Multi-skilled and specialisation skills strategy in work practice</li> <li>4. Defining quality of work practice and how to achieve it</li> </ol>		

**TABLE 3.5:** Content strategy: Cross-media product coding and themes

<b>Content strategy: Cross-media product coding</b>		
<b>Descriptive details</b>	<b>Facing constrains</b>	<b>Overcome Constrains</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content distribution flow across platform</li> <li>• Journalists distribute news across platform</li> <li>• Roles in newsroom on content planning, production and distribution</li> <li>• Reason and decision making on content flow</li> <li>• Function multiple content across platform</li> <li>• Narrative style of each platform</li> <li>• Narrative decision, innovation on narrative</li> <li>• Definition of content quality</li> <li>• Consequence of content from cross-media production and distribution process</li> </ul>	<p>Reflection on what are problems, concerns they are facing throughout process</p>	<p>Newsroom policy</p> <p>Individual adaptation</p> <p>Reflection of what they overcome constrains</p>
		
<b>Themes for pattern conclusion</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distribution strategy</li> <li>2. Integrated narrative across platforms</li> <li>3. Types or function of cross-media content</li> <li>4. Define quality of content and how to achieve it</li> </ol>		

The cross-case analysis provided data sets of similarities and differences between the three cases. When operating in the same media environment that drives news organisations to adapt convergence and a cross-media strategy, internal factors within each case generated both similar approaches and different strategies. After drawing a model of each case study, I developed the data sets to learn deeply from the three cases. Similarity and uniqueness strategies were compared and analysed and led to a conclusion model. In this thesis, my findings are presented through narratives that reveal the actuality of cross-media journalism, with emphasis on various cross-media practices, both explicit and tacit, in the different newsrooms. Importantly, in developing the thesis structure and my arguments, I have drawn on a range of relevant theories and literature on convergence, cross-media production and journalism values to discuss both the opportunities for upholding high standards of journalism, and the threats that might diminish those standards in the evolving environment of media convergence.

### **3.2.4 Methodological challenges and limitations**

This study strives to better understand work practices and content strategies that amounted to social actions within relationships and cooperation between groups of people. I am aware that interview data alone can lead to ‘attitudinal fallacy’, which led Jerolmack and Khan (2014) to argue that there were problematic issues of ‘attitude-behaviour consistence’ in verbal data, and that it could not be assumed that self-reporting was predictive of accurate action because of individual bias. They explained that verbal data from interviews was a good way to understand ‘why’ people take action, but it was limited in that it analysed what individuals ‘say they think they do’. To really understand social action one has to see what action actually takes place in a real situation, and ethnographic observation can systematically examine these actions and add empirical evidence to help to understand them in relationship with others in real situations. Hammersley and Gomm (2008) wrote that researchers should remember that there was a chance that some interviewees would prepare to reveal their perceptions of events and opinions

in a way that they thought the interviewer wanted. This agreed with an argument made by Walford (2007), that interviews alone were an insufficient form of data for studying social life. However, despite the limitations and problematic issue of verbal data, interviews remain a powerful way of gaining insights into interviewees' perceptions. Ho (2006) has suggested that the method could go hand-in-hand with other methods, such as using observation as a supplement to interviews, allowing researchers to investigate both the external behaviour and internal beliefs of participants.

Collection of data for this study was therefore divided into two phases: information gathered via in-depth interviews followed by observations of work practices and follow-up questions to clarify issues about the cross-media production process and decision making, and to seek opinions about the process. These two data sets were analysed in a comparative manner in order to understand actual actions and the context in which actions were taken in a real situation. The open-ended interviews avoided the use of leading questions; my role as a researcher was to remain a listener, to allow respondents to consider issues and express their thoughts. I also took field notes on newsroom observation visits, so I could compare the two sets of data.

When choosing the methodology for this study, a clear challenge was the time limitation. I could spend only period of 2 weeks each time in newsrooms that had complex team structures and cooperation levels. Data from observation and text analysis was therefore more of a support for planning, performing and analysing the interviews. Weighing the relationship between 'meaning' levels, resulting from the interview data, and 'action' levels, drawn from observation and text analysis (Erdal, 2009), this study was able to focus on gaining access to the perceived, self-reported meanings behind decision making and journalistic practice in cross-media news production, to gain fresh insights into 'why' and 'how' they actually do it. Thus, I designed the research methodology to gather data on these relationships and to cross-check three data sets when searching for meanings and solutions to the affordances and constraints besetting cross-media journalism in convergent newsrooms.

This study has not involved interviews with people who lost newsroom jobs because of convergence, which I have acknowledged above may be seen as a

limitation. However, it was my intention, upon entering the newsrooms, to discover the way in which journalists adapted to the changes brought about by convergence so as not to lose their jobs. Thus, my focus remained on the newsrooms and with journalists who were struggling to find ways through the convergence environment in newsrooms, particularly those who had found ways to balance their professional values with heavy workloads, constraints from the need for new levels of cooperation, the benefits and tribulations of multi-tasking, and economic pressures. Having followed news and information about lay-offs and job losses at news organisations, these issues were put to interviewees. Two of the case-study news organizations – *Thairath* and Nation Multimedia Group – had seen journalists lose their jobs in ‘early retirement schemes’. I went back to the editors and asked questions about the situation. I also asked journalists how they made the decision to stay in newsrooms, how their journalistic practices had been affected, and how they had coped with the situation. Although this study does not provide a complete picture of the downsides of convergence for those affected by losing their jobs, I am nevertheless aware of how convergence can weigh on journalism, whether jobs are lost or retained (and on what terms), and during interviews and observation have tried to find answers to how this difficult time was navigated by those who continued with the news organization in question. Having PPTVHD36 – a newly established organization born in the convergence environment – has helped to shed light on how journalism and newsroom direction can continue in the digital era. The newsroom team was formed under the cross-media concept and most of its editors and senior journalists came from long-established news organizations. The lessons they have learned give another level of valuable insights into the ways the constraints of convergence have been negotiated, and why they matter.

One of the challenges of data gathering was that some interviewees needed to be careful about what they said, so as not to find themselves in trouble with their managers. Sometimes they also asked me to evaluate their work. I set my position clearly, that I would not be involved in that kind of discussion. Instead, I asked different questions that engaged these people in a discussion that further revealed their work processes, decision making, emotions and feelings towards the changing practice of journalism.

Another challenge was studying cooperation between multiple platforms in different places served by a complex newsroom when much of the communication between editors and reporters took place via the smart-phone LINE application. I had to ask questions about what and how they communicated, and during observations I also took note of how they used the application to communicate and make decisions. Knowing the key persons involved in those LINE discussions and interviewing them about the process of news production and decision making produced more useful data for analysis than might have been gained from simple observation of the action unfolding before me.

This Chapter outlined how the research was conducted, illustrating the process used to select case studies, the method used to collect data as well as the approach that was used in analysing data. The aim of this study was to understand newsroom cross-media production and content distribution strategy to improve quality of work practice under pressure of convergence constraints and limitations.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Discussion of cross-media news production and quality of journalism**

Chapter four shows result from in-depth interview with editors and journalists reflecting on individual professional goals and definition of quality journalism. A conceptual framework from a literature review on ethics, professional values, and quality criteria in journalism created the structure for data discussion in this chapter. Results show the self-reflections of editors and journalists in two perspectives:

1) Individual's reflections on problems, constraints and obstacles caused by the media-convergence process acting against their motivation to produce quality journalism. Interviewees reflected on professional values, constraints, ethical issues, business forces and changing relationships with audiences. The latter included social-media trends and the influence of social-media conversations on news agendas, with audiences becoming 'prosumers' (Hernández-Serrano et al, 2017), in that they have their own space in which to impart information on what they know within special areas of interest, and cooperation between citizens and professional journalists. In the Thai news-media context, the shift of audience personalization and news-consumption habits towards social media is forcing journalists to struggle through smart-phone and computer algorithms and resist temptations to sensationalize at the breakneck pace of 24/7 internet journalism (Srisaracam and Pornwasin , 2012). The setting of daily news agendas is shifting to what audiences want to know, with journalists monitoring and reporting social-media conversations of interest, sometimes without verifying their accuracy or adding more details. In addition, new and alternative sources of information from citizen journalists and online content providers, especially on Facebook pages, are providing specialized reports and opinions on different issues, making audiences less dependent on information provided by mainstream and professional journalists (Allan, 2013, Srisaracam, 2017; Noor, 2017). These factors influence decision-making in newsrooms torn between quality of journalistic practice and popularity

of news content, in the battle to gain viewership and engagement. In the era of media convergence, these issues are among the biggest challenges for professional journalists, who must find a balance and strive for quality, or lose credibility, even as their changing environment continues to evolve at a rapid pace.

2) Journalists' ad hoc evaluation of news events and judgment of the quality of journalism under the extraordinary pressures of routine convergence journalism and their motivation to maintain high quality in their reporting processes, including news gathering, production and distribution. All interviewees agreed that to achieve quality was to be able to use multiple platforms effectively, to (a) overcome ethical tensions with responsibility; (b) provide reliable, accurate facts with meaningful context; (c) strike up significant audience interest and provide relevant information to reach, engage and enlighten people; and (d) function as a watchdog of the public interest: to make issues known and to use their power to good effect in raising awareness and stimulating action for solutions and change. These are the common goals to which they strive, to overcome current imbalances in the media environment and achieve sustainable, reliable journalism. This contributes to discussion on the quality of news and journalism from the perspective of different news cultures and sociological inputs. Discussion also shows how these judgements, made under pressure of cross-media news production, relate to quality expectations detailed in previous literature. In response to goals and constraints, they reflect upon opportunities to achieve quality in the process of cross-media journalism and how sorely they want to achieve high-quality work practices and journalistic output. This section also illustrates examples of how interviewees in this study see the opportunity to navigate their way through the negative problems and downsides of media convergence, and how they will try to ensure that the quality of reporting is not compromised.

The literature review in Chapter Two helped to introduce a framework for discussion and comparison of existing academic perspectives on journalistic quality, on the one hand, and judgements of quality made by journalists in this study (while reflecting on their own journalistic practices), on the other. An important point suggested by previous studies is the difficulties associated with maintaining, let alone improving quality in relation to journalists' goals of striving towards excellence. They work amid institutional tensions, many of which threaten to

compromise professional core values. In practice, the measure of quality should be tempered by consideration of balancing investments of time and resources in the process of producing news content under different circumstances; the credibility and reliability of verification processes; the participation of the audience, so that it is not treated as passive; the involvement of new technologies to effectively support news production; and cognizance taken of the watchdog role, to encourage debate and set agendas for public deliberation. The production of news content that satisfies a criterion of ‘social quality’ will make news crucial for the citizenry; news that influences changes in communities; news with context that will properly inform people; news that is reliable and relevant; and news that has diverse sources, attractive storytelling and outlets and coverage to reach different levels of people in communities (Picard, 2000; Breit, 2004; Bogart, 2004; Scheuer, 2008; Meyer, 2010; McQuail, 2010; Lacy and Rosenstiel, 2015)

This chapter serves as a framework for discussion and gives criteria for a definition of quality according to the perceptions and motivations of journalists. By focusing on aspects of quality as the ‘goals of journalists’, it will show how journalists working in cross-media production understand quality, and also seek to evaluate the wider significance of their decision-making for this thesis’s enquiry.

#### **4.1 Journalists’ reflections on problems, constraints and obstacles arising from the process of convergence, and how these affect the achievement of quality journalism**

Journalists in this study reflected upon their motivations and what they sought to overcome in achieving their goals in journalistic practice. It was in this context that they pondered the nature of quality journalism. They all believed their professional values could create an impact on society, and that people could rely on their work to make sense of issues of relevance to them. However, there is much debate about how best to define what counts as high quality journalism. For example, a study entitled *What is Quality Journalism and How can it be Saved* (Vehkoo, 2010) finds different definitions and values for the elusive commodity. Some defer to the public view on how well the media perform in informing, educating and entertaining their audiences. Others point out that many factors force

and shape the concept of quality so that it means different things to different organizations. These include various elements aiming to achieve the social, political and cultural goals ascribed to journalism in democratic societies (Picard, 2000).

Some scholars propose that the quality of journalism can be measured by the way in which a journalist goes about his or her job (Picard, 2000). The expenditure of time and resources and the dedication with which they gather information, attend staff meetings, discussions and training, obtain background material and knowledge and produce an end product are all activities believed to create work of higher quality. Some stress that quality in journalism is best seen in an end product that is accurate and truthful, delivered with credibility in a context encouraging democratic and civil activities to benefit society (Meyer, 2010). In his book *The Vanishing Newspaper*, Philip Meyer says that quality journalism can drive growth in circulation and profitability, if news organizations can deliver products that influence important aspects of community life. Journalism gains credibility and influence by being a trusted source of news, analysis and investigative reporting of public affairs. Meyer goes on to say that quality journalism involves influence in local communities, accuracy in reporting and readability. He also stresses the importance of editing. This echoes the principle of truth in journalism stated by Scheuer (2008), who writes that truth is a necessary precondition of quality journalism, and products resulting from good journalism should be able to answer far more than just “who, when, what and where”, but should also be able to put news into context by explaining “how” and “why”. Thus, in the following, the focus is on journalist’s motivation to adhere to professional values and their criteria identification of work practice quality and content quality. The results show journalists’ ability to sense quality journalism under challenge of convergence media environment and cross-media constraints and how they want to react to these factors in practice.

To be able to draw out what journalists in this study identify as the quality criteria applying to both journalistic practice and the content arising from the process, I started by asking them to reflect on problems, constraints and obstacles caused by the process of convergence in their quest for achievement of quality. Editors in all three newsrooms expressed the same feelings of tension created by

the pressures of business survival in times of economic slowdown. They said these pressures were forcing them to make choices between newsworthy items with a potential impact on society and human-interest stories capable of generating more views, clicks and television ratings. In their eyes, the reality of editorial practice was the need to face frustrating pressures and an adversarial sentiment from the marketing and business side of the company, which wanted only to reach audiences and build viewership and readership so as to make more money to sustain the company's profitability.

The organization is expected to raise money from its digital platforms, and the marketing and business units closely monitor traffic to the website. They report the numbers to news teams with the suggestion that viewership could be increased. I admitted that we had to follow the sensational leads of stories on social media, but that journalists tried to add context and explanation from various sources. We published a sensational human-interest piece on the website to gain attention to the issue, and followed up with a few more pieces adding context and explanation, with different angles. (*Thairath's* online editor)

. PPTV HD36's Website Editor and *Komchadluek's* Online Editor also mentioned the same frustration: that the ability of online news to attract readers was bringing pressure to bear on news teams to deal with headlines, photographs, language and story selections that were commonly labelled 'clickbait'. Their compromise, when they felt obliged to publish sensational news, was adding details and publishing follow-up stories that achieved overall balance and context. The big challenge is unchanged: how do they get people to read contextualised and carefully explained stories rather than sensational ones?

When the news editors and website editors from the three study newsrooms explain their role of producing news across platforms, they say they must weigh carefully their decisions on social media and breaking news according to reports from the field. They accept that they cannot ignore dramatic reports that follow the

emotional content of a story because that is what people are interested in seeing. However, they insist that they try to find different aspects to explain that emotional situation in a meaningful context, so that the story is useful in the lives of the audience. Nevertheless, from time to time stories are led with emotional and misleading headlines because the news teams are grasping at ways to attract attention, reach people and engage them in the story. *Thairath's* online assignment editor also spoke of the difficulty of making decisions to balance news values (impacts on society) and human interest fascination. He accepted that organizations had to run with both – when they could reach people – in order to survive in business.

I just try to encourage discussion with my team, to expand a dramatized story into a special report, explaining different aspects and providing different sources to encourage diversity and to give a voice to as many people as possible, who are related to, or effected by, the story. (Online assignment editor, *Thairath Online*)

The practice of reaching people to provide diversity in a story's coverage, mentioned by *Thairath's* Online Assignment Editor, corresponds with an aspect of quality in news highlighted by Lacy and Rosenstiel (2015). They suggested diversity included the number or range of news sources and viewpoints; the use of technology to be creative in telling a story; and the ability of a publication to broaden its appeal with a variety of coverage and content in order to reach different groups of people. The interview testimony from the editors of the three studied newsrooms makes clear they strive to add context to sensational stories by publishing multiple follow-up stories, thereby suggesting that they try to help 'well-informed' readers to understand the issues involved. Scheuer (2008), Vehkoo (2010) and McQuail (2010) see this as one criterion of quality in news.

The Editor in Chief of PPTV HD36 also explained the rationale behind the ways they handle sensational content in light of perceived audience preferences for dramatic news. This entails choosing the best angles to a story, furthering audience understanding, and finding solutions to social issues related to the news story.

Most sensational stories have a social problem behind it and if the newsroom can direct understanding to the point of solving problem and changing system or policy, sensational content can lead to hard news coverage or even investigative journalism. However, some unethical material such as violent and sexual clips should not be used in the report at all.

By way of further example, an evening news talk programme on PPTV HD36 tries to expand human-interest stories and issues “buzzing” on the Internet by explaining the causes of incidents; how different people related to the stories think problems can be solved; providing context so stories can be better understood; giving voice to different angles; and looking at any ensuing social issues at a policy level. The programme has been attracting viewers and is gaining in the ratings because it presents current affairs stories that attract popular interest by providing more context to the issues involved. At the beginning of 2017, PPTV HD 36’s news talk programme was opposed by a show called ‘The Masked Singer’ in the same time slot on another channel. The opposing show attracted a big audience and gained the highest rating, but it didn’t draw viewers away from PPTV HD36. The channel’s Editor-in-Chief commented: “Somehow, it proves that good stories that connect to people can still attract an audience.”

PPTV HD36 is a recently established channel and its newsroom policy is supported by investors wishing to build a reputation for reliable news reporting with high ethical standards and an ability to inform and educate the audience. The achievement of quality in these terms has become the declared goal of the news team. Despite this, interviewees admitted that following leads and “social buzz” on social media to attract viewers is irresistible. Assignment Editor, PPTV HD36 pointed out that people consume information online, they talk about it and they want to know more, so a newsroom’s responsibility is to give them wider aspects of the issues:

We can plan ways of storytelling. We can choose to ignore unethical material from the first process of news gathering. For example, at the scene of a suicide the cameraman can choose not to film it, or film another angle, or another subject, to represent the situation. User-generated content can be used in news, but only on very few occasions and only when we haven't got material gathered by our own reporters and photographers. As an editor, I watch what they report on social media, and when it's wrong I give them feedback. It's learning by doing and turning it into common sense. (Assignment Editor, PPTV HD36).

PPTV HD36 assignment editor also suggests that the newsroom can stay firm and make decisions on ethical issues. To maintain the quality of their work, journalists must plan, choose and create narratives that explain the issues in a story beyond the simple boundaries of human interest. Making these decisions is part of the editorial process. However, the principals involved are part of training and are "built in" to journalists, so that when they are doing cross-platform content, they can exercise their own judgment when gathering, producing and distributing content.

Another constraint challenging the quality of work practices is the weight of the multiplatform workload and competition with online content providers, as multi-skilled journalists are expected to deliver the news immediately and in person, without any outside assistance, restraint or wise counsel. The workload imposed on journalists in the daily effort to serve multiple platforms also raises doubts about their ability to perform a job dedicated to in-depth news gathering and investigative journalism. Their problem is how they will get through the difficulty of the current economic slowdown and survive in business while at the same time swinging all their efforts and resources behind the defence of quality journalism. In a candid reflection upon their burdensome workload, they admit that lack of time and the demands of cross-media production sometimes force them into the trap of relying too heavily on user-generated content.

A Nation Multimedia Group reporter explained that he had to be trained to adapt to the needs of a new platform, but he saw it as an opportunity for his journalistic work to reach different audiences as a result. However, time management was sometimes difficult because he lost opportunities to gather exclusive content on aspects of stories that would have taken time to develop. This agreed with responses from a PPTV HD36 reporter, who pointed out that investigative journalism required the investment of time and money, when journalists were constantly facing competition from social-media content. However, she added that the duty of verification was even more important these days, and if journalists were able to verify and give reliable facts and explanations, they would be giving better quality news coverage to their audiences.

We monitor social media and follow the leads on what people are interested in jumping into conversation. Most of them are violence and emotional conflict story. I admit that sometime journalists were misleading by those information too, speed of internet reporting cause us less time to verify thoroughly. We have lesson-learnt from the mistake. We are finding ways to verify and provide information for people to make sense of what happen. Although sometime it's not easy to cope with overload of information by field journalist alone. (PPTV HD36 reporter)

The convergent and cross-media news environment also creates debate about whether the ethical guidelines for one platform can apply to another, while competition on social media complicates judgments between traditional values and quality definitions on one hand and audience satisfaction and numbers of viewers on the other. When asked how they knew that they had achieved high quality, or had failed to achieve it, journalists said audience feedback showed that they were not yet achieving the kind of quality that met the expectations of society. Editors of the three news organisation in this study explained that most complaints about ethical issues and professionalism in Thai news media concern the effects of “speed reporting” on accuracy and credibility, and the neglect of investigative journalism

in order to exploit user-generated content or become involved with people “buzzing” on social media to catch up with issues. News reporting on websites, social-media platforms and television news programmes has been criticized for its lack of taste because of the tendency by news media to rely on dramatic, emotional and violent material to gain clicks and viewers. Perhaps the most important of complaints questions whether news-media companies offer enough angles on news stories to help the public understand social issues, despite the fact that these companies have many platforms and channels with which to do this. These criticisms reflect society’s expectations of credibility and social responsibility in journalism, and the fact that such criticisms are made to show that journalism in Thailand is losing public faith because its social impact is clearly diminishing.

Journalists argue to the contrary; that they are struggling with lower demand for consumption of news content, and this affects their revenue. They have to find ways to attract audiences and they claim that audiences prefer news with more dramatic elements rather than analytical long-form and hard news. News organizations have had to cut costs, lay off staff and compete with social media and other content providers. They admit that this has reduced their capacity for investigative journalism of a kind that get someone related to the story to take action to solve the problem. However, they say they are finding ways to fight back to reassert the core values of journalism.

In reality, the problem of imperfect quality in news production boils down to differences in values and levels of understanding among cross-media journalists, including editorial staff. Some editors employ a solid code of conduct among their journalists and apply it across all of their platforms, especially in relation of judgments of news value and the critical need for verification. Others, to the contrary, are fond of dramatic views and comments on issues of human interest and, if needs be, will overlook ethical codes of conduct. For example, there are still regular news items in newspapers and on news websites and social-media platforms about weird animals, plants or situations, from which easily impressed viewers or readers may elicit “hidden” lottery or lotto numbers. Such items are not newsworthy; they offer no benefits to society and instead encourage people to gamble. Yet this content is still produced by news outlets twice a month in the run-up to Thailand’s national lottery draws. The perpetrators claim with confidence that

it attracts viewers and readers and engages with audiences, and as long as people want it, news outlets will continue to serve their needs. This is an example of the double-edged sword in the news-production industry: the blurred line between what people want and what they should be given by mainstream news media.

The advent of the cross-media concept has made it more difficult to make decisions and exercise quality judgments throughout the news-production process. The most important factor that could encourage the practice of high-quality journalism would be policies from the owners and investors of news organizations giving priority to support for such ideals over their obsessive battle for viewer ratings and revenue.

Policy is important; that PPTV HD36 is not running just for short-term ratings, but to become a trustworthy news programme in the long-term. The top-management team has to understand and give freedom of judgment to the editorial news team. In a few years from now, there will be too much information flowing across platforms, and people will need reliable news media to verify facts, explain issues and educate society. PPTV comprises a young-generation team that aims to set high standards of journalism; to compete with quality and not only quantity. We believe that journalism can build a taste for news in society and people will give us feedback and help by building good taste in news consumption. At that point, PPTV will have strength in journalism and become the choice of the people. (Editor-in-Chief, PPTV HD36)

However, not all news organizations have a solid policy giving freedom of judgment to newsrooms. Rating sheets, viewers, circulation and advertising revenue force mixed decisions in the search for a balance between the quality of news content and business competitiveness. Nevertheless, the commonly accepted essence of this “quality” remains unshaken: it is defined as social responsibility and influence that is capable of driving social change.

Cross-media [production] is a designed process and every organisation should find ways to balance technology, audiences and the value of journalism to society. Although we have to survive in a commercial world, we can't throw away the idealistic belief that journalism can make a better society. Policy should focus on this mission. Is it effectively done? Have we found a solution to delivering quality journalism while being economically successful? No. We are struggling to find ways. But re-organization, adapting policy, building a new culture in the company and designing the process of news production will enable us to respond to the expectations people have of journalism. In this convergent environment, the quality of journalism should be able to drive change. (Chairperson, Nation Multimedia Group).

As mentioned above, cross-media strategy is a double-edged sword. If a company policy-maker emphasizes the need to reach wider audiences and gain ratings, then the quality of content may fail. However, if policy encourages ways of integrating the needs of different platforms in order to report well-rounded stories, then high-quality content is likely to follow.

However, some journalists are less than confident that this will happen. In reflecting upon the challenges and constraints arising from convergence and cross-media journalism, some journalists suggested in interviews that the quality issue could eventually damage news organizations, because of problems in work practices generated by editorial decision-makers who couldn't find a way to deal with the immediacy of online media, could not imagine ways of reaching and engaging people beyond the use of sensational content, and were ultimately unable to raise the professional role of journalism to serve the public interest. Journalists say they need procedural systems, time management and predictable workflows so that they can achieve a balance between intensive demands for a multi-skilled approach to multi-platform performance, all with professional expertise, and the need to achieve quality in news gathering, verification, production and distribution.

The performance of their jobs, which requires them to meet ethical guidelines accepted by both their professional association and society, begins and ends with the quality of work practices. Only in this way, they felt, can the public be persuaded to rely upon the work and word of journalism.

Concerns were also expressed about storytelling styles that try too hard to reach and engage with audiences, so much so that they dramatize and sensationalize information, running the risk of generating confusion and conflict. Editors, newsroom staff and journalists in the field all emphasized the belief that the quality of content depended upon its credibility, accuracy and usefulness to the audience. Accordingly, if no answers are found to the challenges and constraints arising from convergence and cross-media news production, journalists in this study warned of a consequential outcome that they called ‘journalism without quality’. They said that simply carrying on, without finding solutions to the problems, would place professional journalism in Thailand at risk of losing the public’s faith in its credibility.

## **4.2 Journalists’ goals of journalistic practices quality**

Informants in this study defined quality as the process by which they could achieve professional values in work practices and content strategies related to four matters: (1) overcoming ethical tensions with responsibility; (2) providing reliable, accurate facts with meaningful context; (3) generating significant interest and relevant information in order to reach, engage and inform people; and (4) performing the role of a watchdog in the public interest: making issues known and using professional power effectively to raise awareness and stimulate action for generating solutions and societal change.

**4.2.1 Overcoming ethical tensions with responsibility** refers to pressures between the norms of traditional journalism – accuracy, pre-publication verification, balance, impartiality and diversity – and online journalism’s culture of immediacy, transparency, partiality, non-professional journalism and post-publishing correction (Ward, 2013). Most news organizations in Thailand have their own codes of conduct, as guidelines for how journalists should do their work. Professional journalists’ associations also espouse ethical guidelines for their

members to follow. Quality journalism takes time to build as an organizational culture through the sharing of values. It takes a long time to fight through the love of drama and the temptation to boost views and ratings to prove a reputation for quality. However, if an organization can be firm in its demand for quality throughout the cross-media production process, it can strengthen its brand reputation and gain audience trust.

Apart from some mistakes and unethical issues occurring from time to time in this learning-curve period, they see the opportunity to be better journalists by working in cross-media production – as long as the process and policies are well-planned. Now26 reporter (one of NMG television channel) explained that journalists can develop stories across media by digging into issues at greater depth and constantly engaging audiences to issues. Cross-media is a model responding to changes in news consumption, so journalists are able to communicate issues and tell more angles to a story. Quality is defined when journalists are able to explain issues and audiences can rely on us for information.

#### **4.2.2 Providing reliable, accurate facts with meaningful context**

The supervisor of reporters at *PPTV HD36* supports the belief that an ability to explain issues to society is indicative of quality journalism. He says the attributes of reliability, obtaining information from verified sources, and an ability to explain issues so that they are understood, are needed more than ever these days because of the changing media landscape and rapid information flows via the Internet. Journalists and their newsrooms seek information and provide it to audiences across platforms by telling stories in a way that appeals to them. Yet quality journalism is about reliability and credibility.

In an age in which speed is a priority and fragmented information a hindrance, journalists should be able to enhance the quality of journalism by reporting more angles to a story, to broaden understanding of the issues involved across different audiences. Moreover, maintaining impartiality and giving space to all sides of a story is important. If journalists are to improve the quality of their product, they should find benefits in the breadth and variety of cross-media production, particularly when preparing in-depth or investigative reports.

*Thairath Daily's* Head of Provincial News suggests that multiple platforms add strength to the ways in which journalists can tell a story. Reporting across platforms on the same issue is like creating a “jigsaw” that reveals the entire picture when all the pieces are in place. Each platform, although working separately, can support other platforms by engaging the public with the issues, and this makes journalism more powerful. Although the media landscape has changed and continues to change, the key to quality journalism remains the same: how well a journalist reveals the truth and explains the facts to the public, and how he or she achieves accountability and transparency. In an environment of cross-media production, a news organization should be able to gain advantage from using all of its media effectively.

#### **4.2.3 Generating significant interest and relevant information in order to reach, engage and inform people**

Cross-media production, and within it the integration of benefits to each platform by adopting narratives that can engage with different kinds of people, can clarify important issues and drive changes in society. In their book *The Elements of Journalism*, Kovach and Rosenstein (2001) list the principles that they regard as the core of quality journalism: An ability on the part of a journalist to fulfil the tasks demanded by an obligation to the truth; loyalty to the service of citizens; being disciplined in verification; maintaining independence from the subject being covered; giving space for various voices and providing a public forum for criticism and compromise; striving to make a story interesting and relevant; keeping the news comprehensive and proportional; and exercising their personal conscience. Citizens have a right to expect that journalists will uphold these principles, the observance of which is a measure of the quality of the practice of journalism.

Digital technology and social media have shifted the consumption of news from media-centric to two-way communication that is more audience-centric. Interviewees pointed that citizens can raise their voices on social media; there are amateurs acting on information from the news or particular details of it, and people sometimes choose to believe and follow them rather than reading or watching bona fide news.

All interviewees in this study said the quality of their work rested on how well they could inform people and encourage them to understand what was happening in their communities. All respondents said they were trying different narrative styles on different platforms, to see which one could best engage the audience and how information should be presented to inform an audience well. The Editor-in-Chief of PPTV HD36 pointed out the importance of journalists becoming more like storytellers, using different narratives to tell stories in many forms to reach different target audiences and to make society understand clearly “the entire issues of a story”.

Cross-media is an opportunity to produce quality content that can reach greater audiences. When issues are told clearly and directly so that society can understand them and become literate about them, then they will drive towards social change. People in society will look for different aspects of a story; look for news coverage that helps them to understand the core of the issues. When an audience has faith that journalism can make changes in society, then this defines quality journalism.  
(Editor-in-Chief, PPTV HD36)

Journalists working in the field for *PPTV HD36* and *Nation Multimedia Group* also considered that engaging social media in the process of journalism could help to gain two major benefits: communication and networking with communities. Meanwhile, social-media editors of all three news organizations suggested that social-media platforms encouraged the creation of partnerships between newsrooms and their audiences. Sometimes, social media gave a voice to hitherto voiceless people or groups. Sometimes, social media would raise issues that were being ignored at an official level, and mainstream media would pick them up and expand them into a public-interest debate.

About half of the field reporters interviewed in this study indicated that they saw the use of multiple media outlets as the means by which they could achieve their duty of delivering high-quality news that would both inform the public and

make an impact on society. While one of the principal duties of journalists is gathering facts and delivering them to an audience in a fair and balanced manner, the interview respondents saw additional opportunities arising from multiple media outlets. These could enable access to differing perspectives so as to create deeper awareness of issues; explain complex situations in greater detail; and engage people in conversation and debate, allowing different voices to be heard. They pointed out that sometimes voices were loud enough to get people to take action. A reporter for Now26 gave emphasis to the belief that well-informed people could make decisions about what action should be taken to solve problems in society. “Journalists cannot campaign for action, but we can provide reliable and diverse information for the people who can.”

An example of this is the case of a well-known Thai actor who died from dengue fever. *Thairath*'s newspaper, television news programmes, website and social-media pages gave generous coverage to the story and the many angles arising from it, eventually involving people to the extent of stimulating action to prevent the spread of dengue fever in Thailand.

In the opinion of *Thairath* TV's assignment editors, high-quality journalism uses the cross-media environment to encourage cooperation between specialized journalists and desks, so that they work together to expand all aspects and issues of a story. In-depth stories can go even further, by sharing information, resources and ideas. Different storytelling styles used for each platform enable a story to reach different audience groups and, ultimately, more people. A journalist for *Thairath* newspaper and *Thairath*'s online news editor also agreed that achieving quality in cross-media practice came from a journalist's ability to report multiple stories with greater impact than using a single platform and engaging with people on social media for a better chance to prompt official action.

So-called *Thairath* Synergy Operations are initiated when the organization's independently operating news platforms integrate and work together in the cross-media production of a major story. The key point is that in these operations each platform tells the story effectively in their own style to engage with audiences. I analysed news coverage about Thai fishermen who were deceived into working in Ambon, Indonesia (Figure 4-1), as it won best investigation report 2015 from Thai Journalists Associations and interviewee illustrated it as example of

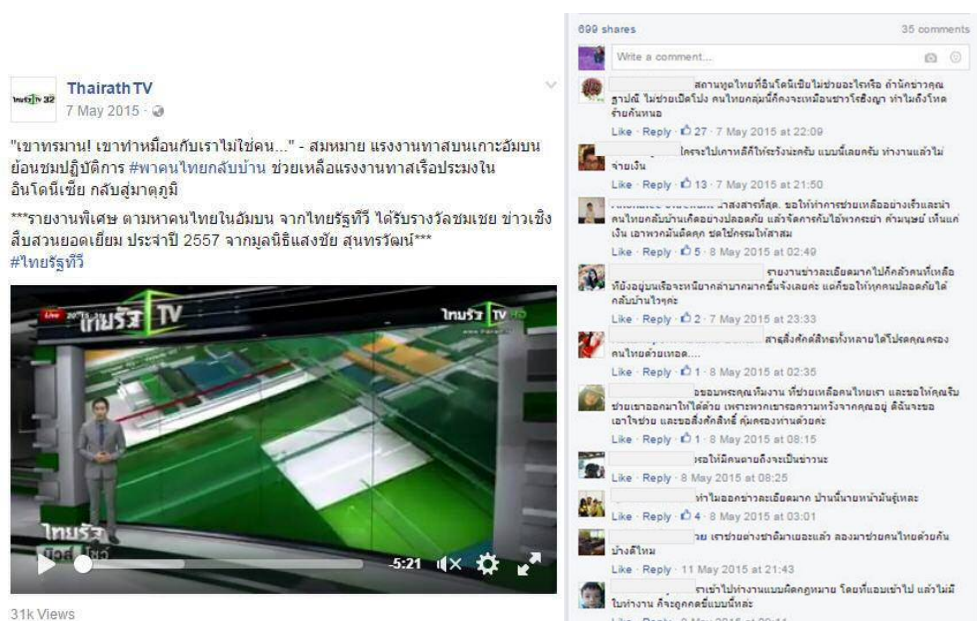
success in terms of using convergent content strategies to achieve quality of journalism.

The organization's television outlet humanized the story, so that its audience related to the plight of the victims. Its narrative style set out to create a desire to help them back to Thailand. Then the story unfolded as new facts were discovered and the chances of bringing the fishermen home were explored. Government figures and officials began to take action and *Thairath's* television news continued to update the situation. The narrative was exciting, and the audience was compelled to follow the investigation to Ambon, in Indonesia. The audience was "alongside" the *Thairath* TV reporter when the fishermen were found, and the truth behind the deception that seized their lives was revealed. The audience continued to follow the story as *Thairath* and various officials helped them to return home.

*Thairath's* newspaper also broke the story on its front page and, it being Thailand's highest-circulation daily newspaper, the public impact was high. The focus of the newspaper story was the enslavement of the Thai fishermen and demands that the government help to bring them home. The long-form narrative explained the situation and the facts surrounding the case, supported by emotional interviews. As the story developed, the newspaper also updated its coverage, along with *Thairath's* other news media.

The organization's online media took the information gathered by television and newspaper journalists and rewrote it for publication on the website, along with video clips taken from the television news coverage.





**FIGURE 4.2:** An example of TV content posted on Facebook to create audience engagement on a social issue – in this case, the Thai fishermen deceived into working in Indonesia.

Another example of a “*Thairath* Synergy Operation” concerned the issue of surrogate motherhood, and was led by the organization’s newspaper team. Regional journalists got a hint of the story because there were reports of a lot of surrogacy in rural areas of Thailand. The issue was raised in a cross-media meeting at *Thairath*, and it was decided to go for synergy across all of the organization’s platforms in a bid to achieve maximum impact and drive social change.

*Thairath* Daily’s Head of Provincial News explained that every platform sent representatives to help plan the story. All had the same focus, shared information and pushed the story in the same direction with precise timing, but with a different approach for each medium.

The issue was reported as a series of stories across platforms, covering many angles. The government paid attention; public awareness was raised. There were policy moves and action taken to solve the problem by those responsible for the issue. That's the power of cross-media. (Head of Provincial News, *Thairath Daily*).

The *Thairath* teams took three months to gather the details and plan the coverage. All involved decided upon story ideas and approaches to be taken by each medium, and then the individual teams designed narrative ideas to tell the story. The key to cross-media success is each platform accepting the strengths of each of the others, understanding the narrative styles of each platform and deciding which stories or angles should be published on which medium. A carefully considered choice of stories and timing creates an effect like putting a jigsaw together.

Cross-media production makes us feel like we're not working alone, and it helps to build more impact when reporting a story. The style of storytelling on each platform responds to its nature and audience behaviour. The point of cross-media storytelling in *Thairath's* case is when one issue is expanded into many stories by the teams from each medium. They reach different audiences. Cross-promotion encourages some audiences to travel across platforms to broaden their views. When a big story is planned together as a jigsaw, the impact of cross-media journalism is higher, and the result proves that journalists as storytellers can achieve social change. (News Director, *Thairath TV*)

In reporting the surrogacy case, *Thairath* took advantage of the nature and specialization of its various media outlets. The News Director at *Thairath TV* says special arrangements were made for the day on which officials exposed an illegal

surrogacy clinic. Understanding that the nature of television is speed with a dramatic narrative, Thairath's newspaper journalists feared that if television journalists reported the incident too quickly, suspects would flee and the official operation would fail. What they did was to ask the television journalists to wait and work closely with officials. They still got dramatic pictures at the scene and television broke the story with emotional and exciting content, in the true nature of television. For its part, the newspaper gathered in-depth information and prepared a story that was aimed at broadening understanding of the surrogacy issue in Thailand. The story went further than the events of the day involving police and officials. The newspaper team planned its story ahead of Thairath's other media outlets in order to compete for readership. That in-depth story was also repurposed for television and website news.

#### **4.2.4 Performing the role of a watchdog for the public interest: making issues known and using professional power effectively to raise awareness and stimulate action for solutions and societal change**

Analysis of study data also indicates another factor defining quality in journalism: an ability to create advantage from cross-media production and access to multiple platforms can drive social change more effectively than when working for a single platform. When news spreads on the Internet, people tend to become involved in collective action. News items explaining complex issues can give society a thorough overview, encouraging awareness and perhaps the need for change. Journalists from three organisations agreed that the needs of society centre around credibility, reliability, accuracy, giving a voice to the voiceless, and driving change in society or creating impacts that will help to solve problems are their definition of quality they want to achieve. These points echo the principles named by Kovach and Rosenstien (2001). The most obvious finding to emerge from analysis of the interviews is that the cross-media concept provides an opportunity to move towards these goals. However, such an opportunity cannot be grasped within the existing newsroom processes. But the trends are promising.

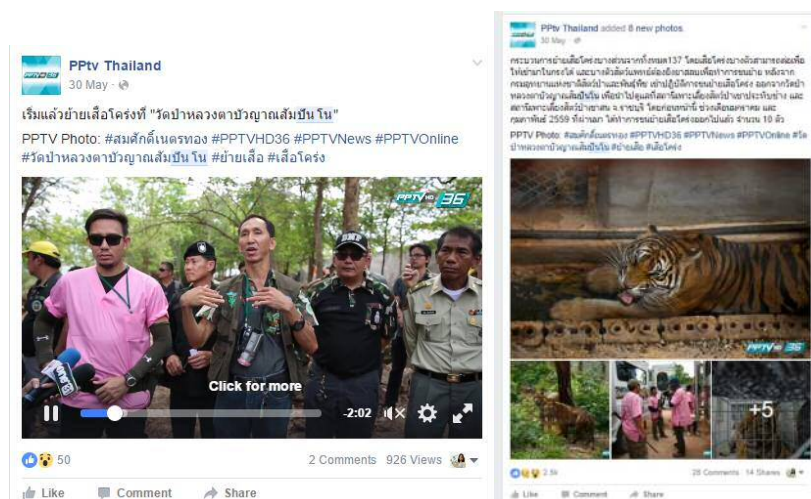
The supervisor of reporters at PPTV HD36 points out that cross-media production provides a chance to improve the quality of journalism by giving

journalists the opportunity to engage with and carefully listen to audiences. Sometimes, journalists monitor “social buzz” and conversations on the Internet, then gather more information to explain these popular issues. Social media can be a source of information, but journalists have to do their work by digging deeper to provide more detail.

Journalists can pick up stories from a social-media audience and gather more facts and details. Then they design cross-media news coverage to spread information about important issues under discussion. When an audience is given information that they should know, they will decide what to do about these issues. In many cases we have found that stories move forward to policy-makers and some changes can be made, or at least greater awareness is created. (PPTV HD36 Supervisor of Reporters)

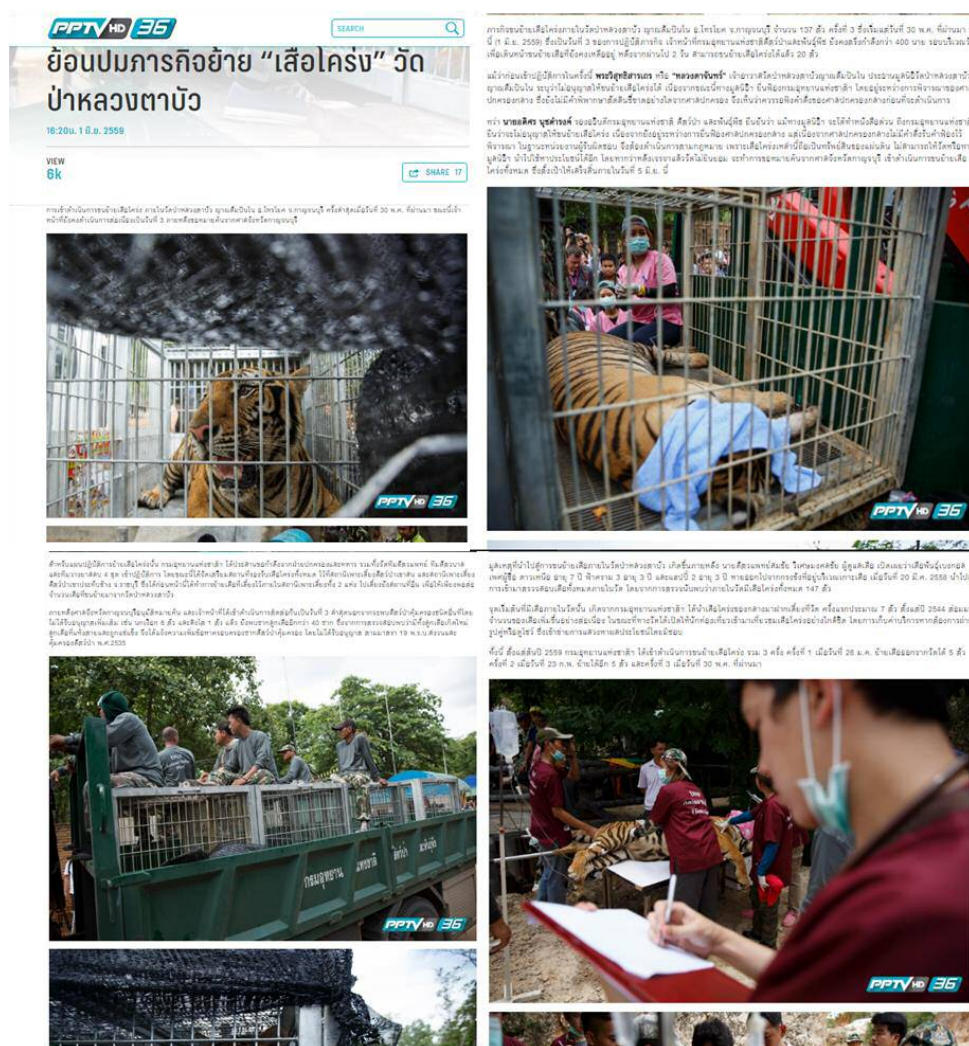
PPTV HD36 also integrates its use of multi-platform narratives in a bid to influence change. For example, the case of the Tiger Temple in Thailand, which faced legal complaints related to alleged wildlife trafficking and forest encroachment. Figure 4-3 illustrates PPTV HD36’s narrative of video clips and photos focused on telling the story with a sense of speed and dramatic reality. Text is also important on social media, so in this case it is brief but carries enough information to grab attention. Some posts are longer – up to 300 words – and provide in-depth information as well as details from behind the scenes to help people to understand the situation. Every post contains several hashtags, including #PPTVHD36 – the station ID, and keywords identifying issues and incidents.

PPTV HD36’s New-media Director said that on social media, content should be divided into several pieces that extend and update issues. The team monitors people’s interest. Typical audience behaviour on social media involves consuming content “bit by bit” and being attracted to exciting or dramatic photographs.



**FIGURE 4.3:** An example of Facebook posts about alleged tiger trafficking in one of Thailand’s well-known temples.

Figure 4.4 shows how stories are reported on PPTV HD36’s website to give them greater depth – in this case the operation to move tigers from the Tiger Temple. This story was then expanded to appear on the News Talk programme on television, where discussions focused on the animal trafficking situation and motives behind it.



**FIGURE 4.4:** PPTV HD36’s website news story about alleged tiger trafficking at a well-known Thai temple.

Figure 4.5 shows a website story that was posted after the bigger story went to air on television. The website team uploaded a video clip from the television programme so viewers could watch it again. Sometimes, television news stories are re-edited into shorter versions and posted on the website along with text and pictures to cover a story in website style. Assistant New-media Business Strategy Director, PPTV HD36 explains that not everyone likes watching clips. Some want to read and see pictures to easily understand issues, and the website has to provide this kind of storytelling. Multimedia storytelling is important on the website: each type of narrative helps to engage people to stay on the news page.



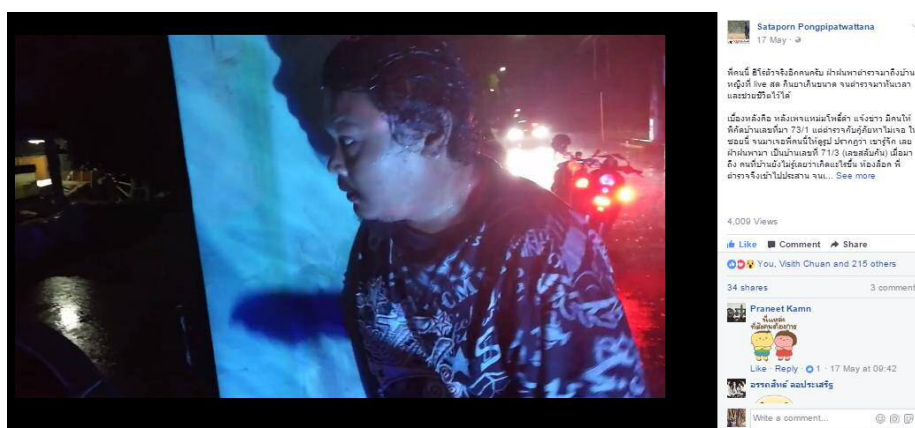
**FIGURE 4.5:** A news talk show on PPTV HD36 analyses the issues and context of a news story.

To synergize journalism and the creation of narratives across platforms, editorial meetings between different teams is important to fix a focus and approach to a story. For example, the new-media team has to know the focal issues of television news coverage, so as to work on production design for its outlets.

Some journalists also develop a connection with social media “influencers” and online groups to monitor information flows and to collaborate when something urgent happens. During crises such as disasters, accidents or violent situations, user-generated content can help to build a real-time narrative. Information becomes available quickly and in many forms. Newsroom staff must check and verify content and design storytelling styles when using user-generated content in traditional media. It is used more commonly in website news and television narratives.

The example in Figure 4.6 shows an incident in which a woman threatened to kill herself, live on Facebook. An online “influencer” saw the Facebook Live feed and posted a message seeking help to prevent the woman from harming herself. A journalist monitoring social media at that time saw the post and immediately sought more information. There was then a collaborative effort to locate the woman and get officials to the scene. They reached her in time.

The favourable outcome resulted from collaboration between the journalist, online “influencers” who were monitoring online activities and police, who intervened to help the woman who planned to commit suicide on Facebook Live. An online influencer spotted the incident and contacted PPTV HD36 journalists. They then worked together with police to locate the woman and stop her from committing suicide. The incident showed the power of working on cross-media news gathering and social-media monitoring. Cross-media production is therefore important in integrating the work of journalists and citizens throughout the processes of news gathering and distribution. Although cooperation between citizens and professional journalists had been able to save a life, the incident led to some soul-searching at a PPTV HD36 editorial meeting. How could the story be told ethically, with responsibility to the woman involved? How could the story be told without showing its violent aspects, and stirring up the horror of copy-cat behaviour? Discussions focused on raising awareness of the risks of using Facebook Live and broadcasting examples of wrong-doing on Facebook. The editorial team decided to tell the story with multiple follow-up news packages about the downside of Facebook Live, the psychological aspects and media literacy.



**FIGURE 4.6:** A news assignment editor’s Facebook post following a real-time situation in which a woman was threatening to broadcast her suicide on Facebook Live (17 May 2017).

Cross-media production enhances our skills to tell stories that will reach different types of audiences. Our stories can reach more people with multiple stories developed through times and across platforms. It doesn't end with a three-minute television report. We can use all of the materials we have, to tell as much as we want audiences to know, via different channels. The more information that people get, the better they understand issues. The consequence is that journalists get a chance to encourage civic participation and this helps to drive stories forward to find solutions. *(PPTV HD36 Assignment Editor)*

In the days following the suicide threat on Facebook Live, the issue gathered stature and importance. All media outlets found angles with which to create awareness of the dangers of distraught people using Facebook Live. The subject was carried into public forums and university debates as solutions were sought to the problem of preventing “copy-cat” incidents. Simple cross-media news-gathering and reporting stirs public awareness and this situation showed that cooperation between citizens, media and officials is able to save lives.

In conclusion, journalists see the opportunity to achieve their goal of high-quality journalism with a well-designed cross-media workflow. Journalists interviewed in this study admit a heavy workload can affect the quality of their work because there are many tasks to achieve at the time the news is gathered. Time spent on writing news or scripts is divided into chunks, in order to deliver at speed and respond to the demands of multiple platforms. They say that sometimes they find it difficult to keep up with pace and balance while maintaining quality in the verification and production processes. However, their workload can be planned, they can be trained for greater efficiency and support should always be given by an editorial newsroom team to make the work of field journalists easier to manage. Organizations that find ways to integrate teams so that they function together find that cross-media principles can become a part of normal journalistic practice. The workload creates fewer problems, materials are used more effectively, and the consequent enrichment of content builds the impact of news coverage across platforms.

If the most important issues weighing on cross-media news production and distribution, in its efforts to re-establish quality in journalism, are examined from the perspective of journalists' motivation to strive for quality in their work, then these important issues may serve as a framework for discussion in this thesis. Bearing in mind, of course, the references in previous literature to various aspects of quality in journalism, these important issues include:

- (1) Managing the judgement and decisions of individual journalists when they have to use social media. How can credibility be balanced with the need for speed in an environment of fragmented information?
- (2) The need to invest in high-quality investigative journalism of a kind that supports social perceptions of professionalism, and which may create social impacts, despite greater workloads on journalists and the need for greater volumes of content. How can investigative and long-form journalism survive?
- (3) The need for alternative angles, aspects, background and context, with high production values, when newsrooms have to compete with speed and meet demands for real-time information. How can audiences get away from watching and reading the same stories from all sources?
- (4) The need to develop innovative storytelling styles to attract the attention of audiences with personalized behaviour. How can this help to achieve a balance between the popularity of dramatic human interest stories and thought-provoking stories driving social change?

The examination of work practices and content strategies in following chapters will aim to answer the questions of overcoming the constraints of convergence and illustrate how journalists, at some point, try to overcome the constraints of convergence and produce content they consider to be high quality. Moreover, it will examine the concerns and obstacles that journalists still face, and need to overcome. This will strengthen the main argument of this thesis on what kinds of models of convergence contributes to or helps lead to media content that is viewed as high quality. It will also enrich the contribution of this study to the realities and dilemmas of convergence and the literature devoted to saving and sustaining high-quality journalism amid changing newsroom practices and the evolutionary challenges of the digital age.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Cross-media models and strategies

This chapter leads on from the previous one by analysing the structures and work practices of the three study newsrooms and asking whether there are strategies to negotiate the workplace challenges journalists and editors have mentioned in discussions, particularly constraints on their achievement of quality reporting. As mentioned in Chapter 4, journalists and editors have indicated in this study's interviews that they wish to achieve work practices in cross-media newsrooms that will enable them to fulfil four goals: (1) overcoming ethical tensions with responsibility; (2) providing reliable, accurate facts with meaningful context; (3) generating significant interest and relevant information in order to reach, engage and inform people; and (4) performing the role of a watchdog in the public interest, and in so doing making issues known, and using professional power effectively, to raise awareness and stimulate action for solutions and societal change.

This chapter aims to answer research questions on cross-media work practices, three aspects of which are examined and analysed: co-operation and integrated workflow strategies; multiplatform workflow strategies; and multi-tasking and specialization in cross-media work practices. The analysis will investigate which processes and strategies are most likely to help and/or hinder journalists striving to achieve their goals of quality.

Interviews with news editors and journalists from three media outlets revealed that each organisation developed its own cross-media model to deliver news and information on multiple platforms. All interviewees emphasized that the main focus of cross-media production was to reach a broader audience, but to serve specific audiences from each platform. This is how they rationalize their changing environment and work their way through the expansion of media platforms, especially when it comes to social-media resources, which, for many of them, are so fundamentally different in their approach to news distribution that they occupy the extreme end of a 'difficulty spectrum'. Every journalist working in the field acknowledged the need to adapt to multi-tasking in reporting news.

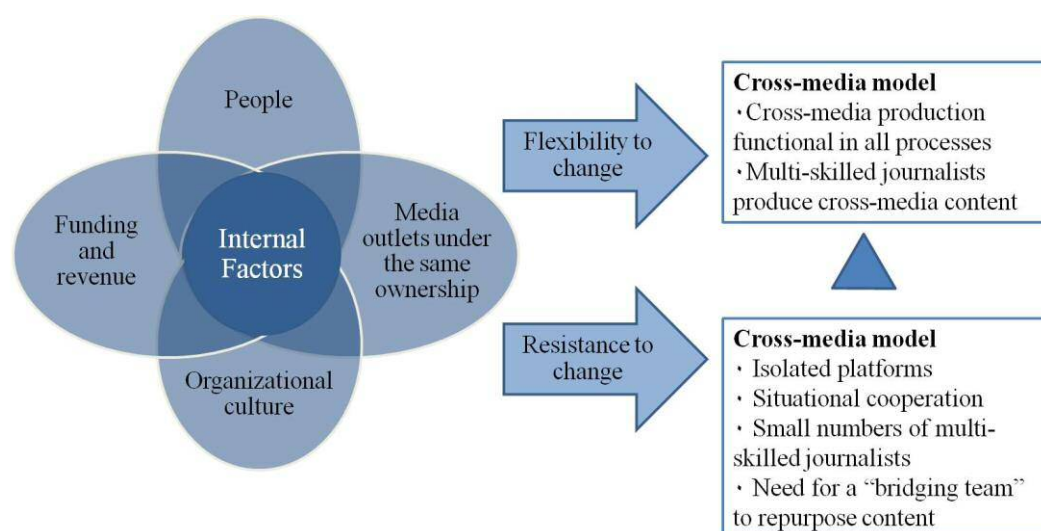
Media organizations in Thailand are commercial businesses, so they survive only by competing for advertising revenue. Reaching wider audiences gives them a chance to attract more revenue. The case study of three newsrooms document the extent to which they have similar characteristics, including multiplatform ownership and cross-media operation strongly shaped by commercial drivers, that is, they have to find ways to balance between gaining revenue and maintaining professional values. Yet, their operational characteristics are distinctive, with differing approaches and attitudes toward newsroom culture, routine practice, and cross-media content production processes. The first case study of PPTV HD 36 involves, in part, an analysis of a hybrid cross-media team where newsroom, new media, and production teams were working together on planning, producing, and distributing cross-media content. The main characteristic is the strategy of multi-skilled journalists able to develop a personal brand and engage people in issues throughout the newsgathering and reporting process. Here I will be further clarifying the nature of the strategies whereby multi-skilled journalists engage in cross-media journalism. The next case study, Thairath, delves into a corresponding strategy of isolated work on each platform, but here designing situational cooperation to strengthen high-quality coverage of issues that impact change in society. Their practice situates them very much as an example of complex news organisation with high tensions engendered between different media cultures in the news organisation. Finally, the case study on Nation Multimedia Group examines the challenges interwoven through complex layers of news outlets within the same company, each of which trying to embrace a convergence concept by building cooperative practice between one another. This case study illustrates the example of a newsroom where each outlet has a brand identity, market positioning, and specific audience profile, enabling an examination of how convergence shapes and conditions news production. Taken together this thesis's analysis of the three case studies' interview data brings to light significant external and internal factors that have affected policy- and decision-making in the design of cross-media production models.

The findings suggest that medium-sized newsrooms with a 'flatter' structure are more flexible and therefore more able to adapt to change, as in the case study of PPTV HD36. This type of newsroom can apply a cross-media strategy to the

entire news-production process, with a culture of higher cooperation and multi-skilled journalists adding advantages to the production and delivery of cross-media content. In contrast, the other two case studies – The Nation Multimedia Group and *Thairath* – have more complex structures and longer-standing differences in the working cultures of teams from different outlets or media. Journalists at *Thairath* admitted that they found it difficult to work as one hybrid team, so the organization chose to leave its various media teams isolated, to work on what they did best, and to establish an online and social-media team to ‘bridge’ their content and repurpose it for new-media platforms. The research of Tameling and Broersma (2013), into the operations of a divergent newsroom where different teams worked separately according to their specializations, came to the same conclusion as this thesis that a lack of cooperation can rob each platform’s team of the expertise they can gain from the others. The Nation Multimedia Group has tried to embrace convergence with what they call a ‘convergence newsroom’, in which editorial meetings break down barriers between different outlets by planning news coverage together. While each outlet still works separately, ‘convergence’ occurs between teams within each outlet.

In term of policy, three organisation’s editors share the same direction that news team should integrate work between multi-skilled journalists and specialisation journalists. Senior journalists at *Thairath* daily newspaper reflected that journalists working more than 10 years find it more difficult to adapt to the change, especially multi-tasking and multi-platform distribution but *Thairath* strategy still depend on their knowledge, experience and specialisation to provide advice and direction to cover important issue to junior journalists of television and online teams. At PPTV HD36 which is new established team of journalists with 6-7 year of experience and early-jobber in journalism career, they are eager to embrace cross-media journalism but facing problem of less specialisation. PPTV HD36 news editor explained that journalists are trained in, or adapt to, cross-media processes easily because the principle that everyone must accept any reporting task to support the newsroom is built in to the culture but they need to build specialisation and gaining experience in various area of issues by working under “no news desk” strategy. PPTV HD36 assignment editor explained that this solution is on the job training to merge those teams that can work together and

slowly decrease the resistant staff into the convergent mix by assigning them to cover specific angles of daily news stories. Journalists at PPTV HD36 and Nation Multimedia Group who has to adapt to multi-platform news distribution by individual journalists explained that the pressure is on journalists and how they choose information to tell story across platform. The tension between the new-media team and the business management team is to force journalists to find stories or produce content to gain more views and clicks on the website and social media. This challenges field journalist to engage in decision making for newsgathering in line with non-journalistic priorities at times. Editors and senior journalism working in newsroom pointed out that news teams cannot overlook the advantages gained by combining the unique characteristics of each platform in newsgathering, production, and distribution process.



**FIGURE 5.1:** Internal factors affecting different models of cross-media journalism.

Different levels of resistance and flexibility shape different cross-media models, this study emphasizes the argument that no organization with multiplatform operations should work without a strategy for cooperation. It will, therefore, examine and expand upon strategies and models for cross-media journalism in order to add to existing knowledge from previous studies.

In addition, the external factors driving news-media organizations to employ cross-media production are the same for every company and the implication is that all involved in Thailand’s media industry are facing the same challenges. These include the changing of the media landscape; fragmentation and

personalization of news consumption; audiences moving away from traditional to digital platforms; increased numbers of business competitors and declining revenue. These factors have driven all media organizations to expand beyond their core media outlets to adopt multiple channels. Online and social-media platforms have become the most necessary additions. This trend of newsroom transformation is much the same as that reported in other countries (Bardoel and Dueze, 2001; Doyle, 2010; Steven, 2014) where newsrooms have adapted to a multiplatform approach. Concerns have been raised in previous research that while newsrooms may be able to produce a greater quantity of news coverage with the new approach, they may be risking a loss of creativity in the production of content. In practice, the findings of this study broadly support previous studies that link technological convergence with expansion to online and digital platforms (Pavlik, 1999; Deuze, 2003), and that these change the speed and in-depth coverage aspects of journalism, as well as involving social-media networks as tools for news gathering and distribution and engaging with audiences (Hermida et al, 2012; Marwick and Boyd, 2012). These external factors can be seen as both a threat and an opportunity for news-media organizations.

Therefore, this chapter will examine how journalists endeavour to strike a balance between the struggle for business survival and saving the quality of their work, including thorny issues like managing their need to make “snap” judgements on newsworthiness and accuracy while making editorial decisions “on the run”, and balancing professional credibility and social impact with the need for speed and greater volumes of content in an environment of fragmented information.

Findings on work practices emphasize the argument that newsrooms should employ cross-media production processes rather than trying to force a single hybrid version of full convergence, which may, in turn, create more tension and decrease the quality of news production. The analysis of three newsrooms in this thesis reveals three distinctive strategies indicative of fundamental cross-media practices intended to help achieve quality journalism.

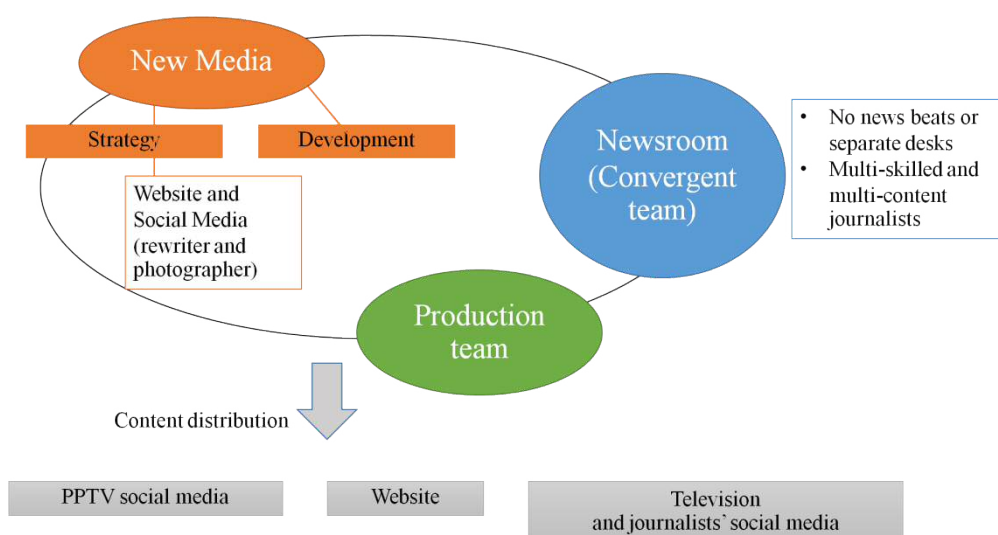
## 5.1 Cooperation strategy installed in day-to-day work practice: Hybrid or Isolated?

Cooperation in a cross-media newsroom is the main strategy for achieving high-quality journalism, because it (1) integrates the specializations of each team; (2) develops different angles to issues to support the creation of multiple stories; (3) gains advantage from using the different characteristics and powers of communication of each platform to create an impact; and (4) expands stories to reach different and wider audiences. Erdal's (2009) study investigated the different methods employed by newsrooms to build a cooperative culture. Such a culture is important because it drives an organization to embrace the 'convergence continuum concept' and benefit from good journalistic practices by saving costs, on one hand, and employing a hybrid team to work together to produce high-quality content, on the other. However, achieving a hybrid cooperative culture is not easy. This study finds that the three case-study organizations were forced by different internal factors to design different work-practice strategies, in which cooperation occurred in different styles. Nevertheless, forms of cooperation were achieved, and these newsrooms showed that they could produce high-quality journalism. I draw below three different models of cooperation strategy in cross-media newsrooms.

### 5.1.1 PPTV HD36 – “No news desk.” Converged teams with multi-platform and multi-skilled synergies

The first cross-media model is based on *PPTV HD36*, which is breaking traditional news-desk rules with a small hybrid team and a multiplatform strategy with a new role for the editorial team of supporting journalists and conducting pre-production studies to overcome workload constraints and using a small number of journalists to compete with bigger news organizations. As mentioned earlier, PPTV HD36 has a small staff working in a newly established newsroom. It has been operating in the digital television business for only a few years. PPTV HD36's News Director explains that his organization's policy is to change all of the attitudes and work habits of traditional television news and focus on delivering news content to audiences on multiple platforms, anywhere and anytime. Several conceptual factors drive this approach: television audiences are no longer believed

to follow a schedule and wait to watch the news; not everyone turns on the television and stays tuned to one channel all day; and audiences have become more personalized in the way they watch television programmes – they don't think of TV screens exclusively when they can watch the same content on a website, Line TV or YouTube. Thus, PPTV HD36 aims to serve content to the right audiences on the right platforms, in the belief that high-quality content is meaningless if it fails to reach its audience. The audience does not choose quality content on its own initiative; rather, the provider of content must deliver good content to the audience. This, according to PPTV HD36's News Director, is the key factor in cross-media news production.



**FIGURE 5.2:** The structure of PPTV HD36's cross-media team.

There are three teams with responsibility for producing PPTV HD36's news: a news team, a new-media team and a production team. They work closely together.

The news team works as a convergent team. It consists of only 15 journalists and editors working together under the principle "no news beats or desks". Every journalist has to cover stories on any subject affecting society, from politics to economics, social issues, the environment, and many more. With journalists covering all types of stories, everyone develops multiple skills to distribute stories across various platforms. Respondents in study interviews pointed to advantages of the 'no news beats or desks' policy, that the editorial team inside the newsroom has

more responsibility for supporting the work of reporters in the field. The close synergy between people in the newsroom and those gathering news is seen as the key to breaking the “news-beat rules”. Without the barriers between “desks” in a traditional newsroom, news stories can be covered with a broader range of aspects and angles. Each journalist develops a ‘content and knowledge convergence’ mentality. By covering stories and researching different issues on a broad range of subjects, a journalist can develop a richer understanding of both the issues at hand and their social context. The understanding that comes from broader professional experience creates the chance for developing stories that are different from those of competitors. This support concept in convergent and cross-media newsrooms can be a key to media competitiveness and quality journalism (Cottle and Ashton, 1999; García-Avilés, 2006).

PPTV HD36 field journalists indicate that they have to adapt to multiplatform reporting where time is limited and, because of the no news desk strategy, they have to run from one place to another to cover different topics.

I used to work on specific areas of news; I had regular duty to follow specific issues and groups of people. When I moved to work at PPTV HD36 I needed to adapt to “no news desk” and be ready to cover stories on any assignment. It was difficult and sometimes I questioned why we had to do a lot. But after I continued learning to be flexible, I saw that I could approach a story with my specialization and the team in the office supporting me with information and background. I learnt to discuss with the editor throughout the process to choose the best angles for our news program. (PPTV HD36 reporter)

Observation data related to this quote show that journalists and editors discuss coverage strategies – most of the time by phone and also on the LINE application – while the journalist is gathering news in the field. Journalists report back to the newsroom on what material and information they have gathered, the editor supports them with background and information he or she has found from

research, and they decide what more must be gathered, what interviews are still needed, and what aspect of the story should lead its presentation in the news program.

It is commonly difficult for young journalists not long in the job to recognize and find different angles to a story and gather exclusive material, but with support from editors who monitor their work on the LINE application, regular discussions and decision-making can frame the story from the field with more background and context produced by teams working in the office. While I observed the newsroom workflow at PPTV HD36, I noticed a lot of conversations occurring on LINE, and while I talked to editors or newsroom staff, messages kept popping up on the application and time would be spent discussing decisions on how a story should be covered. Details of material being gathered by journalists was written on a board in the meeting room and updated throughout the day. At the regular afternoon meeting discussions centered on this information and the agenda for the evening news program. PPTV HD36's news director would explain the cooperative and supporting role played by the production teams in the case of each story, decisions made to ease problems of misjudgments in the field and material that still needed to be gathered, so as to paint a clear picture of news direction.

The reporter continued by explaining that the process could overcome concerns about work constraints and lack of creativity in news production. In traditional newsrooms that have separate news beats and desks, there is often difficulty in deciding who is responsible for reporting when a story has many angles. For example, in the case of a disaster in the countryside, who should be sent to the field: a reporter from the social issues desk, an economics journalist, or local reporters? This can create territorial jealousies that hinder cooperation. Under its policy, PPTV HD36 can send any journalist to cover a story. The journalist assumes specialization in reporting aspects from the scene while the editorial team supports other aspects in order to develop a well-rounded report. PPTV's policy of breaking down the rules separating news desks and beats is a new idea among Thai news organizations and may soon be copied by others with small newsroom teams.

However, in this type of strategy, a newsroom must depend on journalists who are capable of multi-tasking and have the skills to extend stories with multiple angles to compete with organizations that have specialized journalists working on

issues that they routinely cover. Journalists and an editor at PPTV HD36 admitted that sometimes it was difficult on the field to compete with specialized journalists, especially without close relationships to networks with specific sources. So, they adopt a ‘big story approach’, by following and reporting the main big issues. Then they expand upon this with multiple stories throughout the day to engage people across platforms. In more routine news events, they send teams to cover them in two ways: (1) following the breaking news and updates, but trying to add explanatory content to the story; and (2) developing new angles that may attract audience interest or fill gaps to explain what others are saying.

Television is PPTV HD36’s main platform. Its website and social-media accounts are supporting platforms for promoting content, delivering repurposed content and initiating content prepared exclusively for online platforms. Every day, there is a morning meeting where all three teams sit together to set the agenda for ‘big stories’ on that day. From observation, I found that in the morning meeting, teams pick one issue as the leading story and main focus of the day. Discussions focus on developing different angles for stories while everyone shares information and ideas on information gathering and planning for news programmes throughout the day. PPTV HD36 has four main slots for news programmes: the morning news from 5.30am to 8am; news at noon from 11am to 1.30pm; the evening news from 6.20pm to 8.30pm; and a summary of the day’s news from around the world from 11.30pm to midnight. There is also a signature talk programme and an investigative news programme. Big stories are developed throughout the day for these programme slots. The news editorial team will also assign journalists to other topics as the day progresses. At the morning meeting, the news editor gives directions to each programme producer.

Figure 5.2 also draws from observations and interview data the fact that PPTV HD36’s three teams worked closely together to produce and distribute news content across platforms. During editorial meetings, the news team has the role of framing stories for news programmes and making decisions on what materials are to be used and which angles of multiple stories are to be told. The news editor and the producer of the television news program also have to take into account an analysis of how news content has performed on digital programs and current social-media conversations, presented by the new media team. The meetings consider how this

audience data can be used, particularly in terms of employing social emotions to produce news content that matches what audiences want. There are also times when discussions weigh up what people want and what they should know. Sometimes, dramatizing the emotional aspects of a story may gain viewer ratings on television and views on social media and websites, but countering this approach is its unacceptability on the grounds of ethics and failure to uphold the rights of people in the news. There is a bottom line to discussions on shaping story narratives on each platform: “What will be the impacts on society?” Production teams also plan content for social-media platforms, with news and new-media teams coming up with captivating teasers and online content capable of engaging audiences. I noticed, during editorial meetings between the three teams, that a process of shared ideas often ended up with new directions for journalists, who would need to gather more material, or make changes in content-production plans. But it all happened in a spirit of integration between the teams, of planning and producing news content on the basis of using the advantages of each platform, and delivering multiple contents for multiple platforms before, during and after the main television news program.

It could be difficult for journalists to perform cross-media coverage, along with the associated multi-tasking, on their own, because of the risk of losing quality in their work. As Doudaki and Spyridou (2015) explained, workload tensions decrease the investment of labour in individual aspects of work that are needed for high-quality news coverage. PPTV HD36’s model offers a solution. Editorial ‘back-office’ staff have a new duty to support journalists in the field. In the past, an editorial team was responsible for planning stories, editing final drafts of content and setting the agenda for the distribution process. Nowadays, in the practical day-to-day work in a convergence environment, the editorial team must support journalists during the news-gathering process and work in conjunction with the new-media and production teams to produce cross-media content. The latter teams monitor live reports on social media, engage people watching live by giving more information and background, and answer questions that would otherwise go to the journalists, allowing them to concentrate on developing storylines and reporting issues in real-time. The editorial team must also gather more information, develop new angles and find sources for journalists to build on their stories. This hybrid

cooperative help enables journalists to overcome workload constraints and put more effort into their work. However, there is one important key to this strategy: the ‘pre-production planning process’ – an exercise that synergizes the expertise of the newsroom, new-media and production teams.

The news assignment editor explains that pre-production is the key for high quality news production from *PPTV HD36*’s journalists. If it is possible, news stories should be planned ahead. Journalists must have a draft of a story or a hypothesis and they should plan a production process by making shooting lists, proposing graphics, organizing interviewees and developing ways to tell the story. “Visual content is key to telling a story effectively, so planning to have the right visuals and audio content is important,” he said.

Data from study interviews and personal observation show that the convergence concept of co-operation between various news teams has been successfully implemented at *PPTV HD36*. The three teams work in collaboration, using the strengths of their own platforms to contribute to the joint dissemination of a news story. In order to achieve the objective of cross-media journalism, *PPTV HD36* has trained its news staff to be multi-skilled journalists. The News Assignment Editor explains that journalists have to adapt to a multi-skilled environment; to think of every news platform as a vehicle with which to deliver information to their audience.

Looking at *PPTV HD36*’s news production flow, news is delivered first via online platforms – social-media accounts and PPTV’s website. Then, with more information added, the stories go to air on television. Big stories are also extended to talk and news-documentary programmes, while social media play the role of promotional platforms to get content to wider audiences. After that, all content is saved and repurposed for use on PPTV’s website and YouTube. Online news teams also create original stories for exclusive release on the website. *PPTV HD36* has found it easy to set up an organizational culture of cross-media production because it is a new organization that is still building its news teams. However, it still needs training every two months to encourage people to think in the same direction and to build a single-team culture.

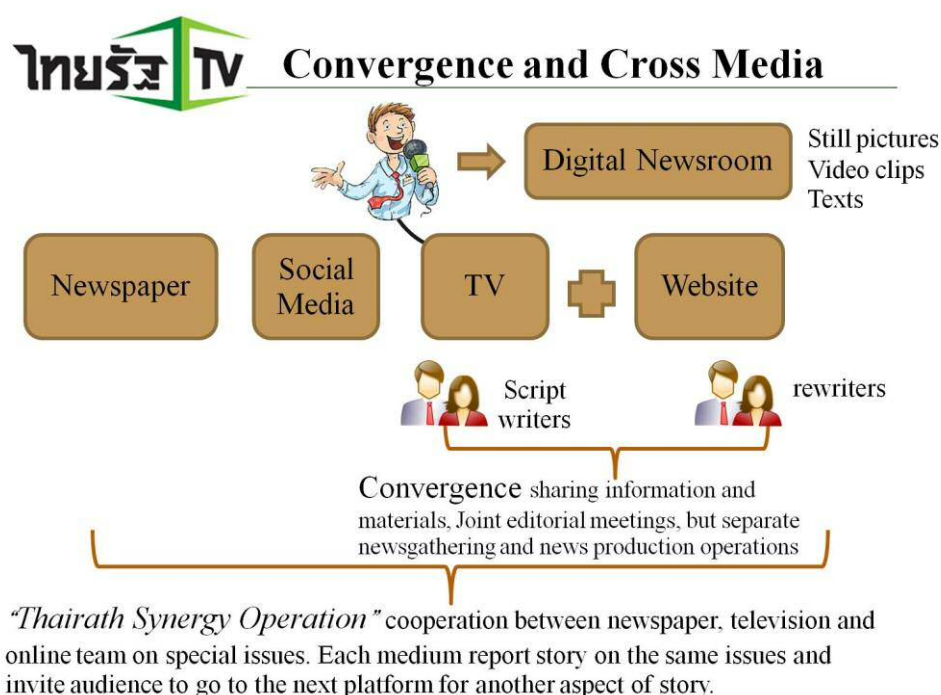
5.1.2 *Thairath*: Specialization on each platform, but situational coordination in “*Thairath* synergy operations”, to enhance investigative journalism

Observation at *Thairath* showed more complex resistance to working together between teams and platforms than the situation at PPTV HD36. Most important was the difference in culture and mindset between the various teams. *Thairath* has journalists from early jobbers to people with up to 30 years’ experience working together on different platforms. There are gaps of age, experience, attitude, knowledge and skills. *Thairath*’s cross-media model echoes the concept described by Carr (2002), of “situational cooperation of isolated platforms”. *Thairath* is a large, long-established professional news organization based on a print platform. Its expansion to encompass television and online platforms has seen a need to position its news content differently. The traditional medium, the *Thairath* newspaper, concentrates on its rural readership because its circulation in the countryside has not yet fallen as a consequence of competition from electronic media. The newspaper therefore caters to a mass audience with a main focus on “human interest” stories. *Thairath*’s online and social-media platforms, on the other hand, have their major audiences within the Bangkok metropolitan region and Thailand’s other big cities.

*Thairath* daily’s Editorial Advisor to *Thairath* Online and Director of the company’s Information Center explained that forcing a merger of teams from all platforms was out of the question because many *Thairath* journalists were long-standing professionals on one particular platform who would find it difficult to change or adapt to multi-platform production. However, specialists with more than 10 years’ experience in particular situations, who had long-standing sources and who could provide contextual input to background many news items, were valuable assets from whom *Thairath*’s new-generation staff could learn. He pointed out that if an organization attempted to fix these problems by forcing teams to work together in full-scale, in reality, resistance would be higher and cross-media production would fail. In practice, the more outlets an organization has, the more cooperation between the various media tends to be “situational” in nature – when all hands are expected to work together for a big story. This is not a bad strategy for organizations like *Thairath*, which interviewees accepted the fact that they could not force all outlets to work as one team. The teams work separately, but situational cooperation

occurs when there is a big event, and this proves that despite the specialization of each team, they can still create an impact. Therefore *Thairath's* policy is to maintain each platform separately, but co-operating via editorial meeting and ***Thairath synergy operation*** on big issues. Importantly, this strategy has online and social-media teams repurposing cross-media content online and each platform can promote content appearing on other media. The daily newspaper, television and online platforms all have their own teams as separate units. Each platform, or news outlet, has to work on its own, producing news according to the brand positioning of each, and serving different audiences.

However, the work is not completely separate: there is a process of cooperation between platforms involving the sharing of information, joint meetings and the sharing of journalists' expertise. *Thairath's* cross-media model is focused on each unit working according to its strengths and delivering news content on its own platform. Although the same story may be chosen on the daily agenda for each unit, the journalists work independently for their own platform. The social-media team has access to information from every outlet so it can repurpose content, promote content from every platform, extend content for online audiences and tell the stories in an original fashion to build engagement with the *Thairath* brand.



**FIGURE 5.3:** Thairath's cross-media model.

In the beginning, when *Thairath* had just expanded from a newspaper organization to launch its website, there was great difficulty in the two teams working together and sharing information, because of their different working cultures. The newspaper journalists didn't see the importance of speed in reporting; they regarded the website as a competitor that drew audiences away from the print outlets, so they were reluctant to give information if it was to be reported first online. However, in practice *Thairath* have tried to find solution to implement cooperative culture between platform by slowly merging joint meeting to plan and discuss on stories angles.

When observing *Thairath's* teams working together in cross-media production, I noticed tension and resistance to some routine practices. Tense discussions between teams occurred from time to time on the direction of news on each platform; how various forms of content would work together and which flow of distribution would still be able to reach an audience. The mood of frustration centred mainly on how each platform could remain exclusive to its audience. *Thairath* journalists do not embrace the multi-skilled journalism concept; each does his or her job with their specialized skills. The editorial meeting with cross-platform teams was the only time during the day that I witnessed discussions and acceptance (in most cases) of others' ideas. In response to questions regarding how they work together, an editor from *Thairath's* online team said "we have to learn who is good at what strategy, try to negotiate a different mindset, and find ways each platform can continue working with their own team to produce impactful stories".

Another editor from the local news desk of *Thairath* daily newspaper told me that there were journalists who were reluctant to embrace multi-platform cooperation, but their mindset was changing because new-media platforms were showing them how they supported the daily news with new space and channels to reach audiences. "We are on a learning curve towards working together," he said.

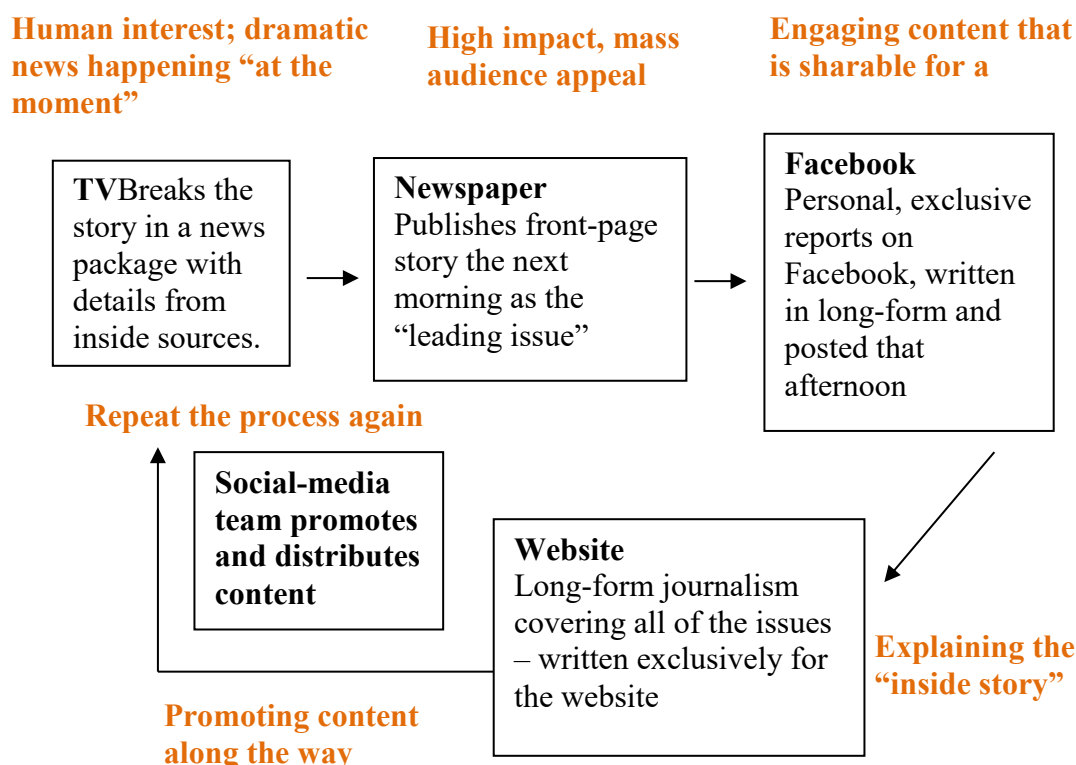
Meanwhile, the Assignment Editor for *Thairath* TV seemed to enjoy discussions between teams because it brought to light for him ideas from different perspectives, and this helped to strengthen the process of investigative journalism.

“I learn from both the newspaper and the online team how to synergize the multiple-platform advantage to help drive investigative pieces to impact society.”

These reflections from interview data show that *Thairath* is still finding ways to coordinate work between different platforms in ways that journalists are comfortable to do rather than have strict policy or strategy to force everyone to fully accept convergence throughout the whole process. There are signs of resistance to simply accepting available opportunities to try to negotiate a level of comfort between members of the team based on special project collaboration. It could be a part of strategy to find a more balanced relationship between different teams and platforms.

A co-operation strategy of cross-media journalism at *Thairath* comes into force when synergy is needed between the specialized teams in order to cover a big story. Editorial Advisor for *Thairath* Online and Director of the Information Centre, *Thairath* Daily explains that even though the teams are separate, there has been more discussion between the platforms and more special cooperation between them. Everyone is getting to know that synergy between platforms generates a more effective approach to telling stories with higher quality.

The News Director of *Thairath* TV told me during observation the editorial meeting that each of the organization’s platforms – newspaper, television and online news – works separately with its own teams and produces news for different target audiences. *Thairath* policy states that every news “beat” and news “desk” should maintain its own specialization. However, when a big story needs the specialized input from different desks, they will work together to develop a well-rounded coverage. This involves a form of cooperation between different teams to investigate the facts. This special co-operation between the newspaper, television and online teams on special issues is called a “*Thairath* Synergy Operation”. Each platform reports the story on the same basic issues, but invites audiences to visit the other platforms for special, developing aspects of the story.



**FIGURE 5.4:** “*Thairath’s* Synergy Operation” cross-media model.

“*Thairath’s* Synergy Operations” – events that need cooperation between all teams and platforms – are described as “full convergence to achieve integrated cross-media journalism”. Everyone involved in covering the story will meet to consider the issues and to bring all areas of specialization into play in order to design contents with the highest impact. Each news desk and each platform will decide on an approach to the story and design the way in which it will be distributed. From the point of view of individual teams, the objectives are the same: to tell the story differently by approaching it from different angles. But all teams share the same focus. The journalist or the team that got the first indications of the story will lead the operation. The story will break on that platform and then the other platforms will give their support to push the story forward, to reach different audiences and make it a big issue that will influence social change.

An example is a story about enslaved Thai fishermen who were rescued from Indonesia. The story was covered mainly by *Thairath’s* TV news team working to

the assignment desk because this team got the first lead on the story and began to investigate it first. However, the story had many related issues and it needed the specialized expertise of other journalists to give it breadth, so that it could influence officialdom and prompt government action.

Television was the main platform for this “synergy operation”, providing a powerful human-interest coverage as the journalist travelled to Indonesia to help secure the release of the fishermen so they could return home. *Thairath* newspaper, with its big circulation and high impact throughout the country, ran the story as its front-page lead and emphasized the importance of the issues involved. The social-media team took the story and its related issues to a wider audience on Facebook, with “sharable” content. *Thairath*’s website created a “special section” for the story and its related issues, providing a broad coverage in long-form journalism. The website became the “hub” of all content from *Thairath* media related to the story and an on-demand platform that visitors could search for details. All of *Thairath*’s news teams worked together to achieve the broad coverage. The content and the timing of its release were planned in joint meetings. Each platform then produced its own content, but all maintained the same focus. It became an example of a fully-integrated cross-media process.

The Assignment Editor for *Thairath* TV explained that a TV journalist from the assignment desk accidentally met a fisherman who had fled from Indonesia and who asked for help. When the facts and information were checked, the team decided to investigate the story and explore related issues. The wider issues needed help from specialist business journalists, to look at the fishery industry and its labour system, and to provide statistics on exports and imports of fishery products. The social-issues desk was asked to pursue the angle of human rights, while the TV assignment team followed the clues to Indonesia. There they found that they were investigating a case of human trafficking. The Thai fishermen had been deceived and were virtually enslaved. The *Thairath* news teams planned their coverage of the story with cooperation from officials. The television team worked closely with the newspaper and online and social-media teams to plan ways to tell the story for maximum impact. Then they broke the story across all of *Thairath*’s news platforms, and helped to bring the fishermen back to Thailand.

In retrospect, most of the resources for gathering the story of the fishermen came from *Thairath's* TV team. The TV platform not only had the lead in reporting the story, it also followed up with both routine updates and in-depth reports. Cooperation between the television and online teams was closer and easier because the working cultures of the media were similar. Within the TV unit, the assignment desk integrated input from several other news desks to achieve a variety of approaches to telling the story. Meanwhile, a joint meeting between *Thairath's* online, social-media and newspaper teams brainstormed and planned a series of stories around the main subject and decided on timing, issues and platforms involved. The newspaper team proved to be slower than the others in accepting the process of integration.

Cultural differences between various platforms make full-time integration or full convergence unachievable at *Thairath*, and teams for each platform, working separately, is a good choice. This is similar to models described in other studies, such as 'coordination of isolated platforms' (García-Avilés et al., 2009) in which newsrooms are expanded to provide for multiplatform production, but each team works separately. The online department spreads its content, but individual journalists are not encouraged to use social media. This is also similar to a level of convergence described by Carr (2002), in which cooperation can occur when teams from different platforms get together to cover stories using their separate specializations. It also explained by form of Intra-platform production by Erdal (2012) which explaining how reporters from different platforms to cooperate extensively in covering a particular news story, sharing content and raw material. These types of cross-media production are categorized as 'content sharing' in the convergence continuum concept; where in some situations, teams make decisions together on how to tell stories best on each platform. *Thairath's synergy operation model* shows a specific strategy of cooperation and integration between platforms when reporting a big story. This has proven to help spread a story wider, and more rapidly to stimulate officials and the government to take action – effectively fulfilling descriptions of quality in the main discussion in chapter 4.

Indeed, it has been proven in practice that cross-media journalism following a strategy of cooperation in particular news-production processes can enrich the quality of journalism by integrating the use of advantageous narrative styles and

the powers of communication unique to each platform, while engaging wider audiences to important issues. It shows that each platform can create different impacts on audiences, and when they are used in synergy, the impact is substantially larger. This agrees with Shirky's network concept and Jenkin's participatory culture (Shirky, 2011; Jenkins, 2011), both of which suggested that when there is synergy between media outlets, the power of news stories can create values and stir people into some forms of action. When the various platforms have to work together, the key issues are planning and negotiating about timing, issues to be covered, and priorities for story distribution. Although working together as a convergent team is neither an automatic nor a rapid process between *Thairath's* newspaper and other platforms, it is nevertheless possible, and perhaps increasingly so, as *Thairath TV's* Assignment Editor stresses the belief that multiple stories that emerge from such cooperation, and appear as a continuing series of news coverage, can really achieve action to solve problems.

News Director, *Thairath TV* explained that newsroom must consider the 'impact'. A big story needs to raise awareness and drive some changes in 'the system' and society. So, newsroom have to plan wisely how each platform should approach the story and prioritize the issues to be published on each platform.

Sometimes, the television and online platforms must wait for the newspaper to publish a story first, and then they follow with other reports on the same issues, aiming to deliver an impact to their audiences and emphasise the need for society to take action. (News Director, *Thairath TV*)

However, *Thairath synergy operation* it's not an achieving level of day-to-day work of quality cross-media production because most of the time platform still work separately. *Thairath* model suggest ways to embrace quality of multi-platform content by having online and social media team doing the repurposing and engaging content by considering impact factors as content strategy plan and production choice on online platforms.

### 5.1.3 Nation Multimedia Group – Two layers of cross-media convergence for multiple outlets

*The Nation Multimedia Group (NMG)* is an example of an organization trying to create cultural convergence by having a joint team in its Convergent Newsroom. However, each outlet works separately in the process of producing news. The number of media outlets under the same ownership is a factor that adds complexity to a cross-media model and makes it more difficult to achieve general cooperation. Organizations such as *the Nation Multimedia Group* have more media outlets operating for different markets and audiences, requiring a more complex design for their cross-media processes. *Nation Multimedia Group* cross-media newsroom illustrates a strategy of two layers of cross-media content that on some occasions can overcome cultural differences between media.

*The Nation Multimedia Group (NMG)*, one of Thailand's leading multi-media companies, operates two digital TV channels, three daily newspapers (including an English-language daily) and two radio stations, along with associated websites and social-media accounts. The Group was the first news organization in Thailand to announce its restructuring to adapt to a cross-media-convergence concept. In 2012, NMG launched a major re-engineering of its management and editorial functions with the convergence of news desks, sales and marketing and management to control costs and raise productivity. NMG had seen a declining trend in print – its main outlet – and had expanded to online media and television. It became a pioneer in employment policy related to the use of social media in news reporting, and saw the development of cross-media production and training of multi-skilled journalists as the keys to achieving full convergence.

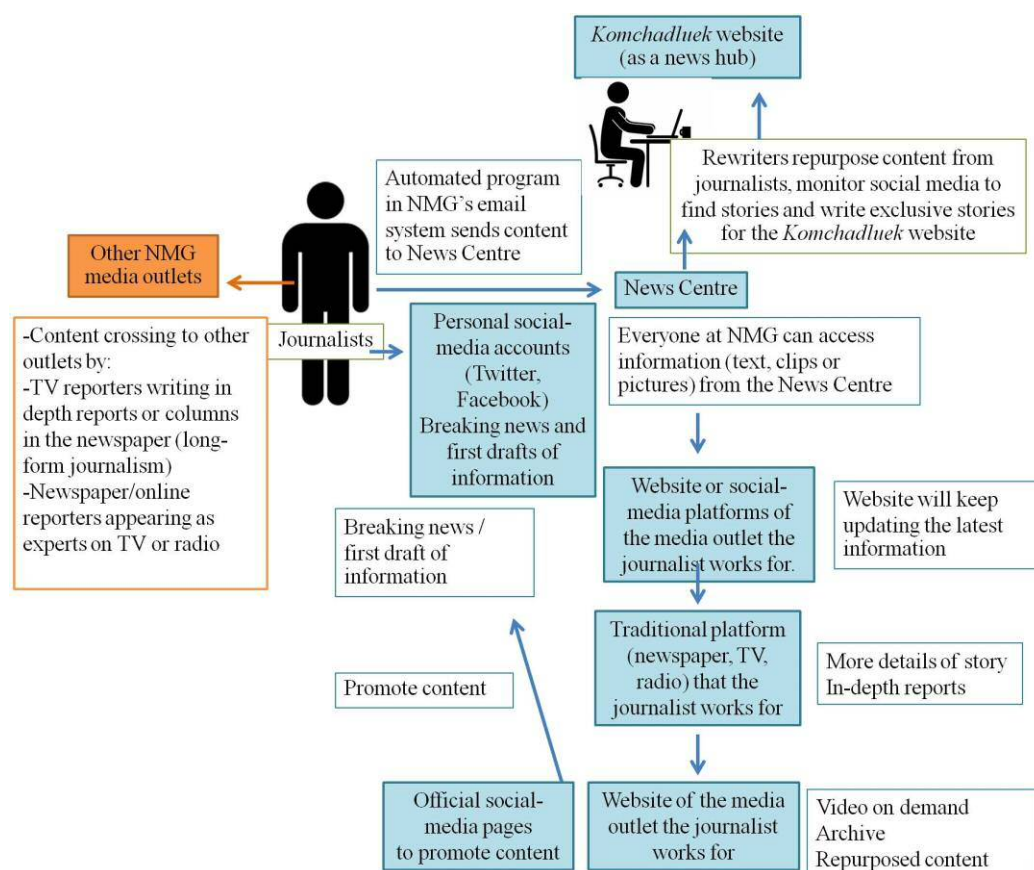
Factors driving NMG to adopt cross-media production included the need to cut costs while its audience was scattered on multiple platforms. If it wanted to be competitive, NMG had to be able to reach greater audiences on every platform. The key goals in the first phase of its restructuring were to meld the differences between the media and to achieve a level of cooperation that would enable the production of content across many channels.

Editor in Chief of Nation TV explained the convergence concept implemented by the Nation Multimedia Group is one involving a News Centre through which all

media outlets share information and materials. Journalists and other outlets in the NMG organization can access information from the News Centre and reproduce it as medium-specific content for the various platforms. Convergence has also been implemented in terms of cooperation between the media outlets. NMG has many media outlets running, and every outlet has its specializations, is focused on a specific audience, and has an experienced editorial team.

All editors from all outlets must attend a daily meeting called the “Convergent Newsroom”. There they discuss the news issues of the day, the news-coverage agenda and news directions. From my observation, every editor at the Convergent Newsroom meeting reveals the leading stories for their outlet and contributes ideas for general discussion. Each editor has a different specialization, for example, Bangkok Biz has strength in economics and business. These specialists offer their experience to assist others in understanding various issues. However, each media outlet has its own audience and its news content is produced separately.

Data from interview and observation were analysed and illustrated complexity of two layer of cross-media model at *Nation Multimedia Group*. The first layer involves cross-media production, content, distribution and promotion within each outlet. The outlets include traditional platforms (television, newspaper, radio), websites and social-media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube). Each outlet has news desks responding to its specialization, section of a newspaper or programme on television. There is an online team responsible for updating news and content on each website. A small social-media team of three to five people promotes content available on the websites and traditional platforms on social media and creates special content to engage with online audiences and build the NMG brand. Editors, rewriters and an online team repurpose content for distributing across the platforms. Nation Multimedia Group Chairman explained that this strategy responds to changes in the media landscape, where the audience is scattered across all platforms and each outlet has to provide content directly to where different audiences can be found. To achieve convergence in the first layer of its cross-media strategy, NMG has focused on training multi-skilled journalists. However, unlike the *PPTV HD36* team, not all journalists can adapt to this task, so the training is called a “voluntary model of multi-skilled journalists”.

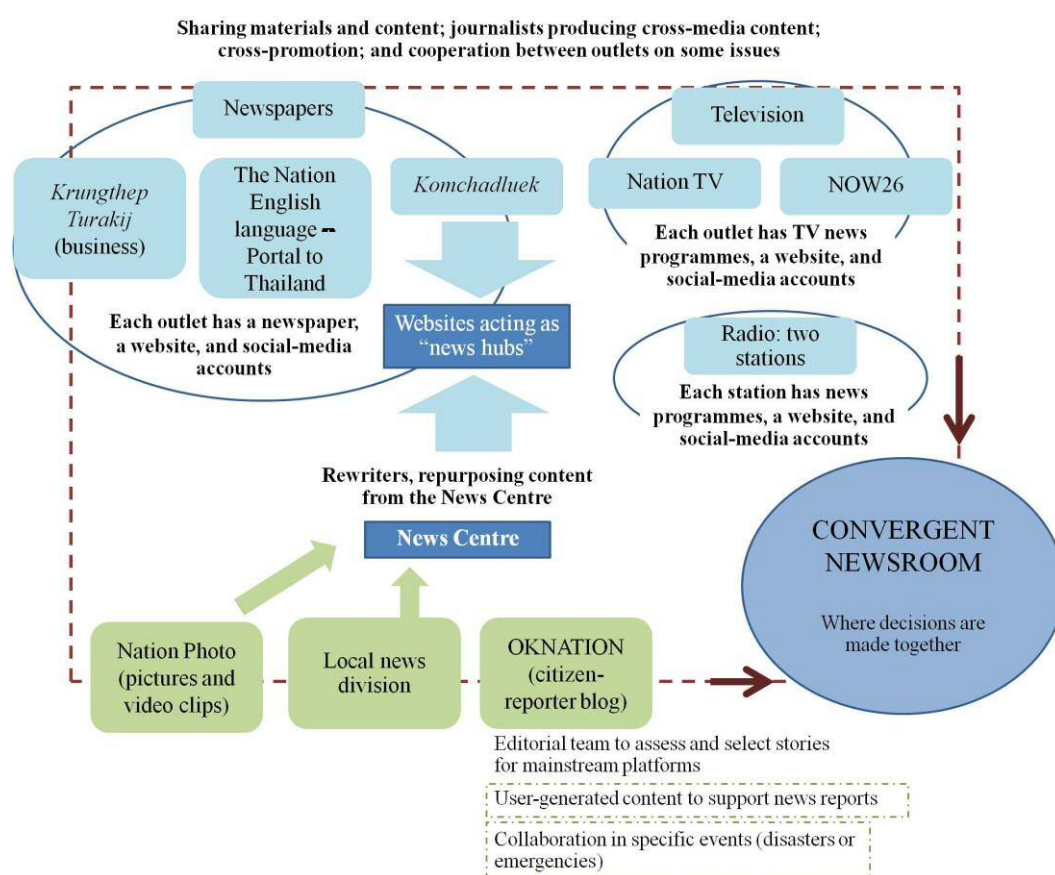


**FIGURE 5.5:** NMG's cross-media model, layer one.

This model is an ideal concept when reporters are multi-skilled journalists. When a journalist gathers information at the news scene, he or she can break the news with live content or updated information posted on personal social-media accounts. The text of the story is then emailed, along video clips or pictures, to the office. NMG's email system has software that automatically sends the content to the News Centre, from where anyone in the organization can access and use the materials. Rewriters and news editors at the outlet for which the journalist works will rewrite and produce the story as a complete news item to be published first on a website or social-media platforms, then later in print or on television. Adding to this process, rewriters will choose stories from journalists working for every media outlet and rewrite them for distribution on the *Komchadluek* website, which acts as a hub or portal for NMG's news content. The *Komchadluek* rewriters also monitor social media to pick up stories and cover exclusive stories for their website. This team of rewriters has to post between 100 and 200 pieces of news on the *Komchadluek* website every day.

Kom Chud Luek News Editor indicates resistance in co-operative work practice that senior professional journalists on traditional platforms, especially print journalism, have a strong belief in the values of their platform. This affects workflow when online and social-media platforms should come first in the distribution process and affects the sharing of information with other platforms. Some print journalists want to keep their stories exclusive to their newspapers rather than breaking them on social media accounts and the official websites. This echoes the findings of Boczkowski and Ferris (2005) that print journalists generally oppose being asked to work for their organization's online editions.

NMG has many media outlets, each of them with a cross-media policy. To emphasize the need for cooperation across the entire organization, it has a 'big picture' strategy aimed at encouraging its media outlets to work together as a "convergent newsroom". This strategy is NMG's cross-media convergence Layer Two (Figure 5.6).



**FIGURE 5.6:** Nation Multimedia Group's cross-media convergence Layer Two.

Cross-media Layer Two covers the workflow of all of the outlets of Nation Multimedia Group. It was designed according to a concept of convergence, in which the newsroom has integrated resources, skills, facilities, technologies and people knowledge, resulting in the best possible news production. First, the organization has a News Centre, to gather all text, pictures, video clips and stories in one place. Every outlet sends materials directly to the News Centre and everyone can access it. Sharing material and content across media outlets in this way helps to save time on producing content from every news “beat” or “desk”, enabling some outlets to focus more sharply on their specializations.

The convergent newsroom is where editors from all outlets join in daily editorial meetings. They discuss current issues and the ways in which the news will be reported. When a big event needs to be covered, collaboration may be sought between the editors to share personnel, information and news sources. They also work out the various angles that will be covered by each outlet in the case of a big event. However, NMG still has to improve its policy; restructure some parts; and train journalists to perform effectively in this process because it’s very complex structure and melding culture of cooperative has not yet synergy to create significant impact as other earlier two models illustrate.

Ideas and knowledge are shared when all outlets meet every morning in the Convergent Newsroom. The specialization or interests of individual editors adds context for others and the newsroom can gather a broader view of events and issues. Decisions are made together on big stories and there is some collaboration between outlets when big events occur. According to NMG’s most recent restructuring plans (2017), *Komchadluek* will act as a news hub. News content gathered in the News Centre will be rewritten, repurposed and published on the *Komchadluek* website. Moreover, *Komchadluek*’s online team will monitor issues on social media and select stories with news value as well as developing original and exclusive stories for the website. The number of news stories published on the website is expected to rise from 100 to 300 each day.

*Komchadluek*’s Online Editor expressed concern about the new workflow, which was expected to produce up to 300 pieces of news each day. This demanded more work from the same number of staff, creating tension in the constant need to

choose stories, gather news and information, spend time in verification and produce news items of acceptable quality which gave context to the issues involved.

I observed production in the newsroom for just two hours and tension was high, especially when they found by monitoring other news organizations that they were falling behind in the issues surrounding a particular story. The web team constantly monitored social-media conversations and new content being posted by online influencers and alternative sources of information, especially a famous Facebook page. If they decided something was newsworthy, or a lot of people were engaging with a story, the web team journalists followed the leads and reported the story on the website. Web journalists were often interviewing sources on the phone, attempting to add context or new angles. When they were unable to reach sources of information quickly enough, they simply reported what they saw on social media.

We need more staff to spend time verifying information; we need to train journalists in the skills of ‘spinning angles’ of stories, to add context and deliver stories differently from competitors. At present, there is tension to distribute whatever we have and then update it later, and that force is coming from the business side of the company. We make mistakes; we are finding ways to do it better. We want to produce quality online content that people can rely on to make sense of what is happening on social media and in their lives. But the workload, and not being sure of a strategy to achieve quantity and quality for the website, can lead us to make mistakes again, and the audience will lose trust in us. (*Komchadluek Online Editor*)

The relentless pressures of this kind of production help to create an understanding of why there is misleading news and unverified information that turns out to be fake news published on a professional news website. This tension and desperate competition to gain views, clicks and shares – all at breakneck speed

– can effectively force journalists to stray from the path to quality, sometimes compromising on accuracy and credibility.

NMG also has a Nation Photo team, responsible for taking pictures and video clips. These materials are submitted to the News Centre and are available for the use of any news outlet. The same principle applies to material produced by the local-news team, which covers news events in provincial areas. It is also submitted to the News Centre as a shared resource.

Added to NMG's sources of news is OKNATION, a special online platform that encourages "citizen journalism". It is a blog platform that can be joined by anyone wishing to write stories on issues that interest them. OKNATION hosts quite an active community, particularly for people sharing the same interests. For example, one group wants to save Thailand's wildlife and forests. The blog platform also has active citizen journalists who write high-impact stories about local communities. OKNATION has its own editorial team that monitors this user-generated content for use in mainstream news reporting. Sometimes, when important events such as disasters occur and public collaboration is needed, NMG's Convergent Newsroom can also call on the involvement of these "citizen journalists".

*Komchadluek* News Editor explained that the policy keeps changing to adapt to the changing media landscape. They are trying to save all of company's media outlets by implementing a more effective cross-media strategy

Cross-media teams should be able to meld working cultures and specializations between older journalists and newcomers so they can work as one team and share what they are good at, to support the process. However, culture convergence is the biggest problem to overcome in a big company like NMG. There are so many differences, so it takes time and effort to meld us into one team.  
(*Komchadluek* News Editor)

The editor in chief of Nation TV indicates their plan of development that NMG still believes that convergence and cross-media strategy is the way for news organizations to achieve competitiveness in this business, while maintaining professional values. However, the factor that slows the process of achievement is that people are slow to adapt to the new environment and new technology. It takes time to train people and set up the system. This is the biggest obstacle to a cross-media newsroom, and we have to find ways to overcome it.

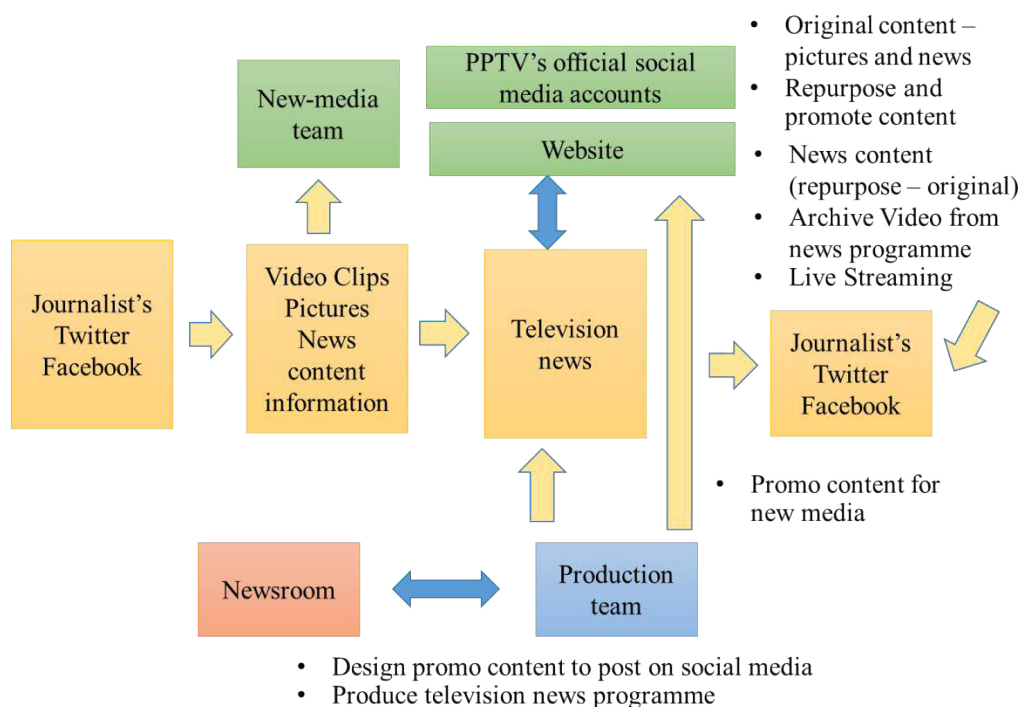
To conclude, the exercise of mapping three different models for building a cooperative culture of cross-media journalism in this study has shown that flexible adaptation within the constraints of the four internal factors has been vital to the design of each model. Success in cross-media production does not require that an organization should commit its entire operation to the principles of convergence. Paterson (2011) explained that the cooperation between old and new media is uncommon, and that "new-media journalists continue to operate independently of old media and are normally considered to have a lower status than old media journalists." This mind set still exists in newsrooms and is an attitude that people engaging in cross-media news production have been trying to change.

However, for bigger newsrooms this strategy may face more obstacles because a significant group of the staff will stick with the traditional process of working and their professional performance may suffer. Organizational culture is another internal factor for study and close attention when melding groups of people together as one team in cross-media production. In addition to a cooperative strategy, the benefits to be gained from specialization and collaboration between different areas of expertise in news practice dictate how newsrooms strategically plan their day-to-day workflow to produce multiple stories across platforms.

## 5.2 Day-to-day cross-media workflow to produce multiple stories across platforms

Although cross-media production increases the workload of journalists and imposes additional tasks on a newsroom, in day-to-day practice these can be alleviated by a workflow strategy that can be designed and implemented in every type of cross-media model. This thesis proposes that a cross-media workflow strategy can allow the development of multiple stories explained here as “long-tail journalism” that engages with audiences throughout the process of developing multiple news stories; from breaking the news with speed and immediacy, to giving it context, creating multiple stories from different angles and eventually achieving a well-rounded, in-depth coverage. This offers a solution to concerns that long-form and investigative journalism will suffer in the high workloads of cross-media production. This kind of quality of journalist performance may also respond better to the needs of ‘personalized’ audience groups by make stories relatable and creating an impact that achieves wider awareness. The quality of content, and justification of its watchdog privileges, can be measured by its accuracy and its ability to frame debates and set agendas, while providing a diversity of viewpoints in attractive storytelling styles (Lacy and Rosentail, 2005). Below, I illustrate day-to-day workflow strategies for cross-media newsrooms that enhance the opportunities for achieving high-quality journalism.

Looking at *PPTV HD36*’s news production flow, news is delivered first via online platforms – social-media accounts and PPTV’s website. Then, with more information added, the stories go to air on television. Big stories are also extended to talk and news-documentary programmes, while social media play the role of promotional platforms to get content to wider audiences. After that, all content is saved and repurposed for use on PPTV’s website and YouTube. Online news teams also create original stories for exclusive release on the website.



**FIGURE 5.7:** PPTV HD36's news flow.

When journalists are at a news scene or event, they report short pieces of information on their personal Twitter and Facebook accounts to engage people to follow their updates. Alternatively, they can report on Facebook Live. These reports respond to the need for speed. While gathering news and interviewing sources of information, journalists plan their television stories and also send video clips, pictures, and information back to the office for the new-media team to use to create content for PPTV HD36's website and social-media accounts. When journalists tweet or post on their personal social-media accounts, others will help by sharing and re-tweeting the content to expand the audience reach. The news team at the office will backup journalists with information, verify facts and supply background material as well as giving story ideas and directions. Then the journalists produce pieces for television news – live reports, short news items or in-depth packages – depending on the story plan. After the television news goes to air, the journalists will again post on their personal Facebook accounts. This time they will offer exclusive content, background information, extended stories or analyses. They can share news clips or graphics when creating this in-depth information on Facebook. This is how one news item can travel from the scene to audiences via multiple

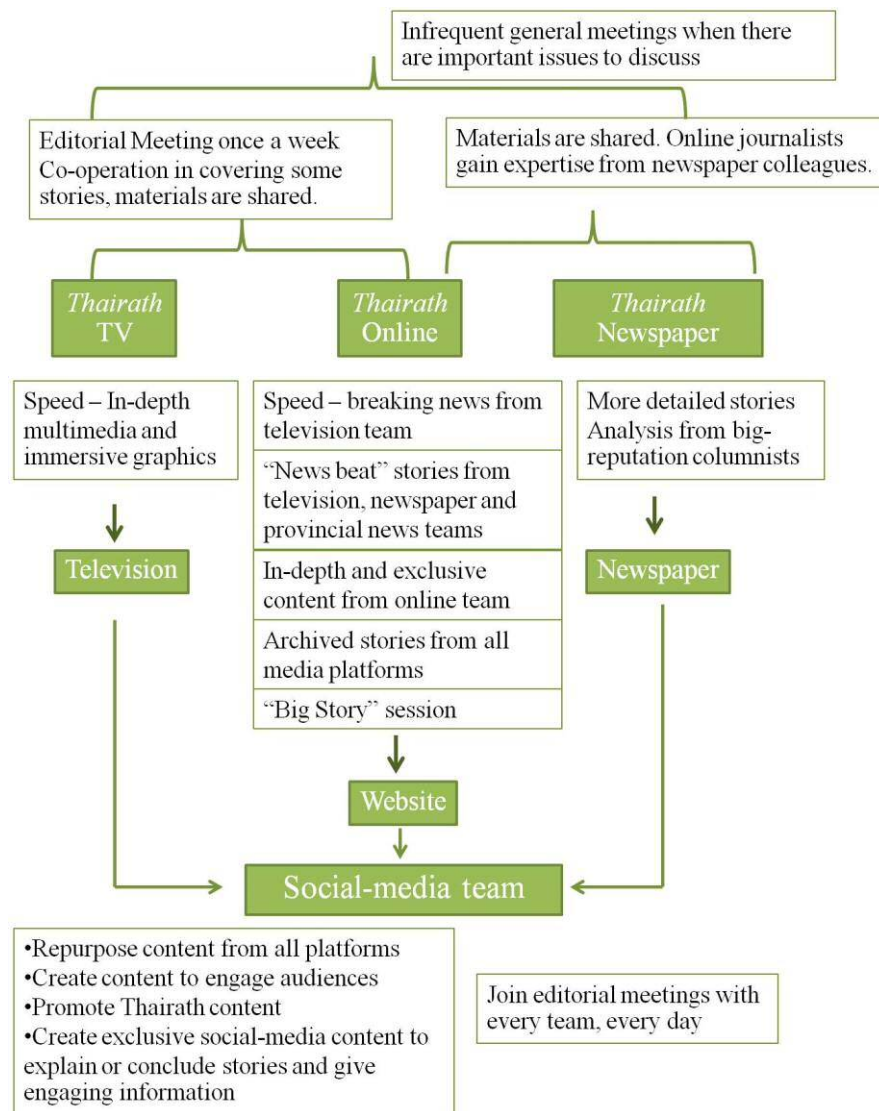
platforms. During this production process, the new-media team plays an important role by repurposing content and creating original and exclusive content for PPTV HD36's website and social-media platforms. In designing this content, the new-media team studies audience analyses and platform insights. It also reports on trends revealed by these sources to others in the newsroom so stories can be planned across various platforms (Srisaracam, 2018).

*Thairath's* daily newspaper has the strength of journalists with long experience. The main story of every day for the entire *Thairath* operation comes from the daily news gathering of the newspaper's journalists. The newspaper also has a strong team of regional journalists. Through its regional reporters, *Thairath* sometimes gets hints of issues different from those of other news organisations. Its firm rural readership makes *Thairath* Thailand's largest-circulation daily newspaper. Although the number printed is declining, it still sells out every day. Head of Provincial News, *Thairath* Daily explains that regional journalists gather news and share information and materials with teams across all *Thairath* platforms. The newspaper and online platforms are given priority, and some journalists share information with the *Thairath* TV team. *Thairath's* expansion to multiple platforms has given journalists the opportunity to reach bigger audiences.

When covering news stories, *Thairath's* television team focuses on speed and multimedia presentation. *Thairath* TV has a strong component of immersive graphics. The television team also works more closely with the online team, as Editorial Advisor for *Thairath* Online and Director of *Thairath* Daily's Information Centre. The newspaper unit points out that convergence can be implemented more easily between television and online operations. Sometimes, the television and online teams work together on breaking stories. The television team has reporters at the scene who send information back to the online team, which breaks the story with brief pieces of information on the website. When broadcast on television, the story has more information and interviews. Online assignment editor, *Thairath* Online explains that the newspaper focuses on detailed information because it comes after the other outlets. The website focuses on speed and gathers information from all other outlets to provide news for readers. Television news focuses on multimedia storytelling as a signature style of *Thairath* TV. Provincial news reporters and stories are a big advantage for *Thairath*. Head of Provincial News,

*Thairath* Daily adds that journalists on each platform can get leads on stories differently. Sometimes the television team gets a story lead that newspaper journalists cannot reach out for. They share information with us and the newspaper team can develop the story with different angles and approaches.

This thesis finds that, in practice, newsrooms do not need to rely solely on cooperative work practices, developing a hybrid team, or achieving full convergence in order to produce content for multiple platforms. For example, the cross-media workflow at *Thairath* is an everyday basic work process in which the team responsible for each media platform works separately, but the online and social-media teams repurpose this content for online audiences. Content crosses platforms to provide for audiences on the *Thairath* website and social-media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LINE. The convergence level of this cross-media model is restricted to sharing information, ideas and some materials. This could be another solution to overcome workload and sustain quality of work practice while be able to expanding stories across platforms.



**FIGURE 5.8:** *Thairath's* every-day workflow cross-media model.

This model (in figure 5.8) of cross-media production and cooperation between platforms provides an opportunity to develop multiple stories to provide extended information of each news issue. Newspaper narratives and the issues surrounding them are switched to more in-depth and explanatory coverage than simply running news updates. Online content is repurposed from the newspaper stories and the television operation also gets its share of information from the newspaper team. Then, other platforms give the stories a different focus, with proper storytelling to meet the tastes and behaviour of different audience groups. Every platform presents its own exclusive in-depth treatment of a story to attract people who are interested in the issues involved.

The cross-media workflow of *Nation Multimedia Group (NMG)* illustrate content development from speed to in-depth report by multi-skilled journalist and online team (rewriters). The process starts online, where NMG focuses on a multi-screen strategy. Audiences currently tend to consume news and content more on mobile phones and tablet devices, and although newspapers and television are still the main platforms, mobile- and tablet-screen audiences are targeted first. However, not every story follows this production path because of the limited skills of some journalists from traditional media who are unable to adapt to a multi-platform culture.

The Editor-in-Chief of Nation TV explains that news breaks on social media are a response to an audience need for speed. People want to get ahead of others in gathering information, and they want to learn of news events when they happen. Thus, social media has become the first platform to release first-hand information – especially from reporters “at the scene”. Some journalists use Twitter or Facebook to update information; some are able to perform Live reports on Facebook Live. Then the news is repackaged and new information is added for the website and for the television news programme. Well-rounded information and analysis goes to the newspapers. All of this material is shared through the News Centre, from where the story will be repurposed to go online again to engage specific audiences, to promote its release elsewhere, or for ‘on-demand’ viewing of archived material.

The Editor-in-Chief of Nation TV emphasized the need to reshuffle ideas within the editorial team and to reach agreement to post more in-depth and investigative news on websites, rather than just repurposing content, because people were seeking different angles to stories. If newsrooms want their websites to create impact, they need to expand the content for news stories across platforms, and not just clone or repackage it for multiple platforms.

According to the interview data concerning the workflow needed to produce content across platforms, NMG’s television outlets (Now26 and Nation TV) are the organization’s main platforms for distributing news content, and the cross-media workflow springing from the television teams is divided into three steps: speed and context; context and on-demand; and in-depth and analysis. The is similar to the workflow strategy of NMG’s newspaper outlets: the online platforms are used to

“bridge” newspaper content to audiences that have moved away from newspapers to digital platforms. News stories are first reported on journalists’ personal social-media accounts. NMG has been encouraging its reporters to recognize the importance and added value of using their personal social-media accounts when covering news events. There are three main news breaks per day, for which journalists may be assigned to deliver live reports, send news updates or produce news packages to give context to the issues involved. If a reporter is gathering the big story of the day, he or she may perform all three options, with the stories appearing on all three news breaks as details are added and different angles developed. If the news event is urgent and generates wide audience interest, it will also break in a short version on websites and official social-media accounts (Facebook and Twitter). Some stories will also be picked up from the News Centre by the radio team for regular news reports on radio.

After they are broadcast on TV or published in newspapers, stories are repurposed, or rewritten in online format, news video clips are edited, and the “packages” are archived on websites where they can be viewed on-demand. The newspaper’s journalists will keep developing their story by seeking out different angles or providing more detail than that already published by online media. Since the newspaper is published on the following day, the journalists will look beyond the current issues and develop a well-rounded story that examines new developments, presents new interviews and reaches deeper into background or peripheral matters. The social-media team will pick up some news stories to promote on Facebook or Twitter. Video clips from news programmes will be sent to YouTube for later viewing by some audiences. Journalists who covered news events can appear on TV talk programmes, or their stories may be developed by talk and analysis programmes to give the subjects more depth and insights. As well, journalists can write in-depth versions of their own stories for publication in NMG’s newspapers. Newspaper journalists tend to be more knowledgeable about the issues they pursue than journalists from other platforms. They are good resources for analytical journalism. Hence, some newspaper journalists appear on television news programmes or host radio programmes for in-depth examination of news-related issues and situations. Then, all news stories and associated materials go back to the websites as archived information for viewing on demand and future

reference. The social-media team will pick up some of these stories to promote on NMG's official social-media accounts. Journalists also have the option of writing background stories on their personal social-media accounts to engage with their followers.

The *NOW26* News Editor explained that cross-media production gave journalists more platforms on which to present their work, and this should encourage journalists to understand the policies and managerial purposes of the organizations for which they work. Television news is short, but when they can produce more content from one story, there are platforms supporting the delivery of their work to a variety of audiences. For example, a news report about violence in Thailand's southernmost provinces may get a few minutes on a news programme. Journalists can do more research of the issues to complete a well-rounded story and write it for a website version or a report in an investigative programme or cross-media to newspaper outlets. In this process, journalists learn to plan their stories and develop them from speed to in-depth reporting. However, in practice, it depends on personal skill of journalists and not every reporter can achieve multi-skilled by working alone to do all tasks and maintain quality of all work tasks. However, results in this thesis show that for journalists who can develop multi-skilled including understanding nature of each platform, have skill to gather material and produce content for each platform, and know how to build community of follow to engage audience on social media along can achieve quality in term of multiple stories and multiple angles to add knowledge of issues for different audience. Yet, it's more difficult to achieve day-to-day work in some journalists than having newsroom team backing up their work throughout the process as happened at *PPTV HD36*.

Both journalists and editors in this study gave the opinion that quality journalism entails giving adequate context to stories, in order to help people make sense of what is happening. In this way, they can say that their work practices conform to public needs. A strategy of mapping workflow will show clearly what cross-media production is achieving on a day-to-day basic level. The problem is how to overcome the time constraints inherent in this process, so that journalists do not feel that they have insufficient time to invest in long-form writing, or so-called

‘long-tailed’ journalistic distribution. In this study, long-tailed distribution is seen to have the characteristics of multiple news stories developed throughout the processes of news gathering and production for distribution on multiple platforms. Multiple stories act as different entry points to the main issues or topics, so that they can reach different groups of people with fresh narratives and personalization of information. Multiple stories are developed by adding more context, new evidence and information, analysis and explanation of issues. Effectively, therefore, the routine production of multiple stories is generating all of the elements of long-tailed news. It is important that it does not languish for want of compilation, fresh presentation or a thoughtful narrative. However, the success of quality cross-media workflow also depend how journalists who functioning it which I will further discuss in 5.3

### **5.3 Multi-skilled journalists or having ‘a bridge team to produce quality of cross-media content**

There have been concerns about decreasing quality in the work of individual journalists when they are expected to perform more tasks in a cross-media environment. It is feared that the effort of competing in the field with the need for speed in online reporting may detract from a journalist’s focus on covering a news event with high quality and prevent the development of long-tail journalism by disallowing the time and resources needed to do so. However, this study is adamant in its belief that multi-skilled journalists are an essential part of cross-media news production, and that they can achieve high quality if they have editorial and new-media teams working to support them in the field.

Cross-media news production has added new skills and disciplines to the work required of journalists, and has changed the news production process. The traditional job of serving a single platform consisted of newsgathering, news production and news distribution, with a journalist proceeding step by step through the process towards publication, which was the final step. When working for just one platform, a journalist could be required to write two or three news pieces per day, depending on the day’s news assignments. But since the advent of cross-media policies by news organizations, the processes of newsgathering, production and

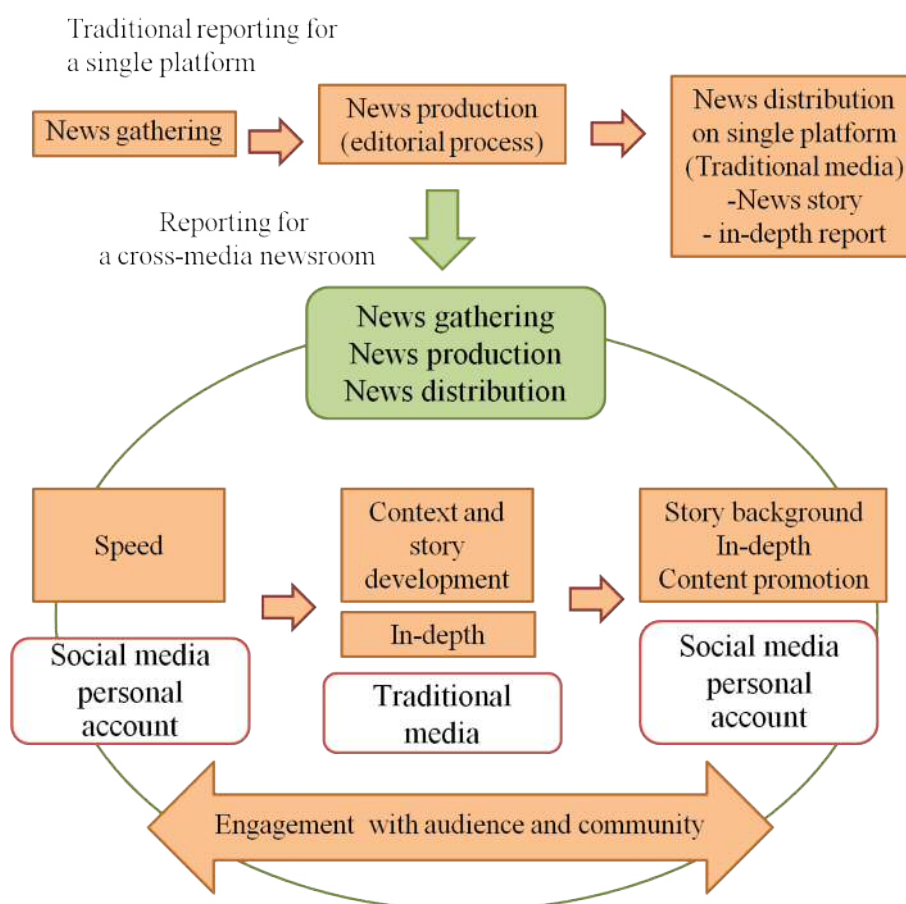
distribution have merged as one flow, and journalists are required to perform all of these tasks at the same time.

Journalists must nowadays develop multiple skills, to gather information, produce coverage and distribute the news to audiences. News distribution begins when journalists are at the scene of a news event, when they will tweet or post important information on social media. Then, the journalists will write a news item in television format, and after it is broadcast on television, a website team will repurpose the story and publish it on a website. Later, Facebook will be used to provide a longer story, told in multimedia style to attract attention, which may explain the real-time situation and promote the organization's coverage on its television news programme. Sometimes, journalists give context and background to the stories they are covering on their own Facebook pages or accounts to engage their fans and followers.

In chapter 4, I discussed a possible solution to the problem of workload pressures preventing investments of labour into long-form or investigative journalism, or even into giving a story a variety of aspects. In practice, multi-skilled journalists can plan their coverage and develop multiple stories to deliver information to their audience during newsgathering process. These multiple stories can give different aspects of issues while information is unfolding. According to the chart in Figure 5.11, while they are gathering information in the field, journalists can distribute drafts of their stories on social media. These may include:

1. Breaking news and first drafts of content, if an event has urgency and high human-interest value, for example, disasters, accidents or important decisions announced at press conferences. Journalists may break the news on Facebook Live, cover an incident with a live tweet, or prepare a short post on Facebook and Twitter.
2. Updating a situation in near real-time, when a journalist gathers important new information and writes a short paragraph with pictures to post on Facebook or Twitter.
3. "Behind the scenes" reports on the news-gathering process using their own social-media accounts can allow journalists to engage with audiences. Sometimes they ask questions of their audiences, seek opinions, or use crowdsourcing to gather wider aspects or angles to the

story. This kind of content encourages social-media followers to participate in the news-gathering process and such engagement can lead them follow the journalist's continuing updates.



**FIGURE 5.9** Journalists' process of cross-media distribution of news.

While gathering news, journalists may also produce content for distribution on their own social-media accounts, which adding context and develop angle of story which audience can follow and engage throughout news reporting process. In these cases, the journalist assumes the role of sole gatekeeper and makes instant editorial decisions. Thus, without good training in ethical judgment, a journalist can easily make mistakes. This ethical issue has raised debates about distributing news on social media and the use of "speed journalism". For example, faulty information

may be reported on social media at a time of crisis, or rumours may be published by journalists or news organizations as matters of fact. There are sometimes problems of verification of facts and judgments on good taste in user-generated content. However, multi-skilled journalists see that using social media during the process of news reporting gives them an advantage in reaching and engaging with audiences. Journalists have learnt more about ways in which social media can be used and these outlets are accepted these days as important tools in news gathering and reporting. Over the past five years, training has been provided for journalists on the use of social media and ethical issues by news organizations and professional associations.

In many newsrooms the exercise of multiple skills by journalists is optional; some simply cannot cope well with multi-tasking. But in reality, those who can learn multiple skills and multi-tasking in their day-to-day work practices can effectively overcome heavy workloads and help their newsrooms achieve high quality in reporting series of multiple stories. These are stories where a journalist develops various ideas, adds context and more information as the issue unfolds and continues with updates while engaging the audience to take part in the coverage, or at least take the time to consider the importance of the issues. The news-production process nowadays demands that multi-skilled journalists report a story across platforms, beginning with content that is repurposed to appear on a range of social media, then developing a narrative and producing content for traditional media, and finally returning the content to social media for the delivery of greater detail in extending and exclusive content. In addition, teamwork between editors and journalists to promote content for others is also important in creating awareness of the organization's brand and reaching audiences. Cross-promotional policies require that journalists post links to news stories on their personal social-media accounts to drive traffic to the main platform. In this way, a news organization can reach a wider audience while responding to consumer demands for news anywhere, anyway, any time.

According to *PPTV HD36's* cross-media policy, every reporter is not only trained as a multi-skilled journalist, but he or she is also required to use social media – Twitter and Facebook – while producing content for their main television platform. When covering a story, their work begins by breaking the story by

tweeting or posting first drafts of information, or updating information, to their followers. Then they develop the television news story by adding fresh information to that already reported via Twitter and Facebook. Editorial teams support them with more information to develop the story before it goes to air. Journalists also have to take pictures in the field, for use on social media. While editing television news reports, they have to sit with technicians to select the pictures and sound bites. This means that the journalists control and design how a story is told. After the news goes to air, the journalists add in-depth information to their reports on their Facebook accounts, placing the news stories in a broader context with background information or news analysis.



**FIGURE 5.10:** PPTV HD36's convergent journalists' workflow.

Reporting news is about following up the issues and delivering facts to audiences throughout the news-production process. News Assignment Editor, PPTV HD36 explained:

That's called engaging with an audience. All media that enable us to communicate with an audience are our vehicles. We, as journalists, should be able to benefit from each platform to get people to consume our content. We may not gain the highest ratings of television news, but more than 10-thousand people

will watch live content on social media when a journalist is on the scene. That's the way our content reaches people. We are building up our audience and our fans, and they will finally come back to television.(News Assignment Editor, PPTV HD36)

This multi-skilled workflow helps journalists to build a personal brand that can strengthen the brand of their organization. Sometimes, if a story posted online by a journalist gathers significant audience interest, the official Facebook account will share the posts to reach an even broader audience. Also, everyone in the team uses social media as a promotional platform, sharing the stories within their personal networks to reach additional audiences.

In the strategy of must-have multi-skilled journalist, training is important to help journalists build up the same culture and direction and to develop new skills. *PPTV HD36*'s teams train every two weeks on methods and ideas for reporting news, along with meetings where issues are discussed that aim to broaden their understanding and enhance their initiative skills so that they can think differently when looking at topics and stories. This is the strategy of a relative newcomer striving to build its brand among news audiences.

*The Nation Multimedia Group* follows a strategy of allowing journalists to voluntarily use multiple skills. This study has found that quality journalism is very difficult to achieve if a journalist must work alone to complete all the tasks involved in cross-media coverage. The consequence is that not every journalist at *NMG* can work at a multi-skilled level. Unlike *PPTV HD36*, *NMG* does not have a clear work process or a team to support multi-skilled journalists in the field, so their success depends on personal drive and ability to adapt to new technologies and the changing pace of journalistic practice.

The sheer complexity of the job performed by a multi-skilled journalist was brought home to me in my observation of one journalist from *The Nation* newspaper's IT desk, as she worked at a press conference. I noticed first that the role she played was greater than producing a single news story for distribution across various platforms. When she arrived, she set up equipment to record the

whole conference. She had a still camera close at hand, and voice recorders were ready on the table. While she listened to the conference, she tweeted information to inform her audience of what the conference was about, with the main intention of directing people to follow, read or watch more in the news coverage. She asked questions to add points to the story. When the conference ended, she ran to grab sources for exclusive information and to shoot short interview clips for use on the website. Then, she wrote a summary of the press conference key points and submitted it with pictures and short clips for the website team to combine into a story for publication on the website. Then, she wrote a news story with more details and contextual information for the newspaper. She discussed the newspaper story on the phone with an editor to confirm all of its aspects and talked with a graphic designer who would produce infographics to support the story.

All of this happened in two short hours. “Work is hectic, but it’s fun,” she quipped. The reporter told me that in the beginning she had to learn a lot of new skills in order to do it all on her own, but after doing it for a year, she found she could plan ahead for what would happen. In routine situations like press conferences it was easy for her to manage all of the tasks. However, she expressed concern that not everyone could do it, and there were situations in which even she fell short. This supports my argument that field journalists still need the support of news teams in the office, rather than those news teams simply waiting for news and stories to emerge from field journalists alone. Another major concern is that if all journalists have to perform this kind of news coverage all of the time, who will be left to do long-form and investigative journalism? “News organizations should be able to strike a balance between multi-tasking, specialization and spare-time investment for investigative pieces that impact society,” The Nation reporter said.

Multi-skilled journalists can also produce content for other media outlets across the organization. For example, a television journalist may write an in-depth analysis of the story he earlier reported on the television channel for publication in an *NMG* newspaper. Newspaper and online journalists can also be regarded as “experts” to analyse a situation or give background information, or become hosts on television or radio programmes. This adds more value to their content and to the journalists themselves. *Komchadluek* Online Editor pointed that every reporters can do cross-media production if they have context and well-rounded information to

produce good content. Content is the key to performing effectively in a cross-media strategy. In practice, some journalists respond eagerly to the opportunities offered by multi-skilled and cross-media production. They see the benefits of sending messages to audiences in various forms via many channels. However, some reporters regard multi-skilled journalism as a burden that demands that they do more work, they overlook the fact that good planning can help them through the task.

The policy isn't strict; it doesn't demand that every journalist has to report news across platforms. It's more like a voluntary situation. As journalists, we are responsible for ensuring that we send information to as many people as we can reach. Cross-media production is about creating our own platforms, where we can tell stories in many ways. I think the organization gives us the opportunity to be storytellers and to deliver important information to wider audiences. Cross-media production adds value to news stories. When a story can reach more people, it can have an impact that drives change or problem solutions. (Nation TV reporters)

Some multi-skilled journalists at *NMG* also suggest that their expertise can help to achieve a cross-media process that saves money for the organization. It may, thus, represent a solution for an organization whose revenue is in decline and faces the need to cut costs. To send separate specialist journalists to cover the same story in order to deliver it across all media channels may ensure higher quality because each journalist needs to focus on a single task. However, for an organization short in budget, the use of multi-skilled journalists to perform cross-media production may be a distinct benefit. *Nation TV* reporter admit that an organization with huge funding can send separate teams to report on the same event. That helps the quality of content because each team is able to focus on one task. Yet, at *NMG* multi-skilled journalists have to perform many tasks at the same time when covering an event, so they sometimes make mistakes or lose some quality.

*Komchadluek* News Editor pointed that an obstacle to adopting cross-media journalism with greater creativity in narrative style is that some professional journalists are used to the ways and style of narrative on the platform for which they work. Senior journalists find more difficulty in embracing new narrative techniques that mix different styles of storytelling. They have strength in developing news angles, but they still have to improve their use of multiple styles and narrative skills. Thus, newsroom have rewriters and teams of photographers to help take these burdens off these people, to be able to use advantage what they are best at: news angles and solid information.

This thesis found in practical level in newsroom that social media team can lead on strategic of content production and distribution which benefit newsroom to reach people and produce well-rounded quality content in two different strategy by being what I called in this thesis *‘a bridging team’*.

This study found that although journalists know that cross-media practice is expected of them, they simply cannot cope with the many tasks involved. The downside to this situation is that they are likely to make mistakes or turn in work of lesser quality. Considerations of this issue concluded that newsroom teams, including editors, production and social-media members, rewriters and graphic designers, need to support journalists in the field by supplying information and materials and discussing production needs while they are gathering information so as to ease the burden and help them to produce multiple content for many channels. Another key strategy of cross-media journalism is to allow each outlet to work separately and independently, but to have a processing or bridging team to converge content from all outlets and produce cross-media content. One interesting finding is that the role of new-media and online teams grows more important in this type of cross-media strategy.

*Thairath’s* social-media team works with the other three news teams to promote news and stories on the organization’s social-media platforms. The social-media team is responsible for *Thairath’s* cross-media strategy on an everyday basis. The team repurposes stories and reports from the other teams to create news content, and while striving to maintain the essence and main focus of each story, tells it in a different way. The social-media team thus becomes a hub connecting all of *Thairath’s* news content together. It works closely with editors from the other

platforms to understand the various news agendas, to choose stories and to pitch ideas through which the other platforms can benefit from social-media exposure. There are also convergent meetings between the various *Thairath* platforms. The newspaper and television units sit down and discuss their plans once a week. The online and television teams also meet once a week. In its special “bridging” position, the social-media team joins editorial meetings every day. Social-Media Manager, *Thairath* emphasised that cross-promotion strategy is important to drive people to consume news across platforms.

We get hints of what people are eager to know, and we create specific content for our social-media platforms. Another way around is that I am working for a TV programme by monitoring what people are talking about online. I check the facts surrounding their conversations and create a story that gives an in-depth explanation. It is broadcast on a television show called “Investigative Social Media”. This kind of content is necessary because lots of rumours and misleading information is spread all over the Internet. News media should be responsible for checking, verifying and making it easy for people to clearly understand issues and situations. (Social-Media Manager, *Thairath*).

*Thairath*’s online team is responsible for producing news content on the organization’s website as well as acting as a bridge for content from both the newspaper and the television news team. News updates on the website come from the newspaper and television units sharing resources for rewriting into web format and posting on online platforms. Video clips and photographs from the newspaper and television units are shared across all platforms. *Thairath*’s online unit also has its own team and production facilities to produce video clips, news packages or stories springing from the original ideas of the online staff. There are five important components of *Thairath*’s website news presentation: (1) “news beat” reports and local news from the newspaper, rewritten for the website; (2) news stories written

by the online team (in some cases, online reporters are sent to cover stories exclusively for the website); (3) in-depth reports, special assignments and packages written by online reporters; (4) all stories from Thairath's various media outlets are saved on the website for on-demand audiences, including television clips and newspaper stories; and (5) the "Big Story" session. This covers special issues, and all related pieces of a story are provided on the same page for readers. The website, therefore, acts as a hub for all of Thairath's news product. Although this content is produced separately by each unit and has been delivered to audiences on each medium, it is loaded on to the website for audiences to explore at their leisure.

The new-media team at *PPTV HD36* is really two teams working together – a strategy team and a development team. The strategy team uses audience analysis and insights to design new content for the website and new-media platforms, while the development team is responsible for maintaining and developing the platforms, their technology and their systems. The strategy is to strengthen *PPTV HD36*'s content and channels; a task in which audience analysis has become important. In its use of audience insights and analyses, the new-media strategic team tries to monitor, evaluate and classify audiences in order to better understand their consumption tastes and characteristics. Assistant New Media Business Strategy Director, *PPTV HD36* explained that when a news organization broadcasts a report on television, it is catering to a mass audience. But within this mass there are specific groups of "stakeholders" that can be targeted, so the news team designs the way in which the story is told; focusing on points or angles that are important to each audience group.

Finding these communities and reaching audiences with specific needs is something a newsroom does online. The new-media team studies these communities and develops ways of delivery specific content to specific audiences, while the newsroom selects different angles to a story that talk directly to these specific groups. These processes have a direct effect on approaches to a story and the ways in which it is told. (Assistant New Media Business Strategy Director, *PPTV HD36*)

On top of this, technology is changing rapidly and constantly. The new-media team must follow the trends and try new technologies that help in the understanding of audiences. The new-media team must then propose new content strategies to the news and production teams so that *PPTV HD36*'s news content can more effectively reach a wider audience. PPTV HD36 explained that the team has to develop understanding of social media insight data with editorials staffs to give them a sense of understanding audience and employ these data into news agenda and story planning. This accords to Thairath social media editor that new-media team acts as cooperation partners with every other platforms in the company to plan and produce news content that related to online audience and find ways to drive audience to consume news across platforms. My observation during meeting and day-to-day work at PPTV HD36 shows that editorial staffs has granted more responsibility to the new-media team to study audience and their performance on social media while editors and journalists embrace information given by new-media team to plan their work practice and news distribution strategy.

At Thairath, new-media team sometimes feel resistance from cooperation with old-media staffs, but in editorial levels there have been more cooperation on planning content strategy and new-media team is responsible on coping with repurposing and extending stories of print and television to meet online audience personalisation consumption tastes.

*Komchadluek* Online Editor explains that the online platforms have no strict rules, and we are testing new ways of producing and distributing content every day. They have to analyse audience insights, understand what people in society want to consume and design appealing content on websites.

Content is still the key to success, so online teams will focus more on producing exclusive content that can differentiate our websites from others. People working in the media industry are learning new things and adapting to new media environments and technologies all the time. Creativity is more important in the news business now than it ever has been. (*Komchadluek* Online Editor)

The success level depends on the proportions of repurposed content and innovative content on each media channel. If the work of the bridging team or the cross-media process is simply picking up stories to rewrite and repackage for multi-platform distribution, the opportunity to engage audiences and create an impact with high-value journalism may be lost. However, if the process encourages the production of more original content, including exclusive stories and innovative storytelling for different target audiences, then the quality of the cross-media journalism will flourish.

## 5.4 Conclusion

To conclude, analysis of the three models finds that there are four essential elements to the successful implementation of cross-media journalism. While these three elements are essential to all models designed to achieve cross-media journalism, in practice there may be different strategies for their implementation.

(1) **Co-operation in cross-media structure needs to be designed and ‘bridge team’ to synergy cross-media workflow decrease workloads and increase productivity.** The first strategy is to establish a News Centre that gathers content from all platforms and from which all materials can be shared and used. Another strategy is to have daily joint meetings of all editors to discuss the day’s news gathering agenda, exchange information and make decisions on what issues will be reported across platforms. This sees the integration of resources and cooperation from every medium and platform in an organization, even though every medium has its own team and platform to distribute stories. Small to medium-sized news organisation with flatter structure can embrace convergence concept of co-operation in more tasks of newsroom. The integration and exchanging ideas to plan and produce content together can bring advantage of each team to produce multiple stories across platforms. For complex structure of news organisation, situational coordination of isolated platforms is good approach for cross-media work practice strategy. This model is usually developed when a news organization still has media outlets that work independently of others in the same company. Some of the organization’s media may converge and work together as a cross-media newsroom. But full cross-media cooperation only occurs when big issues like disasters need to

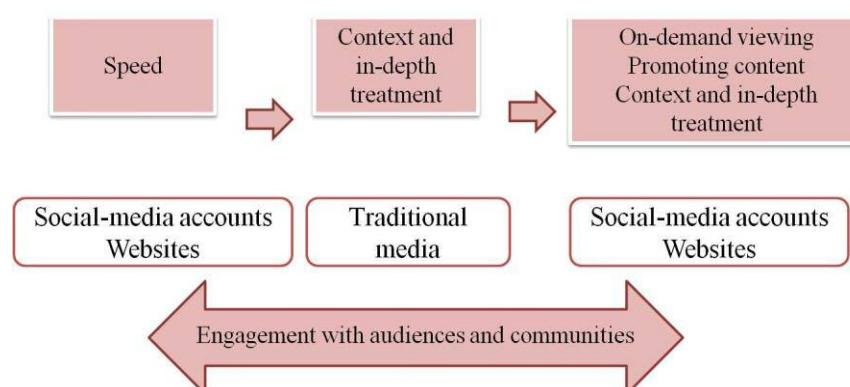
be covered and the effort calls for participation and cooperation from all teams and all platforms

Reflection upon the problems of newsroom cooperation regularly returns to the tension that exists between teams and how the benefits of strengthening various platforms can be realized. As with many new social structures, fear remains a pervasive element in newsrooms: fear of losing jobs, or fear of the organization cutting back on some teams because they are not seen to be benefitting the news-production process to the extent expected or planned. Effective cooperation and synergies between different areas of specialization are being prevented by differences in mindsets inherited from dissimilar backgrounds and gaps in age and experience between teams and platforms. Without integration, a multiplatform strategy is just an additional series of channels for distributing news. Without the motivation for support, cooperation and synergy, the aim towards quality in work practices described by interviewees in Chapter 4 seems remote and the ability to generate social impact leading to change less than assured. This study finds that cooperation between media platforms helps journalists to work effectively and helps newsrooms to achieve a synergy of best practices from each platform, enabling better reporting and dissemination of news. Sometimes the impact of this synergy can help to drive change and solve problems related to cross-media cooperation. Effective work-practice strategies found in this study involved news organizations designing a process of integration, of ‘working together’, and of finding more comfortable ways of encouraging adaptation to new practices.

***Bridging Teams***, or groups of people that can work with all outlets, platforms and teams in a news organization. I have named it a “Bridge Team” because it ties everyone together and is responsible for selecting material from each team, producing it in multimedia form and distributing it across multiple channels. Any team in a newsroom can be given this “bridging” responsibility, depending on an organization’s policy and its newsroom structure. The key functions of a Bridging Team are to (a) innovatively create content; (b) repurpose and repackage content from other platforms; and (c) engage with audiences.

**(2) The workflow in cross-media production should be designed as a framework to develop multiple stories offering contextualised, in-depth and on-demand content.** This workflow should be able to support the entire news staff

and all outlets by producing content in many forms and distributing it effectively to target audiences. It is important that the workflow should provide for three vital elements in the development, treatment and telling of news stories across various media.



**FIGURE 5.11:** Basic cross-media workflow.

The first of these elements is the need for speed when stories are breaking. Details and information should be posted online, as a draft of story details as the journalist gathers the news. This content can be produced and distributed by journalists themselves or a newsroom team.

The second element is the addition of detail, background and context. This material goes to traditional platforms like television, radio and newspapers. In-depth or investigative journalism can also be produced for use on traditional platforms. In the case of each of the traditional; platforms, the story-telling style is different.

The third of the vital elements is required to take the story back to online platforms, where it can appear in many forms. On-demand content is repurposed from other platforms and is stored on websites as archived material that can be accessed by audiences at their convenience or used as background or reference matter. Websites are also platforms on which stories can be further developed by giving them context, or multi-media reports presented that examine various issues in depth. Long-form journalism can also be produced for websites. Social-media accounts play an important role by promoting content in ways that engage with audiences and extend a story’s “reach”.

**(3) Multi-skilled journalists are essential but their ability to operate at maximum quality requires information support from newsroom staff performing multiple tasks.** The skills of such journalists include an ability to write for multiple platforms and appear on-camera or in studios; shoot pictures and video clips; edit video; build an online community and engage with audiences on social media; verify information and work as a “gatekeeper” to make decisions on news angles, aspects and issues to be reported on each medium. Multi-skilled journalists are storytellers, explainers and solution providers for society. They can produce multiple forms of content for use on multiple platforms. The process of cross-media production by multi-skilled journalists begins online (personal social-media accounts), then they write or report for websites and traditional media (television or newspapers), and finally return to online platforms to promote content, write in-depth or provide background to stories. By performing across all media, journalists are able to build a personal brand that can engage people with a news organization.

This study has found that across all of these elements of workflow, engagement with audiences is important to attract people to follow issues and drive them to content across an organization’s various platforms. Work-practice strategies in cross-media production are capable of achieving high-quality journalism, in terms of its audience reach and development of stories through a full in-depth cycle, from breaking news with speed to adding context and going further to develop long-tail and investigative journalism. Such strategies, working with the correct cross-media model, can provide multiple aspects of issues, engage people to understand situations and provide opportunities to stimulate social change. More importantly, day-to-day work practices in cross-media journalism should be designed to uphold the long-term quality and values of professional journalism.

## CHAPTER SIX

### **Cross-media content and narrative strategy**

This chapter explores the exercise of journalism in creating narrative styles for delivery of news content across various platforms. The cross-media workflow, as discussed in chapter 5 (Cross-media models and strategies), shows that news is distributed across channels in three stages: the first driven by the need for speed; the second provides context and develops the story; and the third creates an in-depth report. Previous studies have focused on ‘repurposing’ content when referring to cross-media news production (see Dailey et al., 2005; Erdal, 2009). Some studies have examined the possibility of ‘innovation and creativity’ in digital narratives. This thesis supports the idea that different forms of digital storytelling bring changes to what is a new form of journalism (see Deuze, 2003; Monoley, 2011; Jacobson, 2012).

Cross-media content can be more than simply repurposed storytelling for different platforms; it can extend news coverage to different aspects of a story, to inform and explain issues, as well as engaging audiences. This study suggests that journalists and newsroom staff should have a clear objective in mind for cross-media content, so that it is designed with narrative styles that will carry a story across the functional differences of multiple platforms while ensuring that the different aspects and presentations remain connected to the main issue. The thesis stress the importance of planning how each piece of content should function in the telling of a story; how it should fit into the ‘jigsaw’ that represents the entire scope of a story. This advances earlier thinking, which tended to concentrate on narrative style alone.

This chapter continues the discussion of quality in cross-media journalism, but in respect of content and narrative strategies across platforms. Previous studies have explored the forms, genres, styles and content of specific news platforms (Bolter and Grusin, 1999; Fagerjord, 2003; Erdal, 2009) while other research has focused on the creation of innovative storytelling, using new technology (Ureta, 2011; Monovich, 2011; Thurman, 2012; Pavlik and Brides, 2013). In this thesis, I

argue that it can be more useful to think of content in terms of functional typologies for cross-media dissemination. Erdal (2009) suggested six forms of cross-media (re)production content; this thesis aims to build upon knowledge related to the objective use and design of content by dividing it into four types, based on functions: repurposing, engaging, cross-promoting and extending exclusive content to different platforms. This expands upon existing studies of content management, which suggest that the management of content in a digital media environment should aim to expand the 'life cycle' and value of content (Jones, 2000; Poulter, 2003) as well as embracing the transmedia concept, in which aspects or components of content play different roles with different objectives on different outlets to attract and engage audiences with stories (Moloney, 2011; Veglis, 2012; Franquet, 2014; Renó, 2014).

This chapter divides discussion and analysis of findings into two sections. First, introducing concept of 4 functioning types of cross-media content and examples of narrative of multi-skilled journalist and new media team supporting on producing content across all online platforms. Second, investigating on 'hybrid story-telling' narrative styles in-cooperate between traditional media and new media outlets. These two sections will illustrate distribution strategy, integrated narrative across platforms, types or function of cross-media content and how content strategy and narrative achieve quality of journalism.

## **6.1 Four types of content functioning to expand the quality of multiple stories**

Study-interview responses and some textual analysis of content mentioned by interviewees show that construction of news narratives occurs throughout the cross-media journalism process – from the initial need for speed through in-depth reporting to promotion of content. Storytelling also involves a synergy between the narrative styles favoured by traditional media, on one hand, and new media, on the other, that strives to tell the story in a way that is most likely to engage with audiences. In addition, there are four types of cross-media content and all should be similarly focused on the story being told. Previous studies tend to focus on repurposing content for cross-media distribution. Erdal (2009) describes six forms of cross-media (re)production, and illustrates how a particular news story is

produced for multiple platforms by repurposing content. However, in Erdal's study, forms of repurposing are based on increasing amounts of journalistic work, mainly focused on adapting narrative styles and forms of storytelling. What he neglects to discuss is how journalists can retain control over the flow of their content. Analyses of content strategies and flows of cross-media content in the three study newsrooms presented in Chapter 5 show that multiple stories about a news event are distributed in three steps: (1) in response to the need for speedy reporting; (2) when stories are developed and context is added; and (3) when background is provided for in-depth coverage, herein called "long-tailed journalism". This chapter examines the content at each of these steps and categorises it into four types on the basis of their function in the overall process of distributing multiple stories.

During observations in the three newsrooms I found similarities in content distribution flows of integrated work between journalists in the field and journalists in the newsroom. The first team includes rewriters and editors who work to support story ideas and collaborate with journalists on the construction of story narratives using both original and repurposed content after the materials are submitted to the newsroom. A second team is the online and new-media team, which plays an important role in producing content in multimedia and digital narratives for publication on the website or social-media platforms. These people in the newsrooms work in a cooperative synergy. They are specialists in the design and development of content whose job parallels that of the journalists who are doing their job in the field.

At Nation Multimedia Group, web journalists search through the 'news centre' to gather materials submitted by reporters, photographers, graphic designers and production teams. The web journalists then produce short and updated news stories for the website and social media. When fresh updates on those stories are received, further news pieces are published on the website and social media. In addition, the website team also phones other sources to add context and details, and to further develop their own stories by expanding those submitted to the system by field journalists. Some news stories have four or five items published on different platforms throughout the day. Publication of such updates may continue for a few days, depending on how big the issue is, how many updates are gathered by field journalists, and what new information is supplied by journalists in the newsroom.

During my observations at *Thairath*, I found that the social-media team tried to work along with television and newspaper teams to design content on social-media platforms in ways that engaged different audiences and drew them back to television and newspaper reports. The social-media editor explained that the team joined the meeting of all outlets to observe news directions and decision-making on issues to be covered and to plan with journalists from each platform how social media could support their efforts to reach audiences. *Thairath's* website team works quite independently from the newspaper and television teams. It produces its own exclusive content, sometimes up to hundreds of news stories in a day. But the website team still repurposes some content from the television and newspaper teams for publication on the website.

At PPTV HD36, my observation of the distribution flow found that multi-skilled journalists were using their own social-media platforms throughout the news-gathering process, and after the news was published across platforms, to promote and give background information on the stories. Their Assignment Editor explained that journalists were able to engage with audiences throughout the news-gathering and production processes. Materials from journalists may come as chunks of text, pictures, or video footage which the teams can repurpose, rewrite or update for publication on the website. Some material comes in the form of short news updates, live reports and even news packages. The editorial team is responsible for planning how this material is constructed and distributed across platforms and the new-media team repurposes and creates original content for each platform by extending information into online news or social-media posts. The significance of this process is seen as an opportunity to engage different audiences; to raise awareness of issues and drive social-media audiences back to television news programmes and website reports.

Analysing content from this multiplicity of distribution routes, four types of content can be found that serve different functions, ranging from informing to engaging with audiences (Srisaracam, 2018). They include:

***Repurposed content*** is created when journalists or news teams repackage news material in a different style so that it can be published on different platforms. Sometimes, the same content is used across a range of platforms; sometimes a different narrative is crafted by emphasizing content from a particular source,

which adds a few more aspects of the story. An example of repurposing a narrative is when screenshots are taken from television clips and placed along with text on a news website. Sometimes television news vision is edited down in length or taken out of the programme as a series of still pictures to post on a website for an on-demand audience. Often, the repurposing will depend on how many multimedia exposures the material has already had, but when a news organisation has adequate teams and sufficient time, a variety of elements can be introduced to repurposed content. With this potential for enhancement, it may be seen as a problem when teams take the “easy way out” and post the same material on a variety of platforms.

***Extended and exclusive content***, which is native content on each platform, is constructed from repurposed and original materials. They are for exclusive use by specific platform, and are giving narrative style that makes them unsuitable cloning material for other outlets. Journalists and news teams in Thai news organizations try to design original content that extends traditional media content, by giving context and background to issues, analysing insights and addressing further questions. Original content on social media also offers new-media teams the opportunity and the material to produce exclusive stories that don’t appear on any other platform. Social-media analyses provided by interview respondents showed that original content attracted greater audience engagement than did content that was repurposed or promotional.

***Engaging content*** can be anything beyond news stories or journalistic input. For example, journalists using their own social-media accounts can reveal their human and personal side to build a sense of accessibility and proximity, and this helps to build a community of fans and followers. New-media teams are also responsible for creating narrative content to attract an online audience, to build up a community of followers, to generate traffic to social media and news websites and to reach out to different types of audiences. Interviewees from social-media teams suggested that online content should generate a feeling of intimacy; should play with current interests and social-media conversations, should be able to surprise audiences with new information and should immerse audiences in fresh experiences.

***Promotional content*** aims to attract audiences to news presentations across different platforms. Links to news websites are shared and promotional clips are

offered along with key information or graphic material from related stories, all intended to attract an audience to read or watch the full story.

Categorizing content into these four functions provides for the ‘transmedia’ concept, in which each news platform makes its own unique contribution to an unfolding story, expanding to create a “storyworld of journalism” to engage people across the entire range of news media (Jenkins, 2007). I agree with Moloney (2011), when he says that in the digital era, journalists are “content creators who must no longer wait for an audience to come to them, but should seek out the public, connect to them, and give them a reason to pay attention to stories and issues”, and that cross-media journalism means “telling a story through multiple media in an expansive rather than repetitive way”. In the practice of journalism, it is far more difficult to create a “storyworld” than it is in the entertainment business, because journalism is based on fact and truth. However, it can adopt the concept of continuity and seriality, in which stories are produced in chunks and spread across multiple media to ensure maximum plausibility by extension (Jenkins, 2010). These concepts reveal ways in which multiple stories and “engaging stories” can be developed to immerse audiences in experiences to which they will readily relate, so that they understand and recognize the importance of social issues affecting them.

The narrative treatments found in this studies illustrate how individual journalists choose content types and narrative styles to news stories as they are adapted to different platforms, and indeed demonstrates how storytelling is becoming a more important skill in journalism. Multi-skilled journalists perform cross-media content strategy throughout newsgathering, production and distribution process to respond to demands for speed and engagement with the audience as discussed in chapter 5 that it is strategy of developing long-tailed journalism. Audiences want to be there at the moment an important incident occurs; they want to share ideas and take part in issues related to them; and some are active citizens that can help journalists by providing more information or offering new story lead. The narratives focus on short and concise posts and real-time updates. Pictures and video clips may be used to inflame emotions or appeal to curiosity, leading audiences to follow the story. Then after gathering more materials –

interviews, data, evidence – journalists give context to stories and at the end of the process journalists provide background and analysis of issues to audience.

Content and narrative strategies used by multi-skilled journalists from *PPTV 36HD* and *The Nation Multimedia Group* to plan, produce and distribute their own cross-media content with four different functions – repurposed narrative, cross-promotional stories, extending various aspects of a story, and engaging with audiences and the community. When a multi-skilled journalist reports across platforms, he or she uses personal social-media accounts (Facebook and Twitter) to break a story and distribute pieces of content throughout the news-gathering process. The journalist in the field must respond to audience demands for immediate information; they want to know what is happening as quickly as the information breaks. The journalist begins the process of reporting the news while he or she is at the scene and gathering information (Example provide. Here is an example:

The screenshot in Figure 6.1 was taken from *PPTV HD36* on May 1, 2017, while a journalist was attending a press conference about child prostitution in Mae Hong Son province. This shows how she updated the news in real time from the press conference, which concerned not only an investigation of child prostitution, but also allegations that the provincial governor and local officials had paid to have sex with young girls. It was a big issue that the journalist had been following for several weeks and her audience was waiting to see how the investigation would unfold. She used pictures of officials and short sentences to summarize decisions in which high-ranking officials were sacked. She continued with several live tweets of information from the press conference.



**FIGURE 6.1:** Twitter post of PPTV HD36 reporter during the Mae Hong Son press conference.

On the same day, the journalist remained at the Mae Hong Son police station to gather more information. She tweeted when she had more information or updates as people related to investigation arrived at the scene. Short summaries of interviews were also distributed on Twitter (Figure 6.2).



**FIGURE 6.2:** Twitter posts by the PPTV HD36 reporter as she was gathering information on investigations of child prostitution in Mae Hong Son.

The journalist repurposed the same content for her personal Facebook account. Figure 6.3 shows how repurposing has adapted the narrative to a different way of writing, by adding detail or cutting out some words. The same pictures or

video clips as those used on Twitter may be chosen, depending on the amount of material available. Often, repurposing between Facebook and Twitter uses a similar narrative.



**FIGURE 6.3:** Facebook posts of the PPTV HD36 journalist while she was gathering information in Mae Hong Son.

On Facebook, the same picture is used because it helps to tell the story. Longer sentences and details are added to the Facebook posts. When asked if she was afraid that people reading her reports on social media would not wait to watch the story on television, she explained:

The audience is different on each platform. Some people want updates and short pieces of information; some people like to watch the whole story. We serve both types of audience from different platforms. In addition, I choose what is important and appeal to their curiosity so they will want to follow for more details of the story.

This is a strategy of repurposing content between journalists' personal social-media accounts. Journalists use Facebook because they can report news in a greater variety of ways and engage with their fans. As well, there are more Thai people on Facebook than there are on Twitter, so there is a higher chance that journalists will reach different audiences. Referring to storytelling on Facebook at

the very start of the new-production process, when a story is just breaking, Audiences like live reports because they can feel “the presence” of an incident. Facebook Live is one choice for journalists who have a story to tell and are able to talk to the camera as they work their way into a story (Figure 6.4). If a journalist is unable to make live reports on social media, an alternative is to create short video clips updating information, telling the real situation at the scene, and posting them on Facebook (Figure 6.5). The key narrative idea is to tell what is happening by gathering enough information, reveal the process of gathering further information, and walk the audience through the unfolding situation.



**FIGURE 6.4:** An example of a Facebook Live report, during a Thai police raid on the Dhammakaya Temple in search of a wanted monk (February 20, 2017).



**FIGURE 6.5:** An example of short video clips providing information from a news scene, when fire broke out in a Bangkok department store (May 14, 2017).

Reporting a breaking story, a high-tension incident or a story with high human-interest value on Facebook Live builds more engagement with audiences and attracts their views and comments. News Assignment Editor, PPTV HD36 explains that in a cross-media environment, journalist can't think only about reporting on television, but also distributing information on social media.

Although we don't have the highest [audience] ratings on television, thousands of people watch Facebook live when a situation is unfolding, so we do our job and tell the story. Journalists should be able to tell stories on any platform. (News Assignment Editor, PPTV HD36)

Facebook Live can respond to audience demands for speed and 'to live the experience' at a news scene. People want something exciting, and Facebook Live can deliver excitement. However, when journalists make live reports on social media, they are assuming the role and making the decisions of an experienced and sensitive editor. Making live reports with insufficient information and without experience in choosing what to say and what to show can raise ethical issues. Words can inflame sensitivities, especially in a crisis or a violent situation; using the wrong words or unexplained and unverified information when delivering a live report can distort the facts and increase tensions and conflict.

However, live reporting, as a means of delivering narratives, works well with Thai audiences. A *NOW26* reporter for Nation Multimedia Group explained that people using social media wanted real-time information because it made them feel engaged with the story and immersed them in the situation as a journalist uncovered the circumstances (Srisaracam, 2018). Thailand has about 47 million Facebook users and many of them get their news from the online platform, so every newsroom has a policy that journalists must use Facebook Live as often as they can. New-media staff at *PPTV HD36* monitor the organisation's journalists during their Facebook Live performances. They observe how people join the Live performance, when they feel moved to comment and what makes them leave. The journalists are then given feedback to help them improve their performances.

The key narrative idea is to discover and reveal additional information while walking the audience through the information-gathering process and revealing the unfolding story.

In addition, journalists can also become involved in crowdsourcing via social media (Figure 6.6). Crowdsourcing, in the way it is used by journalists in this study, has two levels: first, monitoring social media to gather user-generated content for use in news stories, and second, engaging with audiences and citizen journalists with the aim of gathering specific information, then working together to verify this material. Sometimes they gather information; sometimes they simply listen to what people want to know; and sometimes they want to build engagement to create a community of fans that follows their work. In the latter case, the journalists may encourage participation in the gathering of information and distribution of stories. This crowdsourcing and collaboration with online users gives journalists access to in-depth information from sources (Arceneaux and Weiss, 2010; Mare, 2014). It also provides journalists with a ‘window into the readers’ world’, through which they can learn about their preferences (Aitamurto, 2015a). As an example, Figure 6.6 shows that engaging with a social-media conversation led journalists to develop context for a story that responded directly to what the audience wanted to know. Sometimes, new information is supplied by an audience and is verified by journalists before it is added to the news narrative.



**FIGURE 6.6:** An example of a crowdsourcing post, asking for information about the working conditions and experience of nurses.

In this example, it illustrates the use of a journalist's own social-media account to report news during the news gathering process and to talk to their followers is a way of exploiting the powers of networking and audience participation. *PPTV HD36's* News Assignment Editor explains that using Facebook to give more engaging information builds a journalist's "personal brand". After updating the story and engaging with the audience on social media during the news gathering process, journalists can then write and produce the full coverage by adding context and developing the story for distribution on traditional media. Context will be added to the story to give it more value than reading about it on social media. Some journalists produce news packages of two to three minutes' duration to give more details about a story. Sometimes, if the event is urgent, journalists will appear on screen in live broadcasts (Figure 6.7). If the story is the main issue of the day, a journalist may produce more than one piece, adding more detail to cater for later news programmes. In the case of some big issues, a journalist may follow a story for weeks and produce an updated piece every day. Alternatively, they may keep a growing collection of information for exposure as an investigative piece, when the time is ripe.

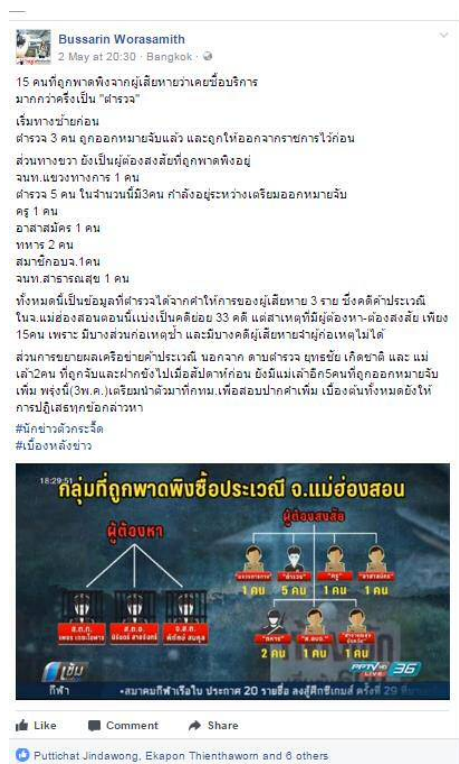


**FIGURE 6.7:** Screenshots of television news coverage of five people suspected of involvement in child prostitution (May 3, 2017).

The Mae Hong Son child prostitution story given as an example above was written and produced in television news format and went to air on the same day in *PPTV HD36's* evening news programme. The journalist in this example still follows the issues and gathers more details for in-depth reporting. As the story develops, she posts more context and background on Facebook.

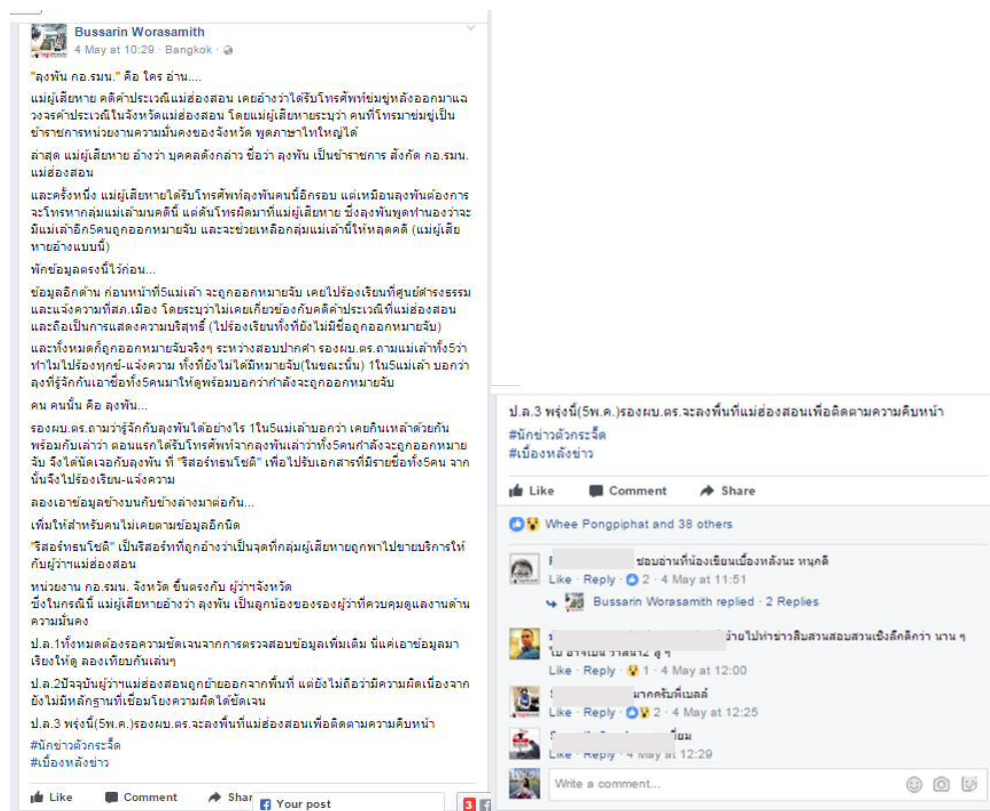
Figure 6.8 shows the graphic used to explain the connection between groups of people related to the child prostitution allegations in Mae Hong Son. It shows

the number of suspects and the government officials who are claimed to be sex buyers and have been charged with human trafficking. The same graphic, drawn for the original television coverage, was repurposed as a picture to tell the story on Facebook, along with text explaining who was involved and the role they played in the crime. This type of background story is posted after the news has already appeared on television. It gives the same information, but adds more background to explain how the suspects are connected to the crime. Journalists can give more details in a post like this by adding information that was left out of the television report because of time limitations.



**FIGURE 6.8:** The PPTV HD36 reporter’s Facebook post giving context and background to the Mae Hong Son child prostitution story.

Figure 6.9 shows an example of a longer Facebook post with no pictures, video clips or graphics. It consists of text giving details about one suspect who is a central figure, whose alleged role connects to all other aspects of the child prostitution case. The text includes information from an interview with the victim, police information and details about the hotel where the offences were claimed to have occurred. Readers of this background information are able to see the “bigger picture”, and can more easily understand further investigations and updates of the story.



**FIGURE 6.9:** The PPTV HD36 reporter's longer Facebook post, giving context and background to the child prostitution story

This demonstrates that many journalists' posts do not need pictures or video clips to engage with followers. People like, share and comment on issues because they find the information interesting. Interview respondents in this study were inclined to argue that visual content was not the only way to create a good social-media narrative; the quality of information given in text-only posts could also attract readers. Additionally, journalists have no limits on the length of posts. In the early days of experimenting with social-media narratives, the best advice suggested that text should be kept short because audiences would not read long text stories online. In analysing the content of journalists' posts, and from study interviews, this study has found that people also read and share longer texts when they provide insights into issues and stories. News Assignment Editor, PPTV HD36 pointed that from insight analysis, statistics show that long-form writing with in-depth details on Facebook gains more interest and engagement than [video] clips.

This content strategy of expanding exclusive content on journalists' social media personal account is helping quality of their work by giving different aspect and well-rounded information to the issues, it engage followers to background and context information which they cannot find somewhere else. Figure 6.11 shows an example of the flow of content produced and distributed by one journalist covering one story. The news packages relate to the Cabinet's refusal to list 10,992 contract nurses as civil servants. The journalist's strategy was based on a "case study", in which she set out to show the realities of life as a nurse; the problems that led up to the Cabinet decision; and how the decision would affect the nursing occupation. The case-study strategy uses the personal (and often emotional) experiences of someone related to a story or affected by the issues to give an in-depth demonstration and explanation of the conflicts involved. The narrative follows the life and routine duties of the "case study" person in order that an audience can empathize with real-life experiences and become immersed in the issues involved. The "real-life" aspect also adds proximity value to the story. In this form, the difficult and complex issues are easier to understand and the story is told in a more appealing fashion for a television audience (Srisaracam, 2018).

The first picture of Figure 6.11 is a post in which the journalist wrote from "behind the scenes", as she was gathering information. She wrote about how the nurse in the picture was making the tough decision to quit her job because she would not get the job security she felt she deserved. Her words revealed an emotional concern for the nurse's dilemma, as a glimpse of the wider story she was developing. The picture was intended to grab the attention of users as the scrolled down the Facebook timeline.

In the next post she used a short caption to ask the questions: how many patients should one nurse be taking care of, and how many hours should they work in a day? She also wrote that research had shown that there were insufficient numbers of nurses working at government hospitals, at which crowds of patients arrived every day. The captions were posted along with a concise video clip that supported these points, as a teaser. The audience was then invited to follow and find the answers in the evening news programme. This is cross-promotional content with a story to tell. The post engaged with 30,000 views, 103 shares, 125 likes and

some debate in comment, including some more information and requests to learn more.

After the story was broadcast on television, the journalist produced another two Facebook posts. In picture 3 of Figure 6.11, she gives background information on the level of nurses' salaries – information that was gathered from one hospital. She compares the nurses' workload to the amount of money they earn. This material is written from interviews, with the intention of highlighting the importance of the issues involved in the story. The final post in Figure 6.11 is a cross-promotional post that uses a striking and emotional quote as a caption and shares a link to the full story as it appears online.



**FIGURE 6.11:** An example of the flow of content produced and distributed on Facebook by one journalist covering one story.

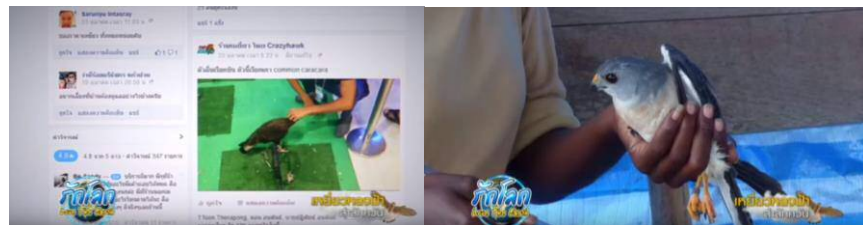
This study makes several noteworthy contributions to guide journalists on multi-platform storytelling. They can produce four types of cross-media content on social media during the process of reporting the news. These include; 1) materials for repurposing with different narratives on multiple platforms; 2) extending the content to create original pieces on social media, the most common of which are background, “behind the scenes” and analysis; 3) promoting content by telling a story; and 4) engage with audience and build community of followers. The key to cross-media promotion is not simply a matter of posting links to other platforms, but revealing important points and putting questions to an audience in more engaging ways. Visual and sound content, along with texts containing insightful, in-depth details are the keys to attracting and engaging audiences into discussing and sharing content.

*PPTV HD36*’s News Assignment Editor explains that multi-skilled journalists can develop their storytelling skills if they learn how to think about and plan “pre-production” of content. Pre-production means that when a journalist is assigned to follow an issue, he or she thinks about the story they must tell, searches for case studies and plans shots lists, graphics and other elements to build up the narrative. The journalist then has to develop the story throughout the day and tell it in different forms. Planning helps to ease the workload and creativity adds value to the content.

In news organisation that has many different outlets, for *example Nation Multimedia Group (NMG)*, multi-skilled journalists can also expand their news coverage crossing between television, newspaper and radio programme. As discussed earlier in chapter 5 that another model of cross-media journalism in which an individual journalist could produce content for many media outlets under the same ownership.

The reporter in figure 6.12 is a broadcast journalist working for *Nation TV*, a television outlet of *the Nation Multimedia Group*. He investigates environmental issues and hunting of wildlife for sale, a practice that endangers hawks. In an environmental programme of about 23 minutes duration, he approaches this story from many angles, starting by explaining that the peak time for bird watchers to see hawks is when they migrate from the north to the warmer south, passing over Thailand to one province in the south of the country, where they can be seen in

plentiful numbers. Then he draws attention to the problem of hawks being captured by animal hunters when they stop in Thailand, and offered for sale. A market for wild hawks is served by online outlets like Facebook. He also mentions another problem for the hawks, caused by unstable climatic conditions when the land is too heat. This produces fog, and fog interferes with visibility, so the hawks lose their freedom to fly. His narrative is assisted by a graphic explaining tropical weather conditions that generate fog, making the subject easier to understand. He also uses video footage of birds and interviews people concerned with the issues. In addition, he uses pictures gathered from online sources. The journalist brings many elements together in one story to make it more appealing and to capture an audience and hold it for more than 20 minutes on television.



**FIGURE 6.12:** Screenshots from a piece of investigative journalism on television concerning the danger to hawks posed by bird hunters and fog created by tropical heat.

After producing the long-form story for television, the journalist extended it across platforms by publishing it as a cover story in the lifestyle section of the *Krungthepturakij* newspaper (Figure 6.13). He cross-produced and distributed his content in another form and on another media outlet belonging to the Nation Multimedia Group.



**FIGURE 6.13:** Journalist extended it across media platforms from television to a newspaper.

He explained that although journalists work for different media outlets, they can cross-publish our work in any of the company's outlets. It's not a duty that everyone is bound to follow, but the company's policy encourages journalists to do so in order to reach different target audiences and add value to the material and content we gather.

In my personal opinion, I think it's something journalists should do. It's an opportunity to get more people watching or reading your story. However, I can't do it for all of my content. I have to choose some stories that can serve different audiences and it also depends on getting enough time to develop the story. I tend to cross-publish investigative pieces rather than routine news reports. (Nation TV reporter)

When journalists develop their own story and extend it across to another platform, the story's focus remains the same, but the narrative changes to suit the

platform. The *Nation TV* reporter explains that the writing style is different, but he has adopted a technique of “thinking in pictures” to enable him to write in different styles. He says that thinking of telling a story in pictures gives a sense of places, incidents and emotion, all of which make a story more appealing to read even though it is simply text in a newspaper.

Print journalists are these days more flexible in the ways in which they tell stories. Before the changing media environment forced them to adapt to cross-media production, the print style of writing was very formal, starting with sources and quotes, then following with details and more quotes in the form of an inverted pyramid. After working with television and adapting to social-media storytelling, which is more dependent on multimedia contents that give the narrative a visual focus, print journalists explain that their writing structure may change to a more vivid narrative. They think more about visualizing a situation through text and graphics, and this makes long-form journalism more appealing to the reader. The narrative style for short news stories remains the same, but when writing long-form pieces the journalists can, on their own initiative, use a non-linear structure with more creativity.

When broadcast journalists cross to a newspaper medium, they can use the same style of telling a story with pictures, but change from footage to words. *Nation TV* reporters say it is not difficult to adapt from television to print writing because they can follow the way they tell stories on television, but adopt a more formal style and add details by using words to narrate the same story for a different platform.

Storytelling doesn't need to have the same pattern of writing as that used by real print journalists. A cross-media newsroom adapts to a more open-minded attitude towards different styles of storytelling. I learned to adapt to some writing styles unique to print, such as using headlines and drawing pictures by using words. It can match my television skills, and I can also use pictures and graphics to help to tell stories. (*Nation TV* reporter)

An editor for *Now26* gave the example of an investigative programme called *La Kwam Jing* (Hunting for the Truth), which is not only broadcast on *Now 26*, but also has a column in the Nation Multimedia Group's *Krungthepturakij* newspaper. While it is an investigative broadcast programme and a long-form analysis news column in print, this does not mean that the long-form story is always printed after the television story has gone to air. Some stories that need to generate a social impact, or to attract TV viewers, can be published first in the newspaper in the form of background and context. Then, having attracted public interest, the whole story can be reported later on television. This involves careful planning and weighing up the impact of a story according to which platform publishes it first.

Figure 6.14 shows an example of a long-form story written by a television team which was published first by the newspaper, before it appeared on television. The contents of the two pieces are different, but they have the same focus, about protests and conflict surrounding plans to build a coal-fired power plant in Thailand's southern Krabi province. The print version gives background dating back many years and includes different opinions towards the proposed power plant. It explains the protest issues in terms that can easily be understood by readers. Then, in a box at the end of story, readers are invited to learn more details in the television programme, to be broadcast in the evening of the same day. The television version gives more details of the power-supply situation, with a graphic showing the number of power plants and a comparison of demand and supply. It also expands the story with interviews offering the opinions of different stakeholders. The narratives are different. The print version is more an account written by journalists of the background and analysis of the situation; the television piece updates the information with graphics and interviews.



**FIGURE 6.14:** An example of cross-media use of long-form journalism, moving from print to a television programme (February 17, 2017).

Figure 6.15 shows another example from the same collaboration between the *Nation Multimedia Group*'s television programme on *Now26* and its newspaper *Krungthepturakij*. In this case, the story was broadcast first and then published in print. The story is about a government roadmap for reconciliation in Thailand. The content is similar; the editor explained that the television script was rewritten into a print version. The graphics have the same focus, but a different design. The graphics team produced a new graphic for the print version, but it matched the style of visualization in the earlier television piece.



**FIGURE 6.15:** An example of cross-media content moving from a television programme to a newspaper (February 14, 2017).

Another way that multi-skilled journalists use social media is to cross-promote news content. Some posts, while updating information, include a “teaser”, or invite audiences to watch the full coverage on a news programme. This is cross-promotion before the news is published on air. The way such posts are written is to give a key piece of information and then raise some questions about the issue or the case in question, to raise audience curiosity.

Video clips are still an important means of attracting audience attention. However, teasers that give the time of a programme “where all will be revealed” no longer work well. People like clips that tell a story. *PPTV HD36* tries to build signature teaser clips that have an enjoyable and creative way of telling a story. The clips will use good footage, quick editing and a song related to the story, but must also have humour and drama. When posting video clips on Facebook, the caption is an important means of grabbing audience attention. The caption can either summarize the key points of the story or pose questions to which an audience will find answers by watching a following news programme.

Photographs are important visual contents on social media. A good picture is one that can help to tell a story by capturing the action and emotion and attracting the empathy of the audience. *PPTV HD36* believes that photographers are an essential part of its new-media team so that good pictures can be taken for use online, ending the need to capture screen shots from video footage. Multi-skilled journalists should also be able to take good pictures with their mobile phones, to help to tell the story on their social-media accounts. As well as helping to tell the story, pictures can be used to promote content at the same time.



**FIGURE 6.16:** Another example of a Facebook post promoting content on an evening television news programme concerning the government’s refusal to add 10,992 more civil service positions for nurses (May 12, 2017).

This is example of Facebook posts that promote a news programme by telling a story. The narrative involves the use of pictures with striking quotes from nurses on how they feel about the Cabinet’s decision against designating nearly

11,000 nurses as civil servants. The quotes refer to the fact that nurses work hard, eight hours a day, with only one or two days off per month. The video clips show how nurses work during the day and deal with the condition of patients, while in one short and emotional interview, a nurse tells how difficult nurses' lives are. The Facebook caption gives a response from the Public Health Ministry, claiming that in making its decision the Cabinet has been misinformed. As can be seen from the post, this promotional content attracted more than 1,800 shares and encouraged debate in the form of more than 60 comments. Some of these gave more information, some expressed sympathy, and some were critical of the government's decision. Some of those who viewed the Facebook posts would watch the television news programme to get more details, but if they didn't do this, at least they knew the main points of the story.

Journalists at PPTV HD36 explained that when they wrote captions for social-media posts, they did not copy the lead paragraph from news stories on the website because this was regarded as a robotic approach. Instead, the social-media headlines and captions were written in a more conversational style. This was confirmed by textual analysis of PPTV journalists' social-media posts linking to website news reports. A PPTV HD36 journalist pointed out: "I can engage with the audience and, in the process, I may be able to drive traffic back to the website or television news programme." Hashtags are another vitally important element of social-media use. Twitter and Facebook hashtags provide collective conversations, and people can search for stories from a hashtag. *PPTV 36HD* uses hashtags of the organization's name, a universal hashtag related to the story, and a journalist's name as a hashtag. This strategy helps people to remember the name and brand of journalists and the organization.

Data gathered from these textual analyses and from observations and interviews with multi-skilled journalists show that they overcome their workload constraints by planning the flow of developing content and distributing it as multiple stories throughout the day. One senior journalist explained that although it may seem as though multi-skilled journalists have a lot of work, in reality the materials they gather from news scenes are no different to those gathered by other journalists. Multi-skilled journalists simply don't have to wait until the end of the day to publish it on only one television news programme. News stories are

distributed many times, in many forms, telling many related aspects, leading audiences to focus on the main issues. This provides for realization of the transmedia concept, and the “drillability” factor reported by Jenkins (2010). In this regard, Moloney (2011) suggested the use of hyperlinks to connect audiences to information contained in electronic databases as a form of “drillability” for audiences seeking additional context and other aspects of stories.

This could be a solution to the quality concern I raised in Chapter 4: that is, how can audiences be encouraged to spend time improving the range of news stories they read from a more diverse number of sources, and how can news organizations facilitate this by giving them something different? Journalists can develop different aspects and produce multiple stories when an editorial team back in the office supports them with fact-checking, identifying and finding sources and developing explanatory contexts. This cooperative culture enables them to meet expectations for the provision of high-quality, well-informed coverage (Scheuer, 2008); it answers Picard’s (2000) concern that content strategies may not be able to overcome workload tensions; and it supports the ability of high-quality journalism to frame debates and encourage a participatory culture in audiences – an attribute which Shirky (2008) found could engage people to participate in crowdsourcing and share information on their networks, thereby spreading awareness and knowledge to others.

In addition, the four types of functional content produced by multi-skilled journalists and found throughout the process of news production offer diversity – a quality that is expected from good journalism (Lacy and Rosensteel, 2015). Multi-skilled journalists with a content strategy in mind can provide a range of viewpoints and story topics and a diversity of storytelling styles that can engage different audiences. Journalists who have been trained in this way are confident that they can handle multi-tasking, are able to plan multimedia content, and can manage to gather enough material to produce different stories across platforms. However, they have to determine a focus for their stories and all ‘chunks’ of content should lead back to the organization’s main platform.

## **6.2 New media as a ‘bridge team’ to strategically produce cross-media content**

From my observations in the three study newsrooms, I found that social-media teams have an increasingly important role because audiences in Thailand consume news mainly on social media, so the teams have to be involved in the news-production process in order to design cross-platform content. I observed discussions between social-media teams and editors of traditional platforms that had some degree of tension related to understanding the use of social media and involved negotiations on narrative style to avoid perceived risks of unethical use of ‘clickbait’ – sensational, violent or misleading content aimed at generating clicks and shares.

New-media team acts as a strategic team that needs to work in close cooperation with an organization’s news editorial team. The first step towards achieving high quality in cross-media news production involves shifting the mindset of newsroom staff who believe that a new-media team is simply a support team for repurposing content. Rather, such a team is what I call a ‘bridging team’ that can also produce exclusive and extended content while strategically studying audience-insight data to plan and design engaging content that can reach wider audiences and engage followers with news content.

Social media used by news organizations include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LINE. A 2016 research survey of news consumption across platforms by the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce (MGR Online, 2016) showed that people consumed social-media content while still trusting the traditional media. Innovative content tends to be seen more on Facebook pages because this is Thailand’s most popular platform, providing a crowded community in which to build brand awareness and fans. Twitter is for speed reporting and updating information from the scene of news events and promotional links to drive traffic back to websites for on-demand viewing. Instagram plays around with pictures in a narrative. YouTube is for on-demand content and archive content from television news programmes. The popular messenger application LINE has push news notifications on official accounts. LINE selects news content from partner news organizations to show in feeds and sends notifications to its users about more-important stories. Some news

organizations also integrate messages from LINE users into the official accounts of television programmes, as a form of engagement.

The new-media strategy team at *PPTV HD36* also has a news-production team working to create news content for websites and social-media posts. This includes content created exclusively for specific online audiences. Some stories initiated by the new-media team can travel back to television news. For example, on World No Tobacco Day 2016, the team created a video item about a father who stopped smoking because his son was worried about his health. Figure 6.17 shows the original item, in which the father talks about his feelings and experiences, his decision to stop smoking, and his life with his children. The warmly delivered narration uses touching words; the pictures show real people; and music has been added to heighten the emotional effect and engage viewers in the issue of health damage from smoking. The post went viral on social media. The Assistant New-media Business Strategy Director explains that new-media content should be able to deliver good news and engage people. The narrative may follow an online style, but the idea and the choice of the person involved is aimed, in journalistic style, to tell a story.



**FIGURE 6.17:** A viral Facebook post by *PPTV HD36* concerned a father who was quitting smoking because his son was concerned about his health.

This story was posted first on Facebook, and the content was shared to reach other networks and a much wider audience. The content went viral, and people began commenting and discussing the inspiration that came from a family persuading one of its members to stop smoking.

Then the story was picked up by the television news programme in the evening. The content was repurposed to use a television news format – reporter voice over and a short interview grab followed by the latest statistics about smoking in Thailand (Figure 6.18).



**FIGURE 6.18:** Original social-media content is repurposed for use in website and television news.

As the story was distributed across *PPTV HD36*'s platforms, the new-media team monitored audience reactions and comments on social media and gathered the best of them for an extended report about quitting smoking. Multimedia storytelling was used in the extended website report, with video clips of the father talking about his experiences and photographs underscoring the emotional relationship between father and son. Text was written to tell the full story (Figure 6.19).



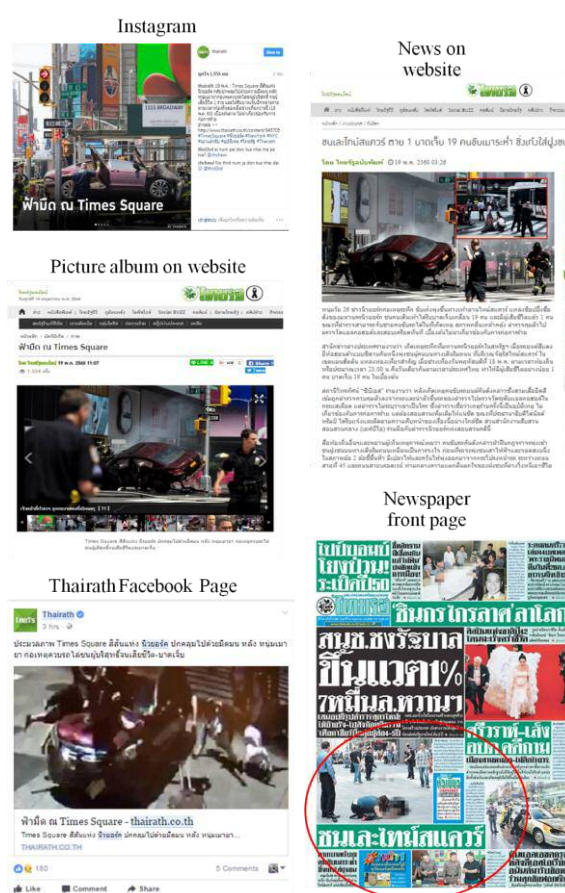
**FIGURE 6.19:** Online users' comments were incorporated in a long-tail follow-up coverage on the website.

This kind of thinking and planning creates a long-tail story that engages people in different ways, across platforms. This is skilled journalism, supported by new technology and a variety of narrative ideas. The pictures, graphics, narration and sound build excitement, and engagement occurs when questions are asked and there is a hint of discussion. Points are made in order to introduce discovery or explanation. All of this compels people to comment, discuss and share the content. The Editor-in-Chief of *PPTV HD36* points out that the online content also helped to bring audiences back to the television content. When the newsroom plans an extended story online and posts television news content on the website, it can drive audiences back to that content. In achieving this, *PPTV HD36* believes it is succeeding in getting people to watch and understand issues in the news.

At *Thairath*, there is a similar belief that social media are a hub for repurposing and creating original content in a cross-media newsroom. Not all stories from the *Thairath* newspaper can be published and promoted online, because online audiences have different tastes from those of popular newspaper readers. The social-media audience is said to consist of people aged from 20 to 25 years. They are called “early jobbers”, and are part of a new generation that doesn’t read newspapers at all. Some of these people believe in information posted on influential Facebook pages more than they do news-media content. Therefore, *Thairath’s* social-media team chooses stories carefully so that they match the interests of the online audience. In addition, the style of storytelling and the language used have to change. For example, if a story in a newspaper is long-form journalism with very tough and dramatic headlines, it cannot be published directly on social media. Instead, the social-media team selects important quotes from the story, along with pictures, for posting online. Stories are rewritten into shorter versions using language that is more conversational and headlines that are softer, but speak directly to online readers. The stories are then published online and promoted on social media.

Figure 6.20 shows how a story about a car ramming into pedestrians in New York’s Times Square (18 May 2017), was reported across *Thairath’s* media outlets. The story was told on Instagram with a set of pictures and short text summarizing the news. The same set of pictures was used to create a photo album on *Thairath’s* website, along with a second piece on the website which reported the news. This

story was also on the front page of *Thairath's* newspaper on 19 May 2017. Links to the website items were shared on the Facebook page. The newspaper front page was also placed on the website with an interactive feature that summarized the content of front-page stories when readers scrolled over each item. The contents were produced from the same raw material, but in different forms and with small changes in narrative style. The aim in repurposing the content was to serve different personalized audiences with different behaviour.



**FIGURE 6.20:** An example of repurposing news content across various platforms.

Repurposed content consists of material that is are rewritten, re-edited and reproduced for use on a different platform. To reproduce content is to repackage and rewrite it to change the storytelling style of television to make it suitable for online audiences. Extended and exclusive content, which is original content for each platform, in this context, is not to be confused with that filed by a journalist from a news scene. Rather, it is content that has been repurposed and repackaged

for exclusive use on a website or social-media page, and is not used on television or published in a newspaper.

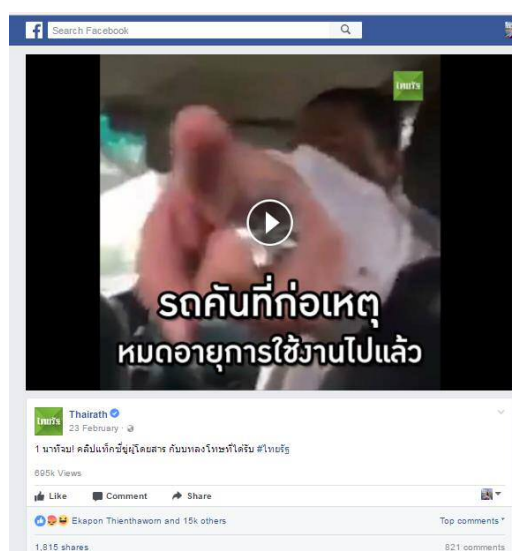
At *the Nation Multimedia Group*, the *Komchadluek* website has rewriters responsible for monitoring issues, story leads and user-generated content on social media. News stories incorporating user-generated content are produced for the website in response to the audience's demand for speed. It also expands original content for the website rather than simply repurposing content from traditional media. This parallels the procedure at *Thairath* online, which has a team responsible for rewriting news and producing exclusive content for the *Thairath* website.

At The Nation, we used to repurpose content by putting newspaper front pages on Facebook to promote the newspaper and share links to website news. Likes and followers increased very slowly. When we told stories in a more 'native' style for online users, the number of fans jumped significantly from 32-thousand to 72-thousand within a few months. We have to post a lot of content on social media. Today, we make about 60 posts [per day] and this will soon increase to hundreds. However, from experimenting with some original content, we have proved that storytelling style is important to reach out and send content to different audiences. ( *Komchadluek* web editor)

Repurposing content depends on how many times it has been seen, across how many media. If there are sufficient people with enough time, the repurposing of content can involve a greater variety of elements to enhance the narratives of stories.

Extended and exclusive content on social media includes a narrative of short video clips assembled so as to suit the tastes of social-media audiences. *Thairath's* Social-media Editors explain that video clips on social media should be punchy, get to the point quickly and build excitement or curiosity. Figure 6.21 shows an

example screenshot from a one-minute video of an incident in which a taxi passenger was cheated by the driver, resulting in a fight in the taxi. The video contained user-generated content shot by the passenger. It was edited and exciting sound added, along with sub-titles. A Google-map graphic explained the distance travelled by the taxi and the normal fare. The clip then expanded the user-generated content by following the police to the taxi garage where they confronted the driver and confiscated his licence. The whole story (posted on Facebook on 23 February 2017) is told in one minute. It gained almost 700,000 views, more than 1,800 shares, 821 comments giving opinions and more than 15,000 likes. This was a very high rate of engagement. The story was also told in news-format style on *Thairath's* website and television news. *Thairath's* social-media team has been producing many Facebook clips of this kind, with an original style of narration.



**FIGURE 6.21:** An example of a highly successful one-minute clip on *Thairath's* Facebook page. *Source:*

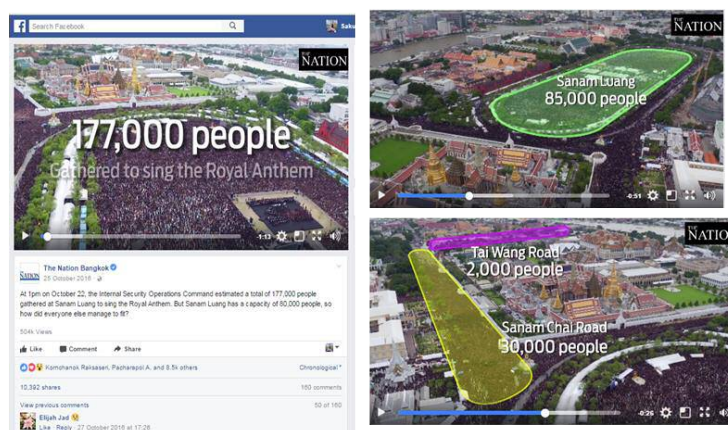
<https://www.facebook.com/ThairathFan/videos/10155355289077439/>

*Thairath's* social-media team knew from statistics that people tended to click easily on news with words and a picture that captured their attention, despite it being tasteless and violent. I observed discussions between the website editor and the social media team about the violent event, which followed a dispute between a

taxi driver and a passenger over the taxi fare. They discussed ways of presenting the story to gain attention, but without its violent and tasteless aspects. In the end, they produced a one-minute clip that cut short the dispute conversation, used a graphic, steered away from emotional content and in the end added how the police were investigating the claim of a wrongful fare. The news team listened to what kind of narrative was appropriate for social media, while the social-media team stood firm on ethical issues and developed aspects of the story after acknowledging the experience of the news team. Although there were tensions, the different teams found a way to negotiate and test narratives that could both inform and engage an audience.

This practice has its parallel at the *National Multimedia Group*, where the Social-media Editor points out that online “native” videos can attract more views by, and engagement with, online users. Sometimes, video clips from television news can be repurposed for on-demand viewing on social media. However, original content like infographics and video clips build engagement and adding a variety of content can increase engagement levels such as likes, followers, comments and shares on social media.

The example in Figure 6.22, taken from The Nation Facebook, involves motion graphics to explain how many people managed to gather for massed singing of the Royal Anthem for the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej. SamanLuang has a capacity of 80,000 people, but participants were estimated to number 177,000.



**FIGURE 6.22:** An example of a graphics-based narrative on The Nation Facebook page.

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/NationNews/videos/10153887726451937/>

The graphics explain where all of these people stood. The content includes simple shots from video footage and pictures combined with coloured graphics on each area, along with text giving numbers. It was an emotional event, coming soon after the King's passing. It gained more than 500,000 views, more than 10,000 shares, 8,500 likes and 160 comments.

It was effective because it illustrated the numbers so that people could understand them. The timing was right and it maintained the emotional feelings of the people towards the situation. We are trying to produce more content like this. However, we're in the process of developing our team. We may not produce as much as we expect now, but we are going forward in this way. (The Nation Social Media Editor)

Social-media teams are also experimenting with the promotion of content and ways in which audiences can be engaged with a story. Sometimes, *Thairath's* social-media team plays with Facebook Timeline to generate engagement and drive traffic to specific content. A good example of this occurred during a week when it was very cold in Thailand. The team's first post was a brief story about the cold weather. It asked people to comment and reveal where they were. Then, it looked at the comments, to discover what people were talking about. The team found that people responding to their first post were talking about "not wanting to take a shower". So, for its next post, the team had an infographic designed that people could share and tag their friends who they suspected of not having taken a shower that morning. Along with the infographic was a headline mentioning the news in the team's first post. The two posts did not appear on audience pages at the same time. People shared the infographic in the second post and when they read that there was another post, they went back to the first post to click and read. This was an example of storytelling that engaged with people and drove them to read a story.

The Assistant New-media Business Strategy Director for *PPTV HD36* said social media were regarded as promotional platforms. The organization's new-

media team cuts short educational video clips about issues involved in news stories and promotes television content by encouraging the social-media audience to watch its news programme to get more information. “We believe that one interesting point can catch people’s attention and drive an audience back to television when the news is on air.”

Strong visual content and video clips with good captions make for good narrative when seeking audience engagement (Figure 6.23). Engagement works when there is a good narrative, such as the conversational, human-contact style favoured on Facebook. “Robotic” posts and sending links do not work all the time on Facebook, so new-media should be able to create special features to encourage participation. Graphics and pictures should tell stories on their own, to grab the attention of people who are scrolling down social media feeds. Live content can also create engagement, but journalists should restrict live content to high-impact stories based on human interest. Proximity and intimacy are news values to be taken into account when producing good engaging content. Audiences should be able to relate directly to stories, in terms of their own experiences and emotions.



**FIGURE 6.23:** Examples in which pictures were used to tell stories and engage audiences on Facebook.

In the final analysis, social media are platforms that enable news content to reach wider audiences and encourage people to consume news across other platforms. It must be argued that social-media content is still in a process of testing and experimentation, to work out what kinds of contents work for different audiences and different purposes. A lack of staff is an obstacle not only to newsroom creativity, but to the evolutionary process of social-media content. Repurposed content is that which is most often seen on social media, followed by cross-promotional content that posts links to other platforms. However, interviewees suggest that multimedia content is playing a larger role in storytelling and digital technology is being embraced as a means of immersing audiences in different experiences and helping them to understand complex issues.

Cottle and Ashton (1999) expressed concern that heavy workloads and multi-tasking created the risk of journalists losing the ability to be creative in fashioning news items and failing to gather all of the materials needed to achieve high quality. However, this study shows that a content strategy can be planned to overcome these problems when a new-media team works alongside journalists and the editorial team. A new-media team can inform journalists what an audience wants and expects. As well, it monitors the performance of journalists reporting on social media and keeps an eye on conversations across all online platforms. These data can help newsrooms to plan content and coverage wisely, so that news is effectively distributed across platforms. In addition, a new-media team can experiment with innovative story-telling, based on audience-insight studies, to engage audiences and make content 'spreadable' (so that content is shared with others) and 'drillable' (so people can explore expanded news items and narratives in-depth). I believe that this is a starting point for transmedia journalism, which enriches the quality of news with creativity, participation and added value.

To have a new-media team repurposing content is an opportunity to achieve quality journalism in terms of news content reaching audiences on different platforms via different engaging narratives. Extended and exclusive stories produced by social-media and website teams provide different aspects of information that raise awareness of social issues among different groups of people. They generate different 'entry points to the storyworld of journalism' (Jenkins, 2010; Moneley, 2011; Alzamora and Tárca, 2012) and invite audiences to relate

directly to news coverage. I argue that long-tail and investigative journalism can survive on online platforms because my textual analyses and audience data observed in newsrooms prove that people like to engage (comment and share) with longer content that contains background information. When it relates to their own experiences, they have a feeling of participation, which in turn drives social conversations. This process may ultimately drive social change or compel the attention of policy-makers who are responsible for the issues being discussed. Thus, the practice of journalism upholds its professional value by making a difference in society.

### **6.3 Hybrid-storytelling to achieve quality of cross-media journalism**

This thesis has been concerned with cross-media journalism, or news that is produced and distributed across a variety of platforms, so this part of this chapter will examine the ways in which cross-media strategies give shape to news narratives and storytelling. Study-interview responses and some textual analysis of content mentioned by interviewees show that construction of news narratives occurs throughout the cross-media journalism process – from the initial need for speed through in-depth reporting to promotion of content. Storytelling also involves a synergy between the narrative styles favoured by traditional media, on one hand, and new media, on the other, that strives to tell the story in a way that is most likely to engage with audiences. In addition, there are four types of cross-media content and all should be similarly focused on the story being told. I will discuss these later in this section.

Examples of cross-media storytelling produced by multi-skilled journalists (discussed in Chapter 6, section 6.1) lead me to argue that in a digital and convergent environment, news narratives have been shifting towards hybrid storytelling; journalists have found benefits in using the styles of one platform to adapt or mix with the narrative styles of others, thus creating new “hybrid” storytelling styles. Interview respondents confirm that narratives are moving towards multimedia storytelling, and hybrid storytelling is when the multiple styles and narrative elements of all media outlets are mixed together to tell a story. The aim of hybrid storytelling is to create intimacy and immerse an audience in the

experiences and issues arising from a news event. This not only captures their interest, but also leads to a beneficial understanding of social issues. When designing narratives for content that will spread across platform, it is not necessary to follow a chronological sequence of events; journalists can adopt a nonlinear narrative by telling stories in bits and pieces – like a jigsaw puzzle – and allowing the audience to explore the points according to their personal tastes. In the end, when they have seen it all, they get the whole picture and understand all of the issues.

In this way, the trend in creating content is to tell one important fact, and then to use the many other pieces of the story to create different narrative approaches to that main fact for distribution on multiple platforms. This makes a story more engaging and keeps the audience travelling across outlets to learn more. It cannot be claimed that media outlets in Thailand have achieved this level of sophistication, but interviewees say that this is where policy is headed and they are determined that their organizations should develop to this point. This hybrid storytelling strategy is changing news narratives on traditional platforms towards a multimedia style.

The Editor-in-Chief of *PPTV HD36* pointed out that in an environment of expanding media competition in Thailand, television – a traditional medium – cannot turn away from reporting news with “dramatic content”. Audiences in Thailand are attracted to dramatic human interest and stories rich with emotion. Many online media strive to serve this social fondness for drama. A social-media “buzz” around a particular human interest story will drive news organizations to cover the story, simply because it is a subject for popular conversation on social media. In this environment, the quality of news services can be upheld by expanding dramatic issues to explain the background; by ensuring that news stories give the whole picture.

An example of this was a story about the 60-year-old university lecturer who shot himself to death in a dramatic stand-off with police. The dramatic suicide quickly became the subject of social-media conjecture. But the Editor-in-Chief explained that there was some concern about the ethics of limiting the news coverage to a dramatic suicide, particularly when journalists tasted a fine narrative behind the superficial drama. The man who shot himself had a long set of

grievances against two colleagues, both lecturers, and he had shot and killed both of them on the day before his death. The news team found that there were claims of corruption related to the PhD qualifications of lecturers at the university. An in-depth report covered the issue of PhD qualifications and the university's system of employment. This expanded story give a bigger picture, to help people understand the dramatic suicide and to drive society towards ways of preventing the circumstances occurring again.

He continued, explaining while I observing an editorial meeting at *PPTV HD36*, that the morning editorial meetings were where the news, production and new-media teams discussed stories and made decisions on narrative designs for multiple platforms. Any story is divided into many pieces in the reporting process. Online platforms take the lead and draw viewers to the television news programme, which must tell the story in greater depth because “what happened” has already been revealed on the website and social media. This often involves introducing a “case study” into the television news version, to generate a deeper understanding of the issues. Then the background material and exclusive content that was not included in the television news coverage travels back to the online platform to reinforce understanding.

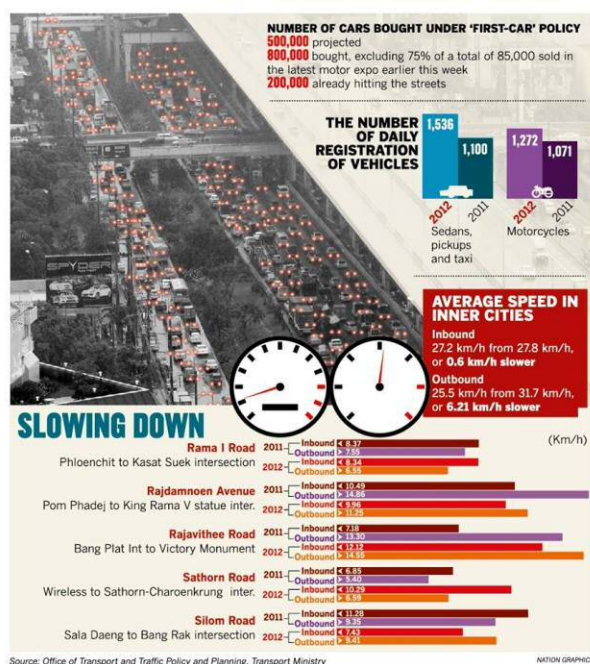
The chairman of the *Nation Multimedia Group* pointed out that journalism – or the “news industry” – faces a challenge when content must be audience-centric and the media have to find ways to reach audiences who personalize their consumption on various platforms. More than ever before, the news has to adopt a sense of intimacy and proximity and handle big issues by connecting them to people's lives. Presentation, or the story's narrative, is very important because it allows appealing elements to be added while conveying quality information in a style that enables ease of understanding among people of different ages and levels of education. News organizations cannot dramatize news to entertain people, he concludes, but they can tell stories in more attractive ways. Stories should be of clear value to an audience; issues can be explained or solutions to problems proposed. Media outlets in Thailand are in the process of inventing and testing new narrative styles across platforms. In addition, creative narrative styles should retain the reliability, accuracy and transparency of facts and information. The detail in

news stories should be verified and should be able to explain issues. This accord to opinion of Head of Provincial News at *Thairath Daily* that:

It's good when we open-up to work more with the television team, because we can learn storytelling techniques from them. People want something that gets to their emotions, and television is good at that. Sometimes, we adapt the style of their narrative to use in print and it turns out to be more appealing to read. Meanwhile, we, as senior print journalists, can offer some insights into issues and sources for the television and online teams, and this adds solid information to the way they tell a story. This 'exchange of specializations' has changed my mind, to point where I believe journalists can work together across media outlets. (Head of Provincial News at *Thairath Daily*)

The writing style in newspapers hasn't changed much, but story ideas have changed. Print journalism is facing a decline in sales and circulation; readership is confined to niche markets and people outside the cities who still buy newspapers. The print medium cannot compete with the speed of the other media, but its remaining strength lies in providing in-depth information and analysis by senior columnists. Although the popularity of newspapers is fading, and along with it, the power of newspaper columnists to set an agenda for society, this kind of journalism is still needed. Some columnists have adapted to the need for blogs and Facebook pages, or now write for websites in order to hold on to their followers and expand their horizons to new audience groups.

The Graphics Editor at *Nation Multimedia Group's* English-language newspaper, *The Nation*, explains that, more than ever before, visualization narratives are very important for newspapers. First, graphics draw attention to a story and make the information easier to understand. As print journalism trends more towards in-depth reporting, the issues involved require lots of data, and visualization helps to make a complex story easier to understand.



**FIGURE 6.24:** An infographic about traffic jams in Bangkok in The Nation newspaper.

He also explained that good graphics can also be used across platforms and drive traffic back to the story when it appears on a website. However, the best graphics result from the best data and the news team's ability to digest or interpret the information those data carry. Some graphic designers are themselves able to digest data and understand information, and this makes the production of good graphics easier. However, if journalists understand the basic concepts of visualization, they may also know how to play with data and give their ideas to a graphic designer. This collaboration helps to create better graphics for news stories.

Thai news organizations are experimenting with new technologies to make newspaper narratives more attractive. One such technology is augmented reality (AR), with which a newspaper may be connected to multimedia contents via an electronic application. Figure 6.25 is an example of a newspaper using augmented reality (AR) technology. In promoting the innovation, *Thairath* says "a newspaper can be more alive by giving power to readers to interact with multimedia content." A *Thairath* AR application is available for use with newspaper content. When a smartphone or tablet with the app is held over pictures, multimedia video clips play to provide more details and show real incidents.



**FIGURE 6.25:** Use of augmented reality technology by *Thairath* newspaper on the occasion of the 100-day Memorial Service for His Majesty King BhumibolAdulyadej. *Clip:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wr30e7Rw8Vo>

Nation Multimedia Group used this technology a few years ago in its newspaper so that readers could interact with video clips of news stories and advertisements. However, development of augmented reality for newspapers has come to a halt because of a lack of staff to manage it. *Thairath* still uses the technology for occasional big issues, but not for all of its stories. It sees this as a way of testing both the technology and consumer behaviour.

Technologies that are helping to create new narratives on television news include 3D and immersive technology to explain and demonstrate data with a “wow” factor, helping viewers to understand complex issues. Organizations that have 3D technology and immersive-graphic designers can create visual displays that immerse viewers in a story. Such graphics can reproduce events or incidents, places where journalists have no access, and can replace real footage when it cannot be used for ethical reasons. In addition, a graphic like the immersive 3D example in Figure 6.26 can reproduce a situation to demonstrate what may or may not happen.



**FIGURE 6.26:** An example of an immersive graphic used in a *Thairath* TV news programme.

Some organizations have simpler means of visualization, but can still explain a complex story effectively. Although they may not be high-technology, graphics still help to explain things in a more appealing way on television news. They catch the eye, grab viewer attention and help an audience to digest difficult data.

Figure 6.27 is an example of a simple graphic that uses a Google map to plot the timeline of a confusing incident to help explain what happened, following an avalanche of data that flooded social media. An engineer was accused of killing a teenager in a dispute over a car. Social media erupted with comments about the circumstances because four witness clips were posted on social media and each told a different side of the story. The video clips were posted separately and on different days, so there was general confusion about what really happened. *PPTV HD36* used a Google map graphic to plot a timeline of what was seen in the clips to better explain the incident while trying to uncover the facts.



**FIGURE 6.27:** A Google map graphic plays a big role in a television news narrative

There have also been changes in the way television news teams generate story ideas, approach stories and assemble their daily “news agendas”. Television news stories often follow dramatic issues that arise on social media, or they use excerpts from social media to add detail to a story. *PPTV HD36*’s News Assignment Editor mentions pressure from minute-by-minute reports on TV ratings, which show the size of the audience, and says the newsroom cannot ignore social-media “buzz” stories because these can boost the channel’s audience ratings. There has been criticism from scholars and television audiences about news programmes following social-media stories and this has been accompanied by debate about journalistic values and ethics. This trend has even raised questions about how television news can survive in an environment of high stakes, fierce competition and strain to balance news values while the audience is moving away to digital platforms, especially younger people who tend to spend less time watching television. News organizations face the need to develop narrative styles that can attract audiences back to television.

*PPTV HD36*’s Editor-in-Chief explains that fierce competition for television audiences has arisen following the granting of digital television licenses and the subsequent increase in the number of channels. When asked about the style of narrative that was needed to make television news more competitive, he admitted that “emotional content is the key”.

Some programmes select news from newspapers and websites to tell it in a way that is easier to understand. This has changed the way people consume TV news. They no longer want the serious and traditional style of narrative. They want something easier to understand. They want to watch real events unfold as if they were watching a drama. Storytelling for television news must find a more appealing approach to telling the truth. The dramatization of news, with a higher value in its ease of understanding: this is the challenge for TV news. (*PPTV HD36*’s Editor-in-Chief)

However, the *PPTV HD36* Editor-in-Chief insists that the quality and values of journalism should be balanced with the need for a news programme's audience ratings and popularity. His newsroom has a policy to "extend stories beyond the dramatic issues". A narrative approach can be adopted that delivers a sense of drama and stirs human emotions, but the story must adhere to the principle of bringing benefits to the public, particularly in making issues easily understandable by using "case studies" of people involved to tell the story.

Dramatic narratives are commonly used for telling stories across the whole range of story formats on television news programmes: single news stories, news packages, talk and discussion programmes and in-depth reports. All of these use the same approach, of emphasizing pictures and location sound to present issues clearly, while some add a specific approach to speak directly to a specific audience. Case studies of people actually involved are important in making stories accessible, understandable and interesting. *PPTV HD36* Editor-in-Chief explained that "journalists have to find 'real people' as examples, to get the audience into the core of issues. From case studies of real people, the news team will develop points and angles to explain the entire range of issues related to the story"

Another style of TV storytelling involves "giving visual insights and bringing a subject closer to the normal lives of the audience". For example, the problem of pesticides in fruit and vegetables is difficult for people to understand if scientific terminology and a range of numbers are used to explain the level of toxins found in fruit and vegetables and how this affects human health. *PPTV HD36* Editor-in-Chief explained:

I told the team to find a case of someone who is ill because of pesticides in fruit and vegetables. Such a story can leave a clearer picture of the dangers of pesticides in fruit in the minds of the audience, by talking about the amount of toxin the person received, how long he or she was exposed to the pesticide, and the result to his or her health. This kind of storytelling helps people to easily relate to the story and feel that it's important because they live their lives in the same

way. Television news should be told in a documentary style, explaining this issues with emotion, fact, appealing sound and motion and understandable infographics. (*PPTV HD36's* Editor-in-Chief)

Creative storytelling in cases such as this begins in the editorial process: the whole team designs the content. The process of thinking, planning, finding cases and designing content is more complicated than it used to be, but it results in high-quality messages delivered to the audience. However, online outlets have a more informal style of communication, with every effort to create “viral” content, i.e. an article, image or video that spreads rapidly online through website links and social sharing. So the same television story has to be recreated to match the consumption habits of online audiences. Importantly, the online narrative has to be ‘neat’ in every detail of picture, sound, graphics and text. All of this is called “content strategy”.

*Thairath TV's* Assignment Editor says that cinematic storytelling should be applied to in-depth and investigative reporting (Figure 6.28) by unfolding the facts and information as the story progresses, rising to a climax where it draws the audience's attention to the main issues and states important points. This style of in-depth reporting can engage people to follow a story from platform to platform as they seek more information.



**FIGURE 6.28:** Screenshots from an investigative news package on *Thairath TV*.

He even suggests that some stories may justify several episodes, with the facts and issues interlocking like a jigsaw puzzle to eventually achieve a well-rounded coverage. Each episode would draw audiences deeper into the story's

details, making them want to watch more. The narrative could also play with clues and generate curiosity to compel the audience to continue watching. The series of episodes would tell the story in the conventional form of an ‘inverted pyramid’, but elements of drama and good cinematography would be added to make the storytelling more appealing and engaging. Moreover, the story should be told in the simplest form so that the audience could understand all of the issues. To enhance its television packages, *Thairath TV* also uses immersive technology in its storytelling.

These views were echoed by *PPTV HD36*’s News Assignment Editor, who said that television news should be more creative in its use of narratives. He also suggests a documentary style of presentation, which means there is no longer a need to start a news story with “who said what”, but perhaps with five seconds of striking shots that capture the audience’s attention, followed by a plot that drives the story to its climax with creative editing of good pictures. All of these elements, from good pictures and high-quality footage to suitable sound and an informative script, should be part of “pre-production planning”.



**FIGURE 6.29:** Screenshots from a PPTV HD36 investigative news story about a train accident.

When analysing the *PPTV HD36* news package about the train accident, it was found that the narrative aimed to immerse the audience in the accident scene and compel it to follow the journalist as she unfolded the shocking fact that the accident was caused by trees and buildings that blocked the car driver’s view of the train approaching the intersection. The package opened with striking vision of the collision between the car and the train, used with sound and sharp editing to summarize the main points and draw attention to the story. A graphic was also used

to show interacting factors in the accident and the obstacles blocking the line of sight between the traffic and the train. *PPTV HD36* News Assignment Editor explains on how to develop this narrative style:

In this way the journalist expanded the dramatic and emotional aspects of the incident in an effort to drive change and force policy-makers or officials to act to solve the problem. After the news broadcast, we investigated the situation further and found that there were about 600 locations with similar problems. We talked with officials and tried to make the issue go viral on social media. Finally, officials took action to cut down trees and adjust the areas to clear the line of sight between cars and trains. That's the value of journalism and storytelling. (*PPTV HD36* News Assignment Editor)

In all study interviews, informants reported that television narratives had changed. Audiences must be immersed in incidents, events or experiences to engage them to watch television news, and competition in the television news business may boil down to who gets the best details and best elements to explain issues. *Now26* reporter explains that although newspaper readership and television audiences are declining, she believe in the impacts that traditional media can create for society. Although journalists are forced to play with dramatic issues to attract viewers, they still need to find the facts beyond the emotions, add details and move issues forward to have an impact for change in society. It's a combination of finding news angles and choosing the right narrative to tell a story.

A *Now26* editor voiced the argument that cross-media production remained an idealistic concept that still faced many obstacles to its practical implementation. Sometimes, news organizations manage effective cross-media production, but more often than not they fail. This is because a lot of information is still scattered across all platforms and data are not managed wisely. Different mindsets among staff across platforms also make the cross-media concept difficult to implement

throughout the entire production process. He suggested that news organizations should have a solid and clear policy stating where they will focus on cross-media production.

In addition, social media are changing traditional patterns of sourcing news and compromising the expert role of journalists, often in ways that fall short of participation consistent with the best interests of the public. The utilization of user-generated content in Thai newsrooms occurs mostly as a result of monitoring and selecting topics from the mainstream media for extended treatment. Crowdsourcing is sometimes used when journalists want to find additional information, locate witnesses or learn of people's experiences. In Thailand, influential figures who have Facebook pages to distribute information become sources of information. Journalists explain that social issues sometimes break on social media through the posts of users or influential figures. These are shared and the ensuing collective conversation attracts people's attention. Social media connect issues, activists, experts, policy-makers and media together to follow a conversational "buzz" on popular issues. Journalists can use this information to add new angles and details to stories for the mainstream media. This cooperative use of information between online users and the news media can attract the attention of policy-makers and even effect social change. Journalists also point out that some stories may not break on the mainstream media because they appear too minor to attract attention. However, if they break in the social-media posts of an influential figure, this launches online conversations and the issues rapidly expand in contention and popular importance.

Having online and social media as hub platforms allows news organizations to reach wider audiences, more experts and a broader community, as well as providing access to more information. *Nation Multimedia Group* Chairman pointed that the challenge facing news organizations is to develop a process of constructing storytelling content that attracts audiences to issues. Newsroom want to reach out; to get messages to a mass audience. "They try to engage and participate with audiences because we want them to get closer to issues. They monitor people's activities on social media to observe trends, interests and demands for stories that people really want. New media connect newsrooms closer to their audiences and to succeed, there has to be innovation in storytelling"

Social media, especially Facebook and Twitter, offer a big opportunity for creative journalists to expand a story by approaching it from different angles and adding new information – forcing it to grow a metaphorical ‘long tail’. Multi-skilled journalists use social media at the beginning of the news process, when they are at the scene and during the production process, to distribute content and engage followers. At the end of the process, after the main story is published, they return to social media for in-depth development, background and analysis of the issues. This is the chance to create journalistic ‘long-tail’ content, which has a non-linear narrative that can originate on new-media, travel to traditional platforms and then back again to online platforms. Meanwhile, a new-media team – acting as a “bridge” team– can undertake strategic planning of cross-media content and can study audience insights to give the newsroom an awareness of the kinds of topics and narratives that will attract audiences.

## 6.4 Conclusion

This thesis argues that a multiplatform narrative strategy is more important than trying to meld different news teams into one convergent newsroom. The four types of functional content proposed in this thesis represent a fundamental part in planning a journalistic workflow strategy, as discussed in chapter 5. Throughout the cross-media news-production process, journalists (field journalists, including reporters and photographers) and newsroom teams (editors, rewriters, graphics team, production team, new-media and website teams) work together to produce multiple stories across platforms on a single issue and its related ‘angles’. These stories are distributed continuously as a ‘long-tailed distribution’ of news; supported by background, clarified by context, enriched by reactions and solidified by repetition. There is a growing body of literature and case studies of journalism that recognize the importance of digital narratives that give journalists an opportunity to engage with society on issues that could grow to engage whole communities. Such narratives also enhance the diversity of news content (Freedman and Scholsberg, 2011). Jenkins (2006) also suggests that digital media provide the opportunity for stories to be posted on different platforms in ‘new forms’, to tell more elaborate stories. Although public engagement with various issues presents an opportunity for the practice of good journalism, many journalists

are concerned that cross-media procedures may involve unethical practices, simply to attract clicks and views as proof of audience size.

They are also concerned that workloads, lack of multimedia skills, the challenges of social-media algorithms and personalization of audience behaviour may be threats to the quality of news and the credibility of media outlets (Viner, 2016). News organizations are therefore researching and developing ways to tell stories in more appealing ways; to engage people on social media in the hope of finding opportunities to send important messages to society. Rather than simply focusing on a narrative style that could change or be modified according to the decisions of journalists and editorial staff, it could be more useful in terms of strategy to use a model such as that in figure 6.33 to predetermine how a particular news story is to be produced and expanded for multiple-platforms. These typologies of cross-media content offer guidelines as to how content functions to achieve high-quality journalism by reaching audiences, providing a diversity of topics and creating an impact from synergies between the narrative characteristics of different platforms to engage people and drive social change.

Content strategy, therefore, consists of four forms of content, each of them functioning to achieve different objectives. ***Repurposed content*** is the most common form of cross-media content. The creation of new narrative styles, using support from digital technologies, means that repurposed content is not simply “cloned” content. Each time it is repurposed, the story is adapted to the different and unique narratives of another platform. This type of content fulfils a newsroom’s mission to distribute high-quality content to the widest possible audience that may benefit from receiving the information.

***Extended exclusive content*** focuses on using the most effective materials gathered by journalists to provide a diversity of topics about the issues surrounding a story, to give a well-rounded news coverage. This extension of a subject into multiple stories provides opportunities for audiences to consume them from different platforms. As well, multiple stories can constitute a “jigsaw” which, when pieced together by viewing, reading or visiting various platforms, can reveal the entirety of an issue. This offers a solution to maintaining high quality in journalism and overcoming concerns about the need for speed in online and social-media reporting blocking investments of time and resources in long-tail and investigative

journalism (Picard, 2000; Cottle and Ashton, 1999; Huang et al., 2016; Yoon, 2016). At the same time, any one of these “chunks” can engage people with the topic throughout the process of news production. This follows the transmedia concept, through which good journalism will be reliable, credible and authoritative (Prasard, 2016) while distinguishing between information and storytelling (Snow, 2014).

Ultimately, these principles may find ways to save the future of journalism. The other two forms of functional content are *engaging* and *cross-promotional* content, both of which are, in a sense, “service” functions, in that they aim to engage and attract audiences; they “work” on behalf of the main features. They are nevertheless essential functions and a successful content strategy must plan as carefully for this content as it does for the storytelling and presentation functions. Content strategy of these four function types of cross-media content can be produced and distributed throughout news process. The same focus of one issues is expanded into multiple stories while journalists and editorial team are developing stories to respond to speed and immediate competition, provide context, in-depth analysis and on-demand content.

Another content strategy proposed in this chapter is “*hybrid storytelling*”, which is a way of developing engaging and appealing content to suit different “personalized” audiences. This builds upon knowledge of hybridization between media; when one medium acquires the characteristics of another (Franquet and Villa, 2012). I argue that traditional news media – newspapers and television – have narrative styles that still engage certain groups of people, but when these people learn to adapt to new technologies, they find a hybrid style of storytelling that integrates many aspects of all platforms. An analysis of findings in this chapter reinforces my argument that journalism is the stuff of storytellers, and it can survive the changing media environment of fragmented information. Although some previous studies suggested that platform adaptability was important when repurposing content from one medium to another, in reality, borrowing and melding the characteristic styles of other platforms can provide opportunities for new narratives that improve the old styles of storytelling on each platform. Previous studies have also shown that new forms of storytelling are emerging in the digital

and convergence environment (Stevens, 2002; Hartley, 2010; Manovich, 2011; Thurman, 2012).

Technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality and some social-media features enhance opportunities for creativity in multimedia reporting and innovative ways of telling stories on traditional media and websites (Boczkowski, 2004; Jacobson, 2011; Pavlik and Bridge, 2013; Ojo & Heravi, 2017). Through these technologies, new experiences can be created to engage audiences with news issues (Buoziš & Creech, 2017; Jones, 2017). These findings confirm the notion expressed in previous studies that storytelling innovations can arise in various styles to achieve an in-depth coverage and help stories go beyond routine reporting (Singer and Quandt, 2009; Jacobson et al., 2015).

We learned in Chapter 4 that journalists and editors indicated in interviews that they wished to achieve work practices in cross-media newsrooms that would enable them to fulfil four goals: (1) overcoming ethical tensions with responsibility; (2) providing reliable, accurate facts with meaningful context; (3) generating significant interest and relevant information in order to reach, engage and inform people; and (4) performing the role of a watchdog in the public interest: that is, making issues known and using professional power effectively to raise awareness and stimulate action for solutions and societal change. In the light of this “wish list”, the findings of this chapter show that a strategy of distributing multiple stories in a continuous fashion – as “long-tailed distribution” – can engage people on social media, and that journalists can cope with the pressures of competing with speed and updating their stories by publishing “chunks” of content that add context and expand angles throughout the gathering and news-production process. Integrated narratives across platforms show how journalists can “specialize” by using aspects of content and effective narrative styles to communicate with different audience groups, to engage them with the news and its social issues. Although tensions occur from time to time between teams working for different platforms, a strategy of integrating the work of specialist journalists with multi-skilled journalists, and employing a new-media team as a bridging team, to generate output from multiple stories across different platforms, seems to gather a collection of “best options”. Thus, at the end of the process, a newsroom can complete a jigsaw of content to effectively inform the public about the many aspects of issues in the news.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Conclusion

Much has been said in the available scholarly literature, and, indeed, in this thesis, about the multiplicity of ways in which newsroom convergence and cross-media production are distorting the traditional practice of journalism and, in doing so, are risking the diminution of its quality. The thesis is driven by an effort to understand what new potentials are being made possible, at least in principle, by cross-media practices that may enrich the quality of journalism, or may work to undermine its integrity. It examines the strategic thinking informing cross-media work practices and content narrative and distribution in order to further evaluate how and where cross-media journalists and editors achieve their goals towards improving the quality of their news organization's reporting. This includes overcoming ethical tensions with due social responsibility; providing reliable, accurate facts within meaningful explanatory contexts; generating significant interest and relevant information in order to reach, engage and inform people; and performing the role of a watchdog to advance the public interest.

The empirical findings of this investigation have been shown to build on those of earlier studies, thereby by providing a substantive basis to evaluate the implications for understanding how news organisation design integrated strategies of cross-media practice and cross-media content to achieve a collaborative culture of convergence journalism. This thesis has provided deeper insights into the possibility of cross-media cooperation to overcome workload constraints and improve time management to invest in quality news production. Collaboration has been shown to include integrating specialisation from each medium teams, editors working on developing context of multiple stories with multi-skilled journalists, and new-media as a bridge team to collaborate design efforts in digital forms of content to support each platform (which will be recapped in 7.1).

Furthermore, the empirical findings in this thesis help to provide a new understanding of how to plan cross-media content, particularly with regard to four different purposes of content strategy (which will be recapped in 7.2), thereby

creating further opportunities to use the unique characteristics of each medium for enhancing the quality of news outputs.

Accordingly, the contribution to existing knowledge made by this thesis is built upon arguments from two sides of previous studies. The first is that convergence and cross-media production are advantageous for quality journalism because the integration of online media technologies can enhance news content by providing a deeper context to stories; it can encourage civic participation and more interactive communication between newsrooms and their audiences; and the production of multiple stories on the same subject allows audiences to choose the medium most appropriate to their circumstances and shapes a better understanding of the issues involved (Pavlik, 1999; Livingstone, 1999; Stone and Bierhoff, 2002; Bloom et al., 2016).

In contrast, the second, counter-argument expresses concerns over workloads, staff well-being and the quality of journalistic practice. Here it is pointed out that work between platforms risks creating managerial tensions and stressful, confused practices, which all too often result in ‘homogenized’ news. Moreover, multi-tasking in the production process may well lead to the abandonment of long-form and investigative journalism because of the scarcity of adequate investments of time and resources, and this may diminish the value of journalism (Cottle and Ashton, 1999; Singer, 2004; Deuze, 2008).

In the course of my research, I found evidence in support of both sides of these types of arguments. Strategic thinking on planning collaboration work practice and functional content distribution can contribute to improving news coverage and enhance the overall range and scope of stories unfolding across multiple media platforms (especially when using core characteristics of each medium to deliver quality output) to potential public benefit. At the same time, however, this thesis has shown how severe constraints need to be overcome, particularly where time management and resource scarcity pose serious risks threatening to degrade the quality of practice and outputs. Intense pressures engendered by commercial priorities overtaking journalistic ones, particularly in a highly competitive environment placing undue emphasis on speed, all too often compromise the quality of outputs on digital platforms. In comparing and contrasting these advantages and disadvantages, then, this chapter will reflect on

pertinent issues of quality raised earlier. In this way, it will proceed to offer a substantive set of conclusions regarding the implications of a dual strategy of cross-media practice and cross-media content for achieving quality journalism.

The differing evaluative criteria by which the quality of journalism may be judged were discussed in Chapter 4. They were used to set out an analytical framework, the basis of which afforded this thesis a means to examine the quality of work practices and cross-media content, that is, in as far as these factors contributed to the quality of the journalistic end product. Journalists involved in interviews for this study defined quality as the process by which they could achieve professional values related to four matters: (1) overcoming ethical tensions with responsibility; (2) providing reliable, accurate facts with meaningful context; (3) generating significant interest and relevant information in order to reach, engage and inform people; and (4) performing the role of a watchdog in the public interest: that is, making issues known and using professional power effectively to raise awareness and stimulate action for solutions and societal change. Analysis of cross-media practices in Chapters 5 and 6 contributed to existing studies by finding that the quality of these practices and the end products was a result of synergistic cooperation between different teams in a news organisation, each contributing its own specialized approach to covering a news event in multiple stories distribution. Such a cross-media strategy expands an individual news story by delivering it across multiple channels, with multiple “angles” drawing on multiple aspects of content, and using multiple narrative styles.

### ***7.1 Co-operation to create long-tailed news reporting and having a bridging team to integrate workflow of cross-media production***

As discussed in Chapter 5 on cross-media work practice strategy, this thesis analyzed relationships between cross-media strategy and practical practice from the viewpoints of production practice, a convergence continuum, and pertinent dimensions of interaction in the convergence process. Idealised forms of full convergence journalism, where all media collaboratively perform work, were shown to be negotiated against structural constraints. Different mindsets engender a corresponding culture of work for different mediums. However, as examined

closely throughout the process of cross-media production in the three case studies, it was possible to identify the advantages and disadvantages concerning a work practice strategy designed to help journalists and editors overcome the risks of constraints negatively impacting on the quality of time, practice and news output.

The findings of this aspect of the thesis build on the work of some of the researchers reviewed in Chapter 2, and add to the knowledge of cooperation strategy – day-to-day cross-media workflow. Many previous studies examined cross-media journalism under the concept of a ‘convergence continuum’, which focused mainly on rising or diminishing levels of cooperation between various teams in a news organization, beginning at one end with sharing of resources and rising to cooperation in news gathering and production and promotion of news content, reaching a hybrid situation in which all teams work together as one. Informants from all three organizations agreed on the inevitable need for cooperation, but reluctantly admitted the difficulty involved in achieving ‘a full-convergence concept of a hybrid team’. This confirmed previous studies suggesting that it was difficult to change the culture of staff producing news for a traditional medium, and pushing hard for cooperation on a strategic level placed more pressure on staff and risked losing the opportunity to benefit from the convergence dynamic (Doudaki and Spyridou, 2015). Interview data from *Thairath* and *The Nation Multimedia Group*, both of which have long-standing newsroom cultures built around traditional media, show the complexity of achieving full convergence, or a hybrid concept of all platforms working as one. In contrast, the newly established newsroom at *PPTV HD36* has established a flexible process of integrated team work. Thus, when levels of cooperation are different, convergence develops differently and newsrooms generate different work-practice outcomes (Deuze, 2004; Gago et al., 2009).

In some newsrooms a concept of integration of work develops between different desks and outlets; the work practices are designed to involve cooperation only in some parts of the process, and instead of focusing on cooperation as the ‘proper behaviour’ of convergence, the core strategy is limited to cross-media production. Previous studies have explained different models of cross-media journalism, such as multi-skilled journalists producing news for all media (Domingo et al., 2007); full integration of a newsroom structured as a single team

controlling multi-channel production; a cross-media model with emphasis on cooperation between separate platforms in routine work and content production; and coordination of isolated platforms where each team works independently (García-Avilés et al., 2009). However, to propose something more useful, as *practical strategy for designing cross-media work practices*, the strategy for cooperation proposed in this study involves (1) integrating each specialized team; (2) developing various angles to news events and issues to support the production of multiple stories based on the same issue; (3) gaining advantage from the different powers and impacts created by the communication characteristics of each platform; and (4) expanding stories to reach different and wider audiences.

The models discussed in chapter 5 are generally compatible with previous studies, in that they accept the reality of full convergence being difficult to achieve, so they suggest the creation of a culture of cooperation in the work-practice process in order that all teams are comfortable working together. However, there are several areas in which they differ from previous studies: I emphasize that the editorial team, new-media teams and journalists should work hand-in-hand at strategy level and in day-to-day practices, as these are important fundamental factors in supporting quality in cross-media journalism. Although the levels of cooperation required for full convergence, or the creation of a single hybrid team, are difficult to achieve because of different journalistic cultures in each medium, the findings here suggest that a ‘cross-media workflow strategy’ can solve these problems and when work between teams is effectively integrated, this will result in powerful news reporting that keeps society well-informed with a wide diversity of topics.

Although the process of changing practice in a newsroom may be carefully designed to create convergence, there will still be constraints arising from the different cultures of each medium. If cooperation is enforced too rigidly and in the wrong manner, this can decrease both the quality of work and the unity of the newsroom team. A newsroom environment should not be rigidly focused on its efforts to force full convergence. Policy should instead emphasize ‘cross-media work practices’ that synergize the differences and gain from the advantages offered by the strength of each medium.

Previous research recognizes that *journalists with multiple skills* are a key element in newsrooms working across platforms (see Steven, 2002; Stone &

Bierhoff, 2002; Doyle, 2011). Arguments suggest that trained multi-skilled journalists can offer creativity while decreasing costs and efficiently gathering material for the distribution of an increased number of stories on different platforms. The findings of this study confirm the essential need for news organizations to invest in training journalists to equip them with multimedia skills and specialized knowledge.

However, this study has also revealed the practical truth that even when journalists are able to perform multiple tasks and have diverse knowledge and special skills, they cannot work alone without support from the newsroom team. Staff working in the office must assume an increasingly important role of supporting journalists whose jobs demand the multiple skills of convergent reporters in the field. They must help by gathering additional information, verifying sources, supplying information to journalists that give their stories context, and planning production with journalists and the production team. This is a key work practice to ease the pressure of a heavy workload on journalists, allowing them to concentrate on each task in the knowledge that there is a team behind them supporting the production of quality content. Such a working arrangement also dispels serious concerns expressed in many previous studies about a decline in the quality of work because the workload on journalists is excessive.

This leads to another significant argument in this thesis: that to achieve a cooperative environment, a newsroom must design, on a day-to-day basis, the cross-media workflow through which multiple stories are expanded in a news-production process that serves all platforms. This aims to deal with workload constraints that may risk the loss of journalistic quality because individual journalists are performing too many tasks.

In figure 7.1, a hybrid team formed in a culture of cooperation oversees work practices that integrate resources and cooperation from every medium in an organization, even though each medium has its own team and platform from which to disseminate news. There is close cooperation extending from a convergent newsroom where plans and decisions are made jointly and ideas are shared. There is also a news centre through which all content, materials and resources are shared. News gathering, news production and news distribution are strategically planned by the editorial team, new media teams and multi-skilled journalists.



However, when there is more complexity and less flexibility in adapting to other platforms, with high tension between journalists of different work cultures, levels of cooperation can still occur in some processes while each platform works in isolation and remains focused on its specializations, different target audiences and positioning of outlets. *The Nation Multimedia Group* and *Thairath* are examples of an **‘isolated platform, situational cooperation’ model**. This model is usually developed when a news organization still has media outlets that work independently of others in the same company. Some of the organization’s media may converge and work together as a cross-media newsroom, but full cross-media cooperation only occurs when big issues like disasters need to be covered and the effort calls for participation and cooperation from all teams and all platforms. When working separately without performing too many tasks, journalists can focus on their specializations and leave the production of cross-media content to other people. However, levels of cooperation that are demanded in some situations and in some parts of the production process provide opportunities for the integration of specialist expertise and the development of hybrid narrative skills across different media.

This deals with concerns raised in the study of de-convergence in the Dutch *de Volkskrant* news organization by Tameling and Broersma (2013). The authors said the separation of the organization’s online and print teams in the de-convergence process could affect the expertise online journalists could gain from working with their print colleagues and undermine the organization’s diversity of information and opinion. Here I would speculate that in Thailand’s media environment, such de-convergence, which effectively separates all of an organization’s platforms, would not be a good choice because audiences in Thailand are segmented and consume news differently from one platform to the next. More positively, I would suggest that any newsroom that faces audiences scattered throughout online media spaces, most of whom access their news via social media, could consider the Thai case studies of this thesis to be helpful examples in forming cross-media strategies.

The uniqueness of Thailand’s cross-media model, in which innovative social-media news narratives are used to create entry points for different audiences to consume news stories, makes nonsense of any notion that cross-media content can simply be copied and pasted between old- and new-media platforms. Newsrooms should be able to integrate the specialized abilities of different teams to create a

greater and wider impact from news stories. Examples that clearly show the effectiveness of synergizing the characteristics of different platforms to expand multiple stories are the *‘Thairath synergy operation’* and *PPTV HD36’s ‘big story approach’*, as discussed and illustrated in Chapter 5.

A key challenge of cross-media strategy in the three news organisations is how to develop the quality of the cross-media process in day-to-day practice. Multi-skilled journalists are the exception and cross-media work tends to be a voluntary function, so the new-media team becomes what is essentially *a ‘bridging team’* that does away with the need for cooperation and produces cross-media content by expanding stories on to websites and social media. For their part, each traditional outlet should enhance its content strategy by producing ‘specialized and focused issues related to different target audiences’. As has been shown, new-media and online colleagues can work together as a bridging team. They can repurpose content and transform stories by using creative storytelling. They also form a ‘bridge’ between the organization and its audiences because they have social-media tools that provide audience insights and analysis, enabling them to produce content for different niche target audiences across platforms. The key functions of a bridging team are to (a) innovatively create content; (b) repurpose and repackage content from other platforms; (c) study audience behaviour; and (d) engage with audiences.

When achieving integration strategy, the advantage of this model is that a cross-media strategy is generated on a day-to-day basis by multi-skilled journalists and new media teams. The editorial team is not simply setting a news agenda and rewriting final drafts before publication, it also works as a support team to help multi-skilled journalists with sources, alternative angles, context and background. As well, the editorial team works with production staff and studies data reported by the new media team to give direction to the whole team on what will be published on which platforms. This day-to-day cross-media work practice encourages the contextualization of news items and a diversity of topics; ultimately, it supports high quality. As found by analysing examples of text and newsroom observation, multi-skilled journalists can engage with social-media followers, develop fan bases and manage community groups so that they take part in crowdsourcing and help to spread information through their networks to wider audiences.

This thesis also adds to the existing research literature by suggesting ways of overcoming “workload constraints” in cross-media journalism. Solving the problem of workloads may provide an answer to ways in which journalists of various capacities can adapt to newsroom changes. “Specialist” journalists can be retained for the value of their experience and “in-depth” knowledge, to work alongside and support “multi-skilled” journalists in teams with combinations of skills. This also offers ways in which “traditional” journalists can be saved, by working alongside new-media teams. In the ebb and flow of content through newsrooms, a bridging team can add knowledge and support, to help a new-media team work in cooperation with more “traditional” editorial staff. Such a system can be adopted by any newsroom facing the challenge of heavy workloads imposed by cross-media production, allowing it to adapt to, and implement, a cooperative spirit in serving multiple platforms with high-quality journalism.

Analysis in this study shows promising opportunity that when cooperation does exist, news stories can be expanded to provide what I have called ‘long-tail’ journalism, using synergies achieved by blending and combining the power of different platforms to not only respond to the immediate need for speed in breaking news, but to later add context and develop the story into a long-form presentation of in-depth and well-rounded information for society on important issues. Researchers studying the quality of journalism define this as diversity. For example, Lacy & Rosenstiel (2015) says diversity is characterized by a range of news sources, viewpoints and story topics, different storytelling styles and a variety of length and appeal, disseminated from multiple platforms to reach different community levels. As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, the long-tail of multiple stories distribution expands stories across social-media platforms, websites and different traditional-media outlets by providing diverse aspects of reportage that then combine and complement one another to provide a whole picture. This is an early stage of adapting to the “transmedia journalism” concept proposed by Moloney (2011). It emphasises the provision of multiple stories related to any single news event, namely by disseminating them on multiple channels to allow audiences to “drill deeply” into the complexity of emergent issues that are told from multiple perspectives. These different stories act as ‘different entry points’ that engage

different target audiences to consume and understand information being provided by journalists.

There has been some concern that multi-tasking, which lies at the core of the proposed model in this study, can pressure journalists too heavily and the quality of their production can falter. In reality, the work-practice strategies described in this study have shown that cooperation can support journalists in their work, ease tensions and workloads, and newsrooms can benefit from multiple stories being delivered continuously throughout the news-production process.

In addition, this study has shown that expanding news stories into long-tail presentations also engages with audiences and, in a society accustomed to fragmented information, enhances professional values by providing credibility and enables fact-checking for reliability. Some study interviewees from both journalistic and managerial levels at *Thairath* and *PPTV HD36* pointed out that synergy between teams can produce high-impact news coverage capable of pushing authorities, officials, policy-makers and stakeholders towards action and social change. They also gave examples of the effectiveness and quality of synergized cooperation between platforms, as discussed in chapter 4, demonstrating that this high standard of news production can happen even though the organizations follow different types of cross-media models.

However, in the complex layers of *The Nation Multimedia Group*, although they insist that they're developing convergent cooperation between outlets, there hasn't yet been a significant or impactful coverage of a news event resulting from the process. The quality of their work has yet to advance beyond the organization's separate outlets.

One of the most important arguments of this thesis, although it differs from concerns raised by some other studies (see Chapter 2), is that cross-media journalism must be well planned, with a clear strategy for designing cross-media work practices and cross-media content. This can bring opportunities for the achievement of quality in three areas: awareness in a wider audience, provision of well-rounded knowledge, and achievement of social or policy change. Quality journalism is reflected in the definitions of Vehkoo (2010), Picard (2000) and Scheuer (2008), which were examined in Chapters 2 and 6. It can be generated in

a cross-media environment when journalists can engage with, and listen carefully to, members of an audience. In so doing, they can produce more relevant stories, offer alternative aspects and reveal solutions that make sense in the everyday life of ordinary people. This thesis emphasizes that when a cross-media strategy is firmly installed in a newsroom, it improves the prospect of competition shifting towards quality in journalism, and that will lift the standard of professional performance throughout the country. However, it remains uncertain when developments and transformation will reach that stage. It's a promising goal, and reaching it will hopefully be made faster by the knowledge imparted by this thesis.

The important concluding argument is that cross-media practice and cross-media content can work together to engage citizens to issues by creating *a 'journalistic-story world'* around important issues. Traditional media such as television and print still have an impact on public emotions and set an agenda for different age groups, whereas websites and social-media platforms have networking characteristics that attract people to the same issues and generate collective action. In some cases, the achievement of real synergy between the various media, and the professionals who work for them, turns a spotlight on hopes of saving the professional values of journalism by making quality a true focus of competition in the media industry.

I look back to questions of quality in journalism that I raised in Chapter 4, and am convinced that with a better synergy of work practices and functional cross-media content, several outcomes can be improved.

First, journalists can make more informed judgements and decisions on legal and ethical issues when using social media. To achieve this, they should receive better training in multi-tasking and professional values, and they should have cooperation and support from an editorial team throughout the process of news production and distribution. Journalists working across multiple platforms need training to equip them with pre-production skills to provide for multiple content. Reporting news is ripe with immediacy. When a journalist has to gather details and report what is happening in the field, skills in planning a sequence of tasks to develop the context of the story will help him or her to manage their time and resources, while engaging with citizens and eyewitnesses and taking part in social-

media conversations in order to guide their audiences to “drill deeper” into many aspects of the issues before them.

This study shows that multi-skilled journalists can maintain their professional credibility when responding to the need for speed in an environment of fragmented information by providing multiple stories bringing fresh context to breaking news as a form of “long-tail distribution”. Context developed over the course of multiple stories provides diversity and different perspectives, connecting all of the stories to engage audiences across platforms. While journalists face the need for speed in the process of gathering information in the field, collaboration with editors and other staff in the newsroom, including rewriters, production teams and new-media staff, provides fact-checking and content distribution that ensures that all of the stories are linked together to clarify the focus of the issue.

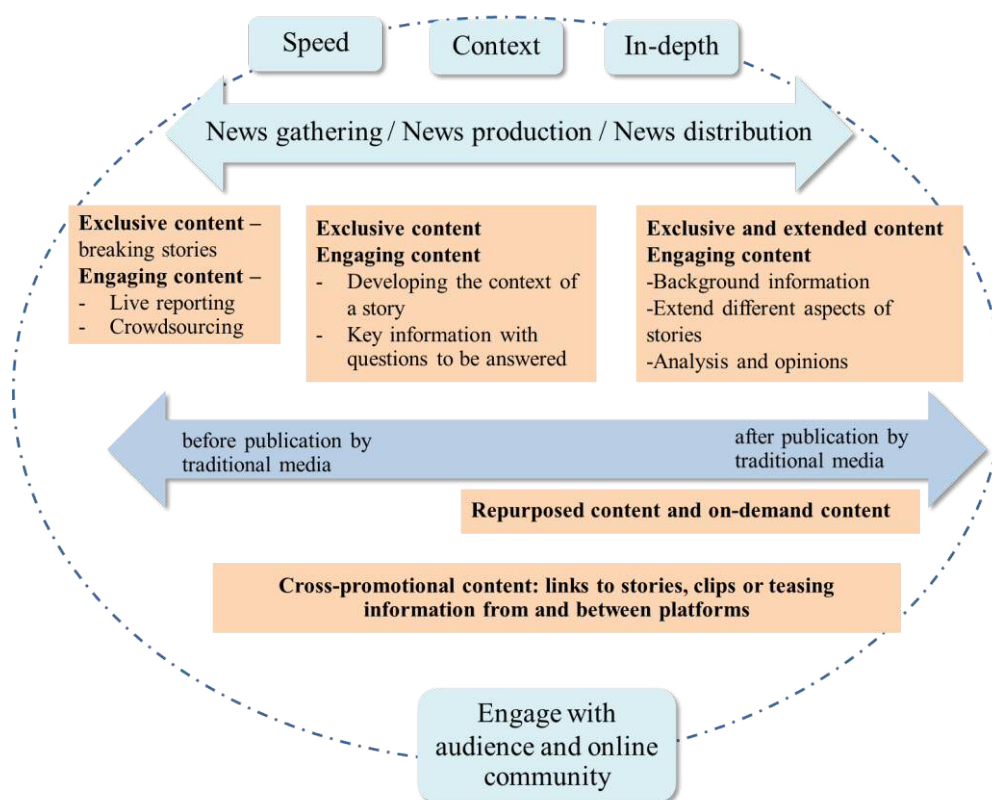
Second, in this environment, synergy between the specializations of different platform teams can create an impactful news coverage that appeals to and engages with audiences on each platform. Audiences may, of their own volition, dig deeply into the context and various aspects of issues that are provided by the long-tail news process. Such extended stories may be the work of individual journalists or created in a cooperative effort by the new-media team and teams from every outlet. What newsrooms can do is use the specializations of teams from each platform in a hybrid process of reporting that combines the talents of both old- and new-media teams. This study has shown that this process is capable of creating an impact on audiences that forces stakeholders involved in an issue to take action to solve it. Debate and conversations based on a news events can be stimulated quickly by online teams, while the in-depth and investigative skills of senior newspaper journalists give the whole team insights into the context and background of stories and broadcast platforms provide a human-interest aspect to engage with audience emotions, making them relate to the issues and feel that they affect them. Results from interviews show that journalists from all platforms see the values of other teams and this eases constraints from cultural differences, allowing cooperation to occur more frequently and effectively.

After six years of striving towards convergence, newsrooms have found that strategies designed to improve cooperation should combine two working processes: (1) separation of specialised teams to expand stories on each platform; and (2)

cooperation between skilled specialists on cross-media content strategy to provide multiple stories of high quality that respond to the needs for immediacy, context, and investigation to provide insights into issues. On that point of strategy, all journalists agreed that they could achieve the goals of quality that were expected of them by society.

### ***7.2 Planned distribution of four functional types of cross-media content in order to add context and provide well-rounded reporting***

The analysis of content management in chapter 6 proposes four types of content that serve different functions. All of them must arise from routine cross-media production, and this calls for a cross-media practice strategy such as that illustrated in the figure 7.2.



**FIGURE 7.2:** Cross-media practices with four types of functional cross-media content.

This model illustrates the integration of work practices with content strategy in cross-media news production, with clear directions for how multiple news items can be produced from one story or topic. Developed from Bradshaw (2007), this model shows the stages of news production as it caters for online journalism and covers two news dimensions – immediate/fast and in-depth. It is in accord with the point made by Ureta (2011), that the online attribute of hypertext enables the creation of a narrative style that possibly provides depth and context to news issues. This model can also be used to develop the concept of content management, with its emphasis on tasks and processes of storing, managing and publishing digital content in many forms (Jones, 2000; Poulter, 2003). Such a management strategy can usefully ‘expand the lifecycle of news content’. However, if good journalism and a well-rounded news coverage are to be achieved, reality suggests that to be able to expand content across platforms, a newsroom should first have clear directions on what purpose or function is to be served by each item of content in cross-media production. One of the consequences of creating a culture of cooperation, along with synergism in using to the best advantage the powers and characteristics of different platforms, is that the resulting environment breeds confusion and tension on the issue of content production, particularly when there is pressure from the needs of a newsroom to distribute content across multiple platforms. In chapter 6, I proposed *four types of functional cross-media content* as a suggestion to newsrooms on how they should plan content narratives and distribution. News organizations are therefore researching and developing ways to tell stories in a more appealing way and to engage people on social media, in the hope of finding opportunities to send important messages to society.

Newsrooms must break the news at high speed, compete with online content and “personalize” the news in order to meet the demands of different audiences, all in the interests of reaching enough people to make an impact. People enter issues from different places, drawn by words, pictures and graphics splashed across a variety of screens and pages. Their understanding comes from putting the pieces together, much as they might understand any other non-media issue. In this environment, news organizations can benefit from all of their platforms, with journalists on each platform still doing what they are good at, while they collaborate with other teams who are producing similar, but different, stories for other

platforms. This kind of content management expands the life cycle of news stories, increasing the chance of people learning to understand important social issues.

The news production and dissemination process begins with exclusive content of breaking news stories appearing on online platforms, especially social media. Short updates then appear on websites in response to demands for fast, immediate reporting, and when such reports are gathered on the same page or in the same section, people can follow an event in chronological order and remain up-to-date. Social-media networks also have a hashtag function that links stories on the same issue, making it easier for followers to find updates and take part in discussions on news topics. Engaging content is important in this process, and is either produced by individual journalists on their personal social-media accounts or by new-media teams on the news organization's official account. Both can be integrated, to reach wider audiences.

However, the challenge in this process is undertaking fast fact-checking and competing with the speed of online 'native news' organizations and eyewitness accounts. The insights provided by this study may help to solve ethical issues and risks to the quality of reporting at this early stage of news production by encouraging the editorial team to change its role. The team should be more supportive of journalists in the field, work together with the new-media team to monitor journalists' performances and provide fact-checking and information to people in the field, as well as co-operating with the new-media team to plan exclusive breaking and updating news items that engage people to keep following the reports.

The next production process of this cross-media model is adding context to stories to develop traditional news coverage and expanding the content for use on websites. This involves redesigning stories for exclusive use on a variety of platforms and giving them the unique narrative styles demanded by the characteristics of each platform. This step usually involves the skills of specialized teams. This study contributes to recent debates concerning both a general loss of quality in journalism and an abandonment of investigative journalism because of constraints upon time and resources in cross-media production. Providing context and background information as meaningful aspects of continuing "long-tail" stories lies at the core of cross-media distribution strategies found in this study, and it is

my contention that innovative, hybrid storytelling styles, such as those shown in chapter 6, can safeguard the quality of good journalism with contextualization and the use of ‘chunks’ of a story across platforms so that audiences may examine all aspects of an issue in a kind of jigsaw pattern. Although, in some countries, the dominance of traditional media is maintained by relegating online media to a supporting role, analysis of the transformation of traditional media narratives undertaken by the three newsrooms studied here (and discussed in chapter 6), has extended our knowledge of ‘hybrid storytelling’; online and social-media platforms have become the bases for innovations in content narratives that are aimed at extending well-round aspects of news stories.

During the production stage in which context is added to stories and in-depth content is developed, the new-media team plays an important role in repurposing content for different platforms and expanding stories to create content that is designed for exclusive use by a particular outlet. As I have already suggested, in a cross-media newsroom the new-media team is a ‘bridge team’ that ties everyone together and is responsible for selecting material from each team, producing it in multimedia form and distributing it across multiple platforms. Any team in a newsroom can be given this ‘bridging’ responsibility, depending on an organization’s policy and its newsroom structure. Drawing from three case studies as online platform become main sources news reach audience, new-media team has responsibility to bridge traditional media content to create different entry points for audience.

The expansion of content is an important strategy for ensuring the quality of journalism because, when it is done effectively, it can provide well-rounded content by using multiple stories, often on different platforms, seizing on different aspects of a story as an entry point to the core focus of the issues. Once again, this is the ‘jigsaw’ concept of using a variety of aspects to collectively cover the entirety of an issue. The principal theoretical implication of this study is the concept of transmedia coverage. It has been proven that when a genuine synergy is achieved in the narrative approaches of different news platforms towards a single news event or issue, then this process accomplishes spreadability, or uses the advantages inherent in the narrative style and characteristics of each platform to spread the story via a variety of audience networks; drillability, in that context is provided

with which the public may dig deeper into the information; and continuity across platforms, using a diversity of viewpoints and innovative narrative styles so that audiences become immersed in the issues and relate closely to them. This finding confirms what other scholars have attempted to explain, and suggests that the transmedia concept offers an opportunity for well-rounded and high-quality storytelling using ‘new narratives’. This compels news organizations to transform the long-standing narrative styles of traditional media and expand their operations to embrace digital storytelling, not only to meet changing audience demands, but also as a new format to reach wider audiences.

By doing this, the goal of high quality – from the journalist’s perspective – can be achieved by providing reliable, accurate facts with meaningful context. Cooperation between platforms can make good use of “old style” focused journalistic specialization when long-tailed journalism is seen as a distribution strategy that not only achieves high quality work practices, but also engages with audiences, especially those using social-media platforms. Such a strategic use of multiple platforms provides greater impact and a better chance of achieving official action.

When examples of news text from the three study organizations were analysed, I categorized them according to similarities and differences in the objective of the content, and this was considered alongside interview data on strategies for planning content distribution. On this subject, the interview data showed some confusion. Where it came to developing content strategies to meet audience preferences and business expectations, in terms of viewer numbers, readerships and television ratings, each newsroom was on a learning curve. This study, therefore, add on to the gap of knowledge on cross-media content strategy that multiple content strategy can be based on four functional types of cross-media content: repurposed, engagement, cross-promotional and expanded content for exclusive use on a particular outlet.

As a concluding answer to the research question on cross-media content strategy, the results of this study suggest that there should be *four functional types of content*, so the editorial and new-media teams and individual journalists know what they should produce throughout the process of news reporting. With this knowledge, they can plan their news gathering, the sourcing of materials, the

sequences of production and distribution to engage different audiences, and the creation of different entry points to the issues on different platforms, using multiple stories. This will ease confusion and give direction on what has to be done and how it should be done effectively, to reach different audiences and help them to understand different aspect of issues. This proposal fills a gap in present knowledge related to content management and narrative construction for cross-media journalism. Anyone who is planning cross-media production can use these four descriptions of content function in the pre-production process to plan their production. It answers the need to ease confusion in newsrooms about how, who, and what needs to be produced across platforms.

The most notable result to emerge from adapting a content strategy based on the four functional types of cross-media content is that the cross-media model that integrates work practices and content strategies creates the opportunity to expand individual news events into multiple stories. Discussions on the quality of journalism showed that editorial and social-media teams expect that important issues effecting society should be able to reach wider audiences, to encourage debate and public concern about social issues. Interviewees suggested that newsrooms were embracing digital technology in order to help them immerse audiences in different experiences and encourage a better understanding of social issues. High-quality journalism is a meaningless concept if it has no audience, and a journalist's fundamental function is to send messages to society using a storytelling style that reaches the widest possible audience because of its appeal and its ability to spark debate.

Another argument concerning the ethics of news production is related to quality content, on one hand, and the hazards of unseemly haste, algorithm challenges and business survival, on the other, leading to over-dramatized content and over-emphasis given to trivial or meaningless social-media conversation, simply to attract clicks, likes and shares. Violent video clips and pictures, stories based on gossip, the stirring of conflict between one faction and another, or use of 'click bait' headlines, all lead to a loss of credibility. The danger of the social-media 'buzz' and user-generated content that fails to elucidate issues is that many members of society may question the relevance of mainstream media and turn instead to alternative 'news' sources such as online influencers and native news websites. In

this light, journalists admit that if they can find ways to tell stories that engage people, there will be less dependence on dramatized content and somehow they will find ways of balancing views and ratings with good journalism.

Finally, the fundamental strategy proposed by this study responds to the need for alternative angles or aspects to stories, as well as enhanced background and contextual information with high production values, when newsrooms face the need to compete with speed to meet demands for real-time information. It focuses on four types of cross-media content and hybrid storytelling that will benefit from the unique characteristics of each platform. Innovative storytelling on social media has proven to attract audience attention. Extended versions of news stories that are designed to give context, analysis and background to issues also help newsrooms to deal with the popularity of dramatic human-interest stories in a more thought-provoking fashion; that is, to find solutions or drive social change. Although this style of coverage has yet to be achieved consistently across news stories on an everyday basis, this thesis has shed some light on methods by which newsrooms in Thailand can adapt to cross-media production using more purposeful strategies to accomplish high-quality journalism in everyday practice. In so doing, they will enrich the long-term reputation of professional journalism for quality and resolute values.

This thesis expands upon existing studies of content management, several of which suggest that the management of content in a digital media environment should aim to expand the 'life cycle' and value of content (Jones, 2000; Poulter, 2003) as well as embracing the transmedia concept, in which aspects or components of content play varied roles with competing objectives on different outlets to attract and engage audiences with stories (Moloney, 2011; Veglis, 2012; Renó, 2014). In addition to enriching the quality of four functioning types of content, newsrooms also tend to develop narrative styles during cross-media co-operative workflow, typically mixing the characteristics of each platform narrative as hybrid content story-telling to better reach audiences and offer relatable, appealing stories. This suggest that the management of content in a digital media environment should aim to expand the 'life cycle' and value of content. Content strategy and narrative on social media in this thesis show the expectations of editorial and social-media teams pose important issues likely to be affecting perceptions of journalistic quality in the

wider society. Quality reporting should be able to reach wider audiences, and encourage a more diverse debate about public affairs.

In the end, this thesis must emphasize the fact that cross-media journalism is not just about expanding from traditional to new and multiple platforms, nor is it simply creating multiple tasks for journalists. Cross-media journalism needs to be well planned, with a strategy of drawing on the advantages of producing multiple stories on single issues and using them to best advantage according to the characteristics and features of diverse platforms. At the same time, it must be alert to the disadvantages, as documented here, which together threaten to severely curtail affordances otherwise being made possible.

### ***7.3 Limitations and considerations for further research***

One of the key considerations repeatedly articulated by this chapter is that cross-media practices and storytelling bring challenges to the quality of journalism. Every newsroom that is in the course of expanding its operations to encompass multiple media outlets is currently in a learning curve of testing work practices and content. The focus of this thesis has thus been to identify the distinct principles of a fundamental cross-media model and, critically, to give purpose to content types and workflow strategies in order to achieve good practices in cross-media journalism. Such a focus is needed if professional journalists are to examine opportunities and find ways for their profession to survive in the age of economic slowdown and digital disruption. Furthermore, this thesis has argued that there is no need to force newsrooms towards full convergence; rather, organizations should concentrate on designing models of cross-media production unique to each newsroom, with strategies encouraging cooperative work practices to produce and distribute content for multiple platforms and, throughout the process, engage with audiences. In all of this, it is important to recognize that structural tensions, economic slowdowns and tough competition in the Thai media landscape may hinder the achievement of quality in cross-media work. More research is required to determine the effectiveness of cross-media production and content strategies in different types of newsrooms, ranging from those that are structurally small to large and complex organizations. Strategies based on the four types of functional content

proposed in this thesis can be further studied in terms of content innovation and audience responses to the different forms of content across platforms. Such research would also shed light on the extent to which various styles and presentations of cross-media content engage audiences, so it would engender a concept of content value. In addition, it would be worth examining commercial and business models in further research to show how cross-media journalism can help newsrooms to survive financial difficulties. Economic slowdowns and declining revenue are crucial obstacles to high-quality journalism. Further research into media value chains and business opportunities for cross-media journalism could help news organizations to see directions for the development of cross-media models in future.

Further research, therefore, might explore audience insights, audience relationships with cross-media newsrooms, and analysis of cross-media content in terms of its impacts to drive social change, i.e. how well the profession of journalism is filling its social role. As well, newsrooms' experimentation with innovative content is worthy of further study. Such studies would help to strengthen cross-media journalism and fill gaps in knowledge in the Thai media environment. Eventually, they may save the future of journalism in Thailand.

This study has provided insights into strategies, both existing and recommended, behind work practices, content, narrative styles and distribution of content in three different types of cross-media newsrooms. Analysis of the three case studies sheds light on opportunities for the production of high-quality cross-media journalism. These occur when an effective cooperative culture is established in a newsroom and the mindset of old roles in news teams changes to produce a working synergy between teams and development of hybrid narratives that draw upon the advantages offered by the characteristics of each platform, creating powerful communication that engages audiences and enhances the value of journalistic practice. This work-practice strategy goes hand in hand with recognition of four types of functional content as a fundamental issue in developing and designing cross-media journalism in order to accomplish high quality. It is clear that this strategy provides a framework for production of long-tail journalism, and that this will eventually become a vital approach to raising standards and competing with quality. It may also help to find ways to sustain journalistic business with value-added content across platforms.

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