

# Convergence business as usual

by Hilton Tarrant

**T**he intersection of online (new) media and other more traditional forms of media has simply always been part of how Moneyweb has operated. Journalists have produced “converged” content daily, long before the word “convergence” became popular.

Founder and CEO Alec Hogg started the group’s flagship website Moneyweb.co.za in 1998 by simply posting transcripts of his evening business radio show (then on 702 Talk Radio).

The transcripts which provided valuable content were posted online, and together with Hogg’s column “Boardroom talk” provided the bulk of the website’s content in the early days.

Audio downloads and streaming were added to the transcripts providing a multimedia experience, which continues to garner a daily core audience.

The newsroom and editorial processes operate as a unit. While there is distinction on some levels between the 20-plus journalists focused on specific forms of media, stories are largely reused in different formats in different media.

Journalists at Moneyweb don’t really think about any theory behind creating content for various media, it’s just part of daily editorial planning and production. Virtual editorial meetings at 10am via instant messaging software plan the day’s content and allow journalists to join in the discussion remotely from media events or press conferences.

A story that gets broken on Moneyweb’s evening radio show on SAfm, for example,

will be written for the web by a journalist as the interview is happening live and will be published together with the full transcript and audio clips.

The daily diary also sets the tone for content on the radio platforms. Radio-specific content is also often produced by the same journalist for both the English (SAfm market update) and Afrikaans (RSG Gelsake met Moneyweb) evening radio shows. The content and guests across both shows regularly overlap substantially, providing common content in different languages. The group’s radio journalists are also involved in producing written content for online platforms.

The trial of stock market news-related podcasts in 2007 also provided the opportunity to leverage existing content. A daily Sesotho personal finance show also offered the opportunity to experiment with repackaging content in another indigenous language. Moneyweb’s soon-to-be-launched 15-minute market update and personal finance “show-within-a-show” on a regional radio station will allow journalists to further repackage and repurpose audio (from and for the other radio shows) as well as written content.

Journalists focused mainly on producing web content will typically record audio at press events and, after filing their stories, edit down the audio clips for use on evening radio shows.

Content from the group’s various websites is also used to provide daily business news content to print partner *The Citizen*.

The finance pages (CitiBusiness) are produced as a joint venture between Moneyweb Holdings and Caxton. Content from the web is edited for print and packaged into story units spanning a total of four pages. Content from the group’s various websites is also repackaged by KwaZulu-Natal’s *Weekend Witness* “Weekend Money” pages.

Hogg’s mantra that “content is king”, sees content continuously reused and leveraged across multiple platforms.

The latest of these are a number of so-called mini-sites, which are standalone websites focused on a number of verticals outside of Moneyweb.co.za’s core finance area. These include property, deal-making, tax, politics and a site aimed at a younger audience. Here too, content is often produced for the niche websites, as well as for radio or even a related core-business news story.

Moneyweb, through a joint venture with satellite channel CNBC Africa, also leveraged the content it produced for television in a year-long experiment (this came to an end in May 2008). Video was provided as multimedia for streaming on Moneyweb.co.za (along with transcripts) and an archive of this still exists.

This experiment allowed Moneyweb to cull audio from the video interviews and reuse that on the group’s evening radio show(s) as well as provide interview-based content for journalists to rewrite as news for the web.

The group is currently testing the use of YouTube-hosted business-related video content produced by news organisations such as Reuters and the Associated Press.