

Emerging Technologies and Cross-Innovation in Audiovisual media ecosystems –
Building an innovation ecosystem of collaboration between media companies and startups

Abstract

Digitalization disrupts the business models through which traditional European media players have successfully captured revenues from both advertisers and consumers. The challenge for these players is to preserve their revenues and further develop their business models, even as their audiences and their advertisers disperse. Not only are the competition rules changing within their local markets, but they are increasingly threatened by the entry of the (global) tech giants. Moreover, beyond the digital technologies of today, new technologies emerge which will further impact and potentially disrupt media markets and business models of the traditional media companies.

This paper addresses the challenges and opportunities of emerging technologies and cross-innovation. We aim to provide empirical insight into the challenges of cross-innovation between media companies and technology start-ups, with a focus on emerging technologies. For this purpose, we investigated three research questions. First, which are the most relevant emerging technologies and their applications in the media industry? Second, how can media companies build scale in assessing or ‘sensing’ these emerging technologies? Third, what is the value created from collaboration between media companies and startups for both parties?

For our analysis, we review the relevant academic literature and identify and discuss the applications and impact of emerging technologies in media. We then address the challenges for cross-innovation between media companies and media technology startups, through the case study of the VRT Sandbox and its subsequent expansion into the international MediaRoad program and Future Media Hubs alliance. Finally, we discuss our findings and identify the value appropriation from collaboration between media companies and startups for both parties.

This empirical analysis is based on structured interviews with experts from broadcasters, media startups, and from the independent TV production and advertising sector.

Keywords: strategic management, entrepreneurship, innovation, collaboration with startups