Digital Age Jargon Buster

Browser

The software allowing the user to surf and travel across the World Wide Web (www). The most common browsers are Internet Explorer (often found on PCs), Safari (the Mac version) and Mozilla Firefox (a free browser able to run on both PC and Macs)

Digital

The way that information is stored as individual 'bits' representing 'on' or 'off' states. It is often described as data recorded as sequences of the numbers 1 and 0 but it is more than this.

Digital Rights Management (DRM)

A range of schemes using different mechanisms to protect the sharing and copying of files over networks. It has huge implications and presents a challenge to traditional copyright laws. Concerns include the "ability to re-use content in different media under existing copyright legislation, and the impact that this may have on developing new business, and managing relationships with content creators". [1]

File Transfer Protocol (FTP)

This is a way of transferring files over the internet between computers. An FTP site can be written in a URL format, for example, ftp://nujtraining.com.

Media convergence

Media convergence is a major factor influencing the training and skills development needed by members to prepare and equip themselves for the digital environment.

Media convergence is understood as the bringing together of "computing and information technology (IT) companies, telecommunications networks, and content providers from the publishing worlds of newspapers, magazines, music, radio, television, films, and entertainment software".

Simply put, the "three Cs"—computing, communications, and content" have become increasingly intertwined. This is resulting in an increase in media content creation and the services delivering content to audiences. [2]

Some common file type acronyms:

Graphic Interchange Format (GIF)

Tagged Image File Format (TIFF)

Moving Pictures Experts Group (MPEG)

Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG)

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Broadly speaking, media convergence happens on two levels:

- Technological level, whereby content is produced in digital forms and available on a range of devices from mobile telephones to Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) to Digital Video Recorders (DVRs) linked to TVs.

- Industry level, where it has had huge repercussions for the entertainment industries, as companies merge and acquire other companies. This has led to the development of new business models, particularly those that can "profit from the growing consumer expectation for 'on–demand' content". [3]

New Media

This is the New Media environment of digital publishing as opposed to the 'old media' of the print and broadcasting environment. Also referred to as interactive media and multi media.

Operating System (OS)

The underlying programme (software) that helps direct all the basic functions of a computer from directing keyboard commands and controlling disc drives to displaying input on the computer screen. Think of it as a conductor directing an orchestra

Platform

There is often confusion around the use of this term. It refers to the operating system on your computer, for example, Mac OS-X, MS–DOS/Windows XP, Unix, plus the hardware – the physical computer – and the software on the computer, such as Adobe Photoshop or Microsoft Word. These different platforms are often simplified by referring to PC and Mac platforms. Working on both PC and Mac is known as cross–platform. Some software programmes, such as Open Office, is designed to work on both PC and Mac platforms. The term cross–platform refers to working across platforms, such as PC and Mac.

Web 2.0

The development of user communities, such as social networking sites, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, as well as virtual reality worlds. Content creators and audiences can interact, often in a more collaborative way. This computer–mediated communication has led to the development of online communities.

Web presence

This is used to describe a business or person who has a web site of some description. It could be a website, a blog a page on MySpace etc.

[1] Skills Needs Analysis for the Publishing Industry, Skillset, November 2008. p. 61

[2] See Britannica Online Encyclopaedia, 'media convergence', www.britannica.com/EB-checked/topic/1425043/media–convergence, date accessed 18.03.2009

[3] Ibid.

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