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TOP TRENDS 2006

CYBERWORLD TV

In 2006, the ability to send whatever is being played on the computer screen to the TV screen will mark the beginning of the end of the communication industry's monopoly on broadcast news and entertainment.

After a decade of promises, such as those made by Microsoft, who partnered with NBC to create "rich multimedia content," but instead delivered MSNBC (More of the Same NBC), the technology is now in place to deliver broadcast quality TV, online. (See, High-Tech Visionaries "Off Trend," *Trends Journal*, Fall 1996.)

The long awaited "convergence" trend, such as TiVo's capability to bring the Internet to the TV, will seamlessly connect the myriad of media platforms, making tuning in online as simple as hitting the remote. And

regardless of who creates the content and where it comes from, a truly world-wide-web of news, entertainment, art and information will "converge" from the Internet to the TV screen of each viewer's choice.

BUGGY WHIPS, NEWSPAPERS AND NETWORKS

Trying to get their piece of the convergence action, Yahoo has partnered with TiVo, AOL will Net broadcast Time Warner re-runs, and the TV networks are now simulcasting some of their shows. But despite the old-line media's attempt to lay claim to a major stake on the Web, their size, power and current lock on distribution will not determine how many eyeballs tune in. Product and content will separate the winners from the losers.

And, just as the newspaper industry watched its circulation plummet as more readers went online for news, the moribund networks, already suffering audience erosion, will lose dominance as new online providers offer news and entertainment that rises above the networks' lowest common denominator fare.

With "content," king - and the media oligarchy unable to control the Internet, the smart money will invest in online production companies that bring in new talent to develop the "computer-to-TV-programming" rather than hiring recycled network and Hollywood types to run their operations. With modestly sized budgets, new upstart online networks can even outflank the mighty Internet dominance of Google and Yahoo.

Trendpost: *Unlike the many coveted dot com domain names that have long been taken, there is still an abundance of dot tv domains available. And although a good dot tv domain will prove valuable in name recognition*

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