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## **Perceptions of Digital Migration on Media Production South America: A Focus on Argentina**

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## Perceptions of Digital Migration on Media Production South America: A Focus on Argentina

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### Abstract

Brazil and Mexico are market leaders for the digital switchover in Latin America and are the countries closest to completing the process. Although they have chosen different technologies for digital terrestrial television, they both demonstrate that actively involving the broadcasting industry is key to success, and that the government also has to promote digital switchover and help the poorest citizens acquire digitally compliant devices. Digital switchover can be a lengthy process in large countries that rely on terrestrial television as their main television platform. This has regional consequences, because countries at an advanced stage of digital switchover cannot easily re-allocate digital dividend frequencies for mobile use while neighboring countries are still using these frequencies for broadcasting. The main challenges that Latin American countries face concern the management of the simulcast period and the switch-off process. The best-practice examples of Brazil and Mexico could, however, benefit other countries in the region such as Argentina in terms of identifying the network parameters that will best meet market demand, involving stakeholders, and carrying out pilot tests. Digital switchover calls for strong government support and action to tackle challenges as they arise. Therefore, the paper examined the perceived influence of digital migration on the performance of La Plata Media Group on Argentina. The study embraced a case study design considering the fact that it only used one institution, La Plata Media Group to gather the information that was used for analysis. The data obtained was analyzed using the content analysis since it was qualitative. The study concluded that digital migration was a cheerful incident to be adopted by La Plata Media Group despite it had the hurdles of the high cost of procuring the digital facilities, lack of adequate information, technology experts, poor infrastructure in the country and the lack of regulatory legal framework on the use of digital platforms. The study also concluded that digital migration spurred the productive information acquisition and news distribution within the organization. The study also, concluded that the organization majorly depended on the internal product re-innovation to establish new products to the viewers. The study further established the organization had ushered in a relook at the competitive service strategy to align it to the existing market situation. The study recommended that La Plata Media Group need to constantly welcome the use of the digital platforms to enhance

its performance and enhance the cost effective. The study also recommended the government to implement strategies and policies that minimize unhealthy and unfair competition amongst the media houses in Argentina to make the firms grow in their future digitization. Besides, the study recommended La Plata Media Group to continue espousing the digitization of its contents and training of the employees to improve the skills and competency, thus higher efficiency.

**Key words;** *Digital Migration, Media Production, La Plata Media Group & Argentina.*

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The digital revolution is not static and keeps on propelling each day. In this digitization World, the new dynamic innovation has displayed more comprehensive coverage and continuous changes to the media industry (Rivero, 2018). As indicated by Skryl, Gregorić and Hegeduš (2018), the importance of switching from analogue to digital was to connect the entire society, even those who are in remote areas, to access the quality sound and pictures. The digital migration influenced the performance of the media houses, both positively and negatively. The digitization has made it easier for local video productions to be generated, thus improving the performance. However, the traditional companies have lost revenue in advertisements, especially from the newspapers and the print media, as many institutions turned to the digital form of advertisement, which is fast and reliable (Baldassar & Wilding, 2019). According to Khan and Aftab (2015), digital migration enhanced the development of new channels, which has increased the base revenue for many companies that are involved in the advertisement.

The study was anchored on the Resource-Based View, Technology Acceptance Model and the theory of innovation diffusion. Barney (2001) conceptualized the Resource Based-View (RBV) that postulates that for a resource to create a competitive advantage, it should generate economic value, not imitable, scarce, non-substitutable, and not readily accessible. These resources that belong to the firm are useful in developing, manufacturing and delivering products or services to its customers. Further, the Technology Acceptance Model was proposed by Davis in 1989 (Davis, 1989). According to Davis (1989), at the point when a client is displayed to innovation, a few variables will impact their choice concerning how and when they will utilize it. At last, the theory of innovation diffusion was spearheaded by Rogers (1995). The theory expresses that innovation diffusion depends on the perception that the selection of innovation includes the continual and organized spread of new ideas.

According to Witteborn (2018), digital migration is the transition from the weak analogue signals to more effective digital signals. More so, according to Ate, Egielewa and Hasan (2019), digital movement involves analogue link transformation to advanced digital or more digital satellite television in which the viewers may have quality and clear pictures from multiple channels. The TVs and the radio have been operating under the analogue signals for a long period and the signals were limited to cover a small geographical area.

Mastrini and Leiva (2019), argued that the digital migration was initiated to counter the analogue transmission and, thus, consumers to have the quality and quantity content in viewership. The analogue systems keep running on a substantial bandwidth to transmit sound and picture data and were subsequently the motivation behind why the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTV) system was instituted with the goal that they may send signals to the remote areas and reduce the transmission range. It was expected that all nations who came to a consensus in Geneva, Switzerland, to have

moved from the weak signals, analogue signals to more advanced signals, digital signals by June 21, 2015 (Galperin, 2016). The main idea of switching from the analogue to the digital was to increase the transmission of the wireless signals, unlike the analogue that transmitted the signals on a massive bandwidth.

Further, the digitization has impacted how quickly news substance gets to the intended interest group. According to Rodríguez Miranda and Carboni (2018), before the digital migration, people primarily depended on the papers for presentation and getting information about an event, which took much time to get to the intended audience. The transition to digitization has made it considerably progressively easy to introduce information continuously, raise to-date the breaking news and happenings contemporaneously (Mastrini, Becerra, Bizberge & Krakowiak, 2018). The media houses have benefited from the digital advertisement and the majority of the customers prefer the digital method because it is fast and most reliable compared to the traditional way, thus increasing the total revenues through the production of various products.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Digital migration has dramatically changed the quality of the content, the signal and pictures and consumers have access to broader coverage of the information through a variety of TV channels in Latin America (Clarke, Lindquist & Roy, 2017). The digital migration process has affected the performance of some of the media houses negatively since the majority of the audiences were not well informed and educated about the digital movement. Despite the media houses requesting for more time for public awareness in Argentina, the process of switching from analogue to digital went on as planned (Mastrini & Leiva, 2019). The migration to digital was costly for buyers due to the purchase of decoders and the pay-to-watch programs, along with these lines instances of decrease in the TV group of viewers, which is not appropriate for advertisers and the promoters consequently a drop in the exhibition as far as performance. Drop-in numbers of TV viewership reduced the advertiser's profits. Angulo, Calzada and Estruch (2018), reported that digital migration was costly and increased the chances of decline in TV viewers, which affected the media houses negatively and the total revenue was decreasing. Also, the digital movement influenced the financial performance of the newspapers negatively and its income decreased.

The main challenges that Latin American countries face concern the management of the simulcast period and the switch-off process. The best-practice examples of Brazil and Mexico could, however, benefit other countries in the region such as Argentina in terms of identifying the network parameters that will best meet market demand, involving stakeholders, and carrying out pilot tests. Digital switchover calls for strong government support and action to tackle challenges as they arise. Therefore, the paper examined the perceived influence of digital migration on the performance of La Plata Media Group in Argentina.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

To establish the perceptions of digital migration on media production South America while focusing on Argentina.

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

#### 2.2.2 Theory of Innovation Diffusion

The theory was developed by Rogers (1995). The theory depicts innovation and creativity within an organization alters the method of production and improves the efficiency significantly within a certain period of time (Rogers, 1995). The theory revolves around that the impression of progress is exceptional and that if and when the thought appears to be novel to the potential adopter, it is then should be considered as advance.

Besides, the diffusion theory establishes that innovation incorporates data, and hence, the reception will bring down the vulnerability within the institution. As per Rogers (1995), diffusion of a change is dependent upon five key highlights which incorporate its relative bit of scope, similarity, intricacy, trainability, and discernibleness. The innovation diffusion theory can be utilized to clarify process innovation where innovation is a segment. Hence, this theory is essential to the present investigation and the digital movement includes the reception of the change from the simple signals.

However, the theory fails to concentrate on the complex issues such as the cultural and political factors and the societies which are believed to be rational in the process of deciding on whether to adopt a new technology or not (Bradford& Florin, 2003). Thus, the diffusion theory has concentrated more on the innovation itself rather than the social-cultural factors associated with the technology and the consequences related to the introduction of the change in the industry. The technological innovations become successful when they appreciate and provide a beneficial role to the consumers and all the stakeholders.

### 2.3 Forms of Digital Migration

The digital migration took different forms depending level of technology and infrastructural developments within a country. The different forms included Digital Video Broadcasting Handheld (DVB-H), Digital Video Broadcasting Terrestrial (DVB-T) and Integrated Services Digital Broadcasting Terrestrial (ISDB-T) (Rivero, 2018). The DVB-H is a service suite that is majorly applied for video transmission by using various modes and medium. The DVB-H mainly focuses on using the smallest amount of the resources to provide the best and reliable services (Kornfeld & May, 2017). Moreover, the best technology that is used to ensure DVB-H is successful is called time slicing, in which the data packets are transmitted as data bursts in small time slots.

The Digital Video Broadcasting - Terrestrial (DVB-T) is a comprehensive set for the transmission of digital terrestrial television (DTT). DVB-T is in a situation to transmit various types of information, including compacted digital data, digital sound, digital video, moving picture specialists Group (MPEG) and other information with codec balance (Eizmendi *et al.*, 2018). DVB-T is much reliable and it provides an advanced method of transmission compared to the previous analogue transmission. In like manner, the ISDB-T standard can be broke down as the transformation of a double sign, which is the digital sign generated by the television operators formatted by MPEG-2, into electromagnetic waves (Taylor, 2010). These waves travel noticeably all around until they arrive at the ISDB-T recipients, who have the function of executing the invert procedure that is turning electromagnetic waves into a digital sign that the television decoders may understand: the video and sound sign. The digital sign was significantly applied in Japan and its environment (Berger, 2017)

### 3.0 Research Methodology

The study adopted a case study design. The targeted respondents of the study are managers in different levels of management in the La Plata Media Group. The units of analysis were managers from the finance department, ICT department, human resource department and programs division department. Further, the data was collected by administering the interview guide to the targeted respondents. The selected respondents were expected to record and write down information that was used later for data analysis. The report was interpreted utilizing the content analysis since it was qualitative. The procedure of the data analysis involved different stages. These stages include familiarizing with the data by taking the time to re-read the data and write down the information that has value and is relevant to the research question. Then, the researcher identified the main themes that need to be answered throughout the analysis. The researcher categorized the data and established a framework that was guided by the research questions. Afterward, the researcher identified the relationship between the data sets and tried to find the explanations that were coming out from the collected data.

### 4.0 Data Analysis and Discussion

#### 4.3 Digital Migration

##### 4.3.1 Challenges of Digital Migration

The study sought to examine the challenges of digital migration in La Plata Media Group. According to the findings of the study, the interviewees indicated that media companies are experiencing a wide range of difficulties concerning the adoption and use of digital advertising.

*"Problems that faced the organization after the digital migration was the high cost of acquiring the digital facilities and lack of adequate information technology infrastructure in the country." ICT manager [Key Informant, 2019].*

Besides, the discoveries of the examination demonstrated that digital movement required the set-top boxes that made it critical to contend with contenders who had simple and less expensive set-top boxes. There was a lack of adequate regulatory legal framework on the use of digital platforms and the broader choice of TV channels led to the viewer's fragmentation, which hindered the organization from achieving its goals and the revenue from the advertisements went down.

*"It turned out to be simple for the contenders to enter the media business and contest successfully, there was a significant risk of substitute item, the aggressive contention had expanded and it was easy for purchasers and this situation sponsors to drive costs down just like the change to a contender." Programs division manager [Key Informant, 2019]*

The issue of insufficient digital equipment was a challenge to active digital migration in Argentina and numerous TV stations in the nation came up short on the required digital devices to make the switchover a reality in their different stations.

Another study undertaken by Rivero (2018), uncovered that most TV channels lacked the digital communicated device in their stations. Additionally, Benedict and Chukwuma (2017) clarified another challenge of digital migration was that many staff of the TV channels does not have the imperative expert learning to work toward digital devices and some of them were not all around prepared to man the technology for maximal execution. In a related report, Ebimini (2015) found that most of the inhabitant's in-country networks in South-South Nigeria cannot handle the expense of electronic workplaces to equip them to see electronic material from digital TV.

Just a couple of customers had the option to buy the set boxes and make the month to month membership that prompted an outstanding decrease in the TV crowd, which was bothersome for advertisers and the sponsors (Ilesanmi, 2015). In spite of digital migration showing attractive outcomes, it has additionally introduced issues to the media houses, especially the La Plata Media Group.

#### **4.3.2 Training of the Employees**

The investigation sought to find out whether La Plata Media Group invests in the training of employees to understand the usage of digital platforms. According to the findings of the study, the organization was forced to set aside some funds in preparation for the workers to know how the digital platforms operate.

*“The organization subjected each employee inclusive of the management to mandatory training of at least six hours a week to understand the content of the digital systems.”* Human resource manager [Key Informant, 2019]

The findings of the research implied that digital migration forced La Plata Media Group to invest in training of its employees to understand the usage of the digital platforms that increased the operational costs. However, the performance of the organization improved after the training of all of the employees.

*“Such training has yielded positive outcomes as now representatives can work out the stage and help improve activities.”* Programs division manager [Key Informant, 2019]

The outcomes of the examination concur with the discoveries of Danneels and Kleinschmidt (2014), who found that creative items offer viable opportunities for business and there is an outstanding connection between the innovation consideration and business execution and adapting is one specific approach to improve the abilities of the workers. Elnaga and Imran (2013) showed that training programs are to stimulate the motivation of the employees to enhance their performance and capacities, which increases their work efficiency. Training and advancement, including instructing and tutoring, gathering conferences and expert programs decidedly impacted worker execution of the employees in the association (Mwangi 2017)

#### **4.3.3 Benefits of Digital Migration**

The study sought to establish the benefits of digital migration over analogue broadcasting in La Plata Media Group. From the study findings, the interviewees indicated that the profits attributable to digital migration included expanded speeds in data dissemination, closer vicinity to their group of spectators, developed adaptability in news dissemination, expanded crowds and fast analysis on the nature of substance conveyed by the media houses.

*“The nature of our news inclusion has improved since the beginning of digital development,”* Programs division manager [Key Informant, 2019].

Also, the findings of the study established that digital broadcasting has increased transmission networks by improving spectrum efficiency and the increase in transmission capacity that had raised the establishment and introduction of new channels that have allowed for the cropping up of multiple stations. The digital broadcasting allowed the implementation of single frequency networks instead of independent parallel analogue systems, which were more efficient than multi-frequency networks.

*“Digital migration has increased the sales in the organization as well as the market size through the introduction of new channels.”* Finance manager [Key Informant, 2019]

The discoveries of the examination agree with the results of Eizmendi, Velez, Gómez-Ba'rquero, Morgade, Baena-Lecuyer, Slimani and Zoellner (2014) who revealed that various transmitters utilize a similar recurrence channel to transmit a similar TV administration and just a single recurrence channel is required to cover the administrative region in this way lessening capital use on conveying and keeping up discrete foundation and expanding velocity of Digital transmission. Moreover, Ndonye, Khaemba and Bartoo (2015) set up that digital TV will help offers of TV sets and digital video recorders and the Consumer consumption on digital hardware could prompt definite advantages regarding expanded time spent sitting in front of the TV and more popularity for digital substance, in this manner expanding the general execution of the media houses.

#### **4.3.4 Dissemination of News**

The investigation sought to establish the dissemination of news after the digital migration in La Plata Media Group. According to the findings of the study, the news was gathered faster and was also disseminated quickly.

*“Since the beginning of digital migration, the news is accumulated quicker and disseminated rapidly, thus reaches the targeted audience within a short period.”* Programs division manager [Key Informant, 2019]

This means digital migration has empowered faster dissemination of news and the digital platforms are performing better in the organization. Leurs and Prabhakar (2018), in concurrence with the aftereffects of the investigation, found that the digitization procedure improves news revealing and dissemination and news detailing shows the inventiveness in transmitting and going over the news to the intended interest group. Likewise, Duguma (2019) built up that one of the incredible influence of the digital transformation is that the information is spread faster not merely to push news dissemination that is of top quality but also increases the imaginative creation and broadcasting of news through the digital strategies. Further, Ndonye, Khaemba and Bartoo (2015) clarify that the digitization procedure has made an alluring circumstance during the time spent trading thoughts and its connection to transferring makes the gathering of data reasonable and manageable.

#### **4.3.5 Internal Product Re-Innovations**

The study sought to find out whether digital migration influenced product re-innovations. The findings of the study found that digital migration allowed for product re-innovations at La Plata Media Group, which increased the market share and the company changed the brands of the products, which improved the quality and it had a competitive advantage.

*“The organization depends mainly on internal product re-innovations than external ones to produce quality products.”* ICT manager [Key Informant, 2019].

The findings of the investigation further revealed that products re-developments were satisfactory and had improved the exhibition within the organization after the digital migration. The examination also found that the product re-innovation connected the organization with the business model that enabled it to generate a variety of brands to increase sales revenue and market share.

*“The item re-advancement occasioned by digital movement has effectively associated with the plan of action, which has made more brands for us.”* Finance manager [Key Informant, 2019]

This result agrees with the inferences made by Vonortas and Xue (2014) that established the item re-innovation of media houses in Sub-Saharan countries built up that economic inspirations, inner sources and also digitization had developed a blend of the outside as well as interior resources which this way equipped a possible progression in the development. Additionally, as indicated by El Hanchi and Kerzazi (2019), Product re-innovation is a critical pointer of the organization's aggressiveness and development. Product re-advancement cannot be overlooked for the most part for a business whose basic premium is to have a sensible high ground and wishes to innovatively and financially go into the more active markets available. Wolf and Pett (2012) found that the media part is commonly adaptable and can create and execute new item thoughts rapidly on the off chance that they digitize their activities and innovation

#### 4.3.6 Competitive Business Strategy

The respondents were asked whether digital migration has steered to relook at the focused business procedure to adjust in the present market situation. The discoveries from the examination uncovered that the organization had developed a new competing business strategy to align with the case in the market and be in a position to compete with other media houses in the country.

*“Digital revolution has introduced a relook at the aggressive business procedure to adjust it to the present showcase happening.”* Programs division manager [Key Informant, 2019]

The results implied that the digital progress had introduced another market mixture, which means the media houses have to develop new strategies that will match the market forces. Jabłoński (2018) argued that organizations go through viable intensity and an organization acquires an upper hand and shows its successful aggressive business technique when the organization exercises, plans and results are different from contending organizations and are adjusted to the current advertise circumstance. In addition, Brenner (2016) demonstrates that an organization has a focused business methodology when it has the component to escape the method for contenders by showing signs of improvement favors from clients and is likewise adjusted to current market settings.

The findings of the study showed that La Plata Media Group was facing difficulties from the digital migration such as high cost of acquiring the digital facilities, lack of adequate information technology experts, poor infrastructure in the country and the lack of regulatory legal framework on the use of digital platforms. Further, the findings of the study found that set-top boxes were mandatory in the process of the digital migration to transmit the signals and this became a critical challenge to the La Plata Media Group since not many Argentinians had acquired the required set-top boxes and were ready for the automated relocation procedure resulting in low viewership and contrarily influencing the performance after some time. The results of the investigation concurred with the findings of Mirona (2015) who assessed the impact of the digital migration process on consumer viewing of TV programs in Argentina and reported majority of the consumers were unable to purchase the set-top boxes after the digital migration making the viewership to drop dramatically which in turn reduced advertising hence the drop in financial performance. Also, Lando (2017) showed that digital migration increased the competition among the media houses that led to a massive movement of journalists from one media house to another.

Likewise, the findings of the research established that La Plata Media Group was involved in the process of training the employees to understand the usage of the digital platforms, which increased the operational costs. The training enhanced the efficiency of the employees within the institution. The results reported that after training of the employees, there was an improvement in their

productivity and they showed both quantity and quality performance and the sales revenue increased over time. The findings of the results agreed with the findings of Lemma and Alemu (2016) who revealed that preparation practice measurement, for example, need an appraisal, preparing targets, preparing techniques, choice of learners and trainers, execution of the preparation program and assessment and input have a positive and colossal relationship on employee achievement.

Based on the findings of the study, it was established that digital migration was so beneficial to the La Plata Media Group and it gathered news very fast and disseminated quickly to the viewers. The speedy dissemination of news increased the number of viewers and this improved its reputation, which led to an increase in the market share as well as the sales revenue. The results of the examination agreed with the findings of Khan and Aftab (2015) that inspected how digitization impacted the performance of media houses in the Indian economy and established the spread of the news was very fast to the targeted audience however, the old means of advertisement such as the newspapers have reported a decline in the performance.

The findings of the study showed that La Plata Media Group majorly depended on the internal product re-innovation to establish new products to the viewers. The outcomes showed that the introduction of technology within the organization greatly influenced the opening of the brand-new items that fulfill the need of the clients. The product re-innovation within the company improved the efficiency of the company and also its profitability enhanced because of the consistent introduction of the brand-new brands. The results of the investigation agree with the findings of Bustinza, Gomes, Vendrell-Herrero and Baines (2019) who established that product re-innovation is very paramount to the organization and it improves the quality of the products, reduces the costs of production and increases the competitiveness hence increase profitability level over time.

The findings of the research indicated that digital migration overseen the organization to relook at the aggressive business technique to adjust in the market status. The outcomes uncovered that digital migration introduced another market blend to the organization, which stimulated it to develop new strategies to match with the market forces and remain competitive. The results of the study concurred with the findings of Brenner (2016) who set up that an organization has a focused business technique when it has the means to overcome its competitors by building better long term goal of actions that changes the reputation of the organization to get favors from the consumers to purchase more of its products and services.

## **5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study concludes that digital migration was not a cheerful incident to be adopted by the La Plata Media Group and it had the hurdles of the high cost of procuring the digital facilities, lack of satisfactory information technology experts, poor infrastructure in the country and the lack of regulatory legal framework on the use of digital platforms. The study also concludes that training of the employees is essential and it increases the efficiency of the workers. The La Plata Media Group has been committed in the process of training of its employees since the inception of digital migration to fully understand the procedures of the digital platforms and compete with other media houses in the country.

The study concludes that digital migration was helpful to the La Plata Media Group and it spurred productive information acquisition and news distribution. The study concludes that the quality of the news coverage has improved since the initiation of the digital migration and customers are

content with the services offered hence the increase in sales revenue. The study also concludes that digital migration has enabled the establishment of many channels that have led to viewer fragmentation and thus increasing the performance of the La Plata Media Group.

The study concludes that La Plata Media Group majorly depended on the internal product re-innovation to establish new products to the viewers. The product re-innovation within the organization advanced the performance of the organization positively and its profitability also increased. The study concludes that the internal product re-innovation is significantly more than the external product re-innovation. The study finds that the La Plata Media Group majorly depends on the inner product re-innovations than the external product re-innovations to enhance the quality of the services.

The study recommends that La Plata Media Group should continually grasp the utilization of the digital platforms to improve in its presentation and upgrade the focused business systems by stipulating a critical system that is associated with the new market elements where watcher fracture has become a substantial concern. The essential system created ought to welcome the approach of everything being equal in the market and thus establish the best approach to outdo them and improve in its competitive advantage.

The study recommends the La Plata Media Group to maintain establishing more channels. Forming a variety of channels will expand the extension of the company. It will be able to access a variety of viewers and the market share and the growth of the organization will progress. Also, the study recommends the organization to be advertising most of its products using the digital platforms such as the social media considering most people have access to it. The research recommends that the government ought to implement techniques as well as policies that minimize undesirable as well as unjust competitors amongst the media houses in Argentina to make the firms prosper in their future digitization.

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