

Digital convergence, and the information industries

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Our work aims at analyzing the dynamics of the long-term evolution of the information-related industry and its technological determinants, as related to the *global* evolution of these industries.

The occurrence of digitizing allows for a very general definition of information. In this general sense, information can be defined, with Varian and Shapiro (1999, p. 3), as: "*Anything that can be digitized – encoded as a stream of bits – is information*". Digital convergence, together with advances in the computer and telecom technologies, means that information can be very easily transferred, and exchanged, between industries that were previously distinct industries. In today's global world, due to *digital convergence*, the telecommunication, computer and software companies, publishers, movie studios and television networks, among other industries, all use the same information and communication technologies. Various media industries and neighboring industries tend to merge towards multi-activity groups.

Does all this evolution lead to a global information society, as described by a number of authors? This is perhaps a rather optimistic view. In particular, because of the so-called "digital divide", whereby many segments of the population of less advanced countries are deprived of access to computers, internet and digital technologies, the phenomenon in question is limited to the advanced industrial and emerging economies.

Bibliography

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