

Chapter 16

Convergence of Mobile TV with Everyday Life¹ and Culture

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ABSTRACT

Mobile communication technology has become one of the most popular technologies, profoundly associated with many users' everyday life. Mobile communication technology has evolved from a simple communication tool to mobile multimedia. This chapter concentrates on 'mobile TV,' the convergence of digital broadcasting and telecommunications. The main purpose of this chapter is to explore the diffusion and adoption of mobile TV-DMB (Digital Multimedia Broadcasting) in its early stages and examine the use of mobile TV-DMB in a wide range of everyday practices. This chapter also focuses on the factors that influence the adoption and use of mobile TV-DMB, and a contextual understanding of DMB that may affect media use patterns in a wide range of social and cultural contexts. The results of this study underline the potential of the broad integration of mobile TV-DMB into people's everyday life.

INTRODUCTION

Media use is profoundly associated with culture and individuals' everyday lives and practices of those who have grown up with digital technologies such as the computer, the Internet, and the mobile phone. For the young generation, the use of these media has become routine. Particularly, mobile media, usable anytime and anywhere, is now becoming more widely connected to people's

daily life and culture. People carry and use their own mobile media everywhere and they are engaged with it in a wide range of social and cultural contexts. As Fujimoto (2006, p.87) points out that "the *keitai*² is a locus that integrates Japanese subcultures," mobile media culture integrates with many subcultures, such as the choice of ringtones and straps, e-mail, texting, picture messaging, and social networking. In this regard, the use of mobile media might be incorporated into the public's everyday life, affecting the patterns of media use and creating new trends in a specific

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culture (Lee, 2008). The adoption of mobile media will likely have profound social and cultural effects. In their study of mobile TV, Constantiou, Papazafeiropoulou, and Vendelø (2009) underline the importance of culture in the adoption of mobile TV and in differentiating the preferences for mobile TV content services.

Because mobile communication technology has become one of the most popular technologies, closely associated with everyday routines for many users, mobile communication technology -- such as the mobile phone -- has expanded into mobile multimedia, which can be used not only for communication, but also for mobile Internet, music, games, banking, shopping, and even television. In other words, mobile technology has evolved from a simple communication tool to mobile multimedia, combining the capabilities of the Internet, camera, video, and TV. As the convergence of text, audio, video, and visual images (May & Hearn, 2005), mobile multimedia play an increasingly important role of transmitting and disseminating information and entertainment, in addition to voice communication and text messaging. Mobile multimedia represents four distinctive attributes - convergence, immediate accessibility, individuality, and portability, allowing users to do many things with one, multi-purpose device. These characteristics indicate vital implications for mobile multimedia use in that they can be used regardless of time and place in everyday life.

The latest evolution of mobile technology includes the launch of mobile TV. The convergence of digital broadcasting and telecommunications, so-called "Mobile TV," is an emerging mobile multimedia technology (Lee, 2007). The idea of delivering live TV and audio and video content to mobile phones, personal digital assistants (PDA) and laptops has resulted in mobile TV. Mobile TV refers to the integration of live TV, personalized time- and place-shifted TV, and on-demand audiovisual content delivered to mobile devices. It is called 'TV on the palm or on my hand' (Burns, 2007; Europa, 2007; Reardon, 2005; Suh, 2005).

Mobile TV is the convergence multimedia of telecommunications as an extension of mobile phones, broadcasting as an extension of television, and the information technology as an extension of the Internet.

This chapter explores the diffusion, adoption and early use of mobile TV-DMB (Digital Multimedia Broadcasting) in its initial stages of adoption and characterizes the use of mobile TV-DMB in a wide range of everyday practices. It also focuses on examining the factors that influence the adoption and use of mobile TV-DMB, based on the diffusion of innovations and adoption approach (Rogers, 1995). It aims to depict a contextual understanding of mobile TV-DMB that may affect media use patterns in a wide range of social and cultural contexts. It proposes two main research questions, "What factors influenced the adoption and use of mobile TV?" and "How was mobile TV used in public places?"

This chapter draws from a combined online survey, in-depth interviews and observation, which were conducted in Korea during April and May of 2006 to collect data on the adoption and use of mobile TV-DMB in its infancy. The researcher recruited participants from among DMB users nationwide through several DMB-related online community websites. Because the survey was conducted only one year after the S-DMB service launch and six months after the T-DMB service launch, and because mobile TV-DMB with the low penetration rate was in its infancy at the time of the survey, a random sample of the population through random-digit-dialing (RDD) would generate a very small sample of DMB users.³ Although the sample might not represent the overall Korean population, I believe that the findings of this study will provide insights into the nature of mobile TV-DMB use in its early stages in Korea. A total of 205 valid responses were used for this study and the response rate of the survey was approximately 41%. Among the respondents, 94% were male and 6% were female.

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