

## Upholding the Correct Orientation and Comprehensively Promoting Deep Media Convergence (Postprint)

**Authors:**

**Date:** 2023-10-08T00:00:00+00:00

### Abstract

, advancing deep media convergence requires first adhering to correct political orientation, understanding the development, trends, and laws of media convergence, and considering the multiple logics driving media convergence development from a theoretical dimension.

### Full Text

#### Deep Media Convergence: Grasping Orientation and Comprehensively Advancing Integrated Development

Deep media convergence represents a state-led innovation and transformation in the media sector, whose development, evolution, and dynamic trends possess essential, necessary, and stable connections.

Promoting media convergence development constitutes a crucial measure by the Communist Party of China to deepen its governance principles, upholding Party control over publicity, ideology, and media. The integrated development of traditional and emerging media must follow the laws of socialist construction, fully comprehend the economic and market environment, and advance supply-side structural reforms in the media sector. This people-centered approach also reflects adherence to the laws governing media convergence development. For instance, many news clients have integrated government services and public welfare functions, focusing on the daily lives of urban and rural residents and broader social development. These services span from news and information to government communication, healthcare, transportation, education, employment, elderly care, and more. Advancing media convergence should enable the people to share in the fruits of internet development and allow more scientific and technological achievements to benefit all citizens.

Concurrently, media modernization should support the modernization of national governance. Currently, media convergence is closely integrated with technology. Big data, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence have spawned numerous new media models. Data journalism has innovated media expression, digital technology drives emerging formats such as video livestreaming, and media data services have enhanced media value. Meanwhile, the vigorous development of the digital economy—including digital public services, smart cities, and new digital economy models—cannot be separated from cross-industry collaboration at the industrial level.

As a specific work domain, the foremost priority of the Party’s news and public opinion work in the new era is to uphold the correct political orientation, with the most prominent manifestation being adherence to the Party spirit principle. In advancing deep media convergence, Party control over media serves as an important embodiment of this principle. From organizational structure establishment to specific news gathering and editing production, Party control ensures that deep media convergence develops in the correct direction. From the perspective of media convergence, it is essential to give full play to market mechanisms and enhance media’s self-sustaining capabilities. From central to local and county levels, mainstream media are experimenting with new profit models, transforming and innovating through the “news + government services + commerce” operational model. From the standpoint of cross-industry collaboration, media organizations leverage their content advantages to innovate industrial models and restructure operations. In this sense, media development should, against the backdrop of socialist construction laws, fully comprehend economic and social development laws, improve digitalization, networking, and intelligence levels, and seize this opportunity to pursue transformation and innovation.

Only by simultaneously upholding the Party spirit principle and a people-centered work orientation can media ensure that information dissemination and public services remain truly people-centered. As stated, “We must follow the mass line in the all-media era, adhere to a people-centered work orientation, stay close to and serve the masses, and innovatively practice the Party’s mass line.”[1] This requires us to take people’s needs as the direction for reform in the process of deep media convergence. In the traditional media era, newspaper and broadcast audiences were called readers and listeners; in the internet era, media audiences are migrating toward users. From the early practice of “open-door newspaper operation” with reader mailboxes and listener hotlines to today’s user interaction platforms and new models of user participation in news production at media convergence centers, the people-centered work orientation has gradually adapted to internet development trends and the diverse needs of netizens. This represents the correct application of the “people-centered” principle from the CPC’s governance laws and the news value law from journalism communication laws that satisfy social and public information needs. It unifies the universality and particularity of laws, combines macro thinking with micro realities, constantly monitors cutting-edge media trends,

and actively transforms work thinking to adapt to the all-media era.

At the National Conference on Propaganda and Ideological Work in August 2018, General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed “solidly grasping the construction of county-level media convergence centers.” In November, the fifth meeting of the Central Committee for Comprehensively Deepening Reform reviewed and adopted the “Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of County-Level Media Convergence Centers.”<sup>[2]</sup> On the surface, this represents the advancement of media convergence at the grassroots level, but in essence, it constitutes the grassroots extension of modernizing the national governance system and governance capabilities—a crucial measure for the Communist Party of China to enhance grassroots governance capacity. Present-day county-level media convergence centers have transcended traditional media attributes, transforming toward comprehensive public service models encompassing Party affairs, government services, public welfare, commercial operations, and community management. Notably, the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee has positioned these centers as “mainstream public opinion positions, comprehensive service platforms, and community information hubs”—functions that epitomize key aspects of grassroots social governance.

As an important component of ideology, journalism and communication belong to the superstructure, which interacts with the economic base through contradictory movement. Only when the economic base reaches a certain level can a media convergence pattern emerge—a pattern primarily driven by media technological progress and the development of the media economy. The application of information technologies such as 5G, big data, and the Internet of Things in journalism and communication has propelled supply-side structural reforms in content production. Only by expanding content production capacity and establishing a content production system can the ultimate goal of guiding public opinion be achieved. This represents the most appropriate verification of the fundamental social contradiction between economic base and superstructure within the domain of journalism and communication. Advancing deep media convergence, building an all-media communication system, and forming new-type mainstream media are also objectives related to content productivity. Without a resource-intensive, collaborative, and efficient content production system, a deep media convergence ecosystem cannot be formed. Therefore, it is necessary to uphold dialectical materialism and historical materialism, closely integrate era characteristics, market environment, media technology, and media conditions, and promote media development based on the laws of human social development.

Currently, during the period of deep media convergence, we continuously emphasize integrated development and vertical deepening. From a longitudinal perspective of media evolution—encompassing history, reality, and trends—traditional and emerging media, different media forms, and various media attributes must all undergo a developmental process from communication, interaction, and integration to convergence and symbiosis under media logic. There-

fore, in understanding media convergence trends and constructing laws of media convergence development, we need to grasp the evolution of media convergence from the following aspects to enhance the cognitive logic of media convergence.

First, properly grasp the media logic of media convergence, which involves correctly handling the relationship between traditional and emerging media. From the logic of media development, we must base ourselves on media convergence—that is, the evolution of media forms. Second, grasp the political logic of media convergence, which involves correctly handling the relationship between journalism communication laws and propaganda laws, political communication laws, and ideological construction laws. As distinct concepts, “news” and “propaganda” possess different values, objectives, and attributes. News manifests as objective, accurate, and public, disseminated through media, whereas propaganda possesses guiding and orienting attributes. We must correctly understand both propaganda value and news value. In deep media convergence, the news propaganda of the traditional media era has gradually expanded into content production in the digital media era, requiring propaganda laws and journalism communication laws to continuously embed information laws, content production laws, network dissemination laws, and platform development laws. Third, grasp the market logic in media convergence by correctly handling the relationship between journalism communication laws and market laws. In future deep convergence, media will survive and develop under multiple drivers including capital, society, and technology. The challenge lies in maintaining public character, avoiding capital coercion and technological bias, ensuring social benefits alongside certain economic benefits, balancing both laws, demarcating their applicable scopes, and correctly handling their integration space. Fourth, grasp the technology logic in media convergence by correctly handling the relationship between media convergence laws and technological development laws. Current media and communication studies invariably emphasize “technology,” from technological mediation and embedding to technological empowerment. Cutting-edge technologies such as 5G, artificial intelligence, and big data bring changes in media forms, iterations in content production and consumption, and transformations in the media environment to media convergence. Following technological development laws requires correctly understanding the fission-like iteration of technology. Although technological development has shifted the media ecology from structural changes to disruptive innovation, technology cannot replace the content, communication forms, organizational structures, and development orientation inherent to media convergence itself. In summary, advancing deep media convergence requires first adhering to correct political orientation, understanding the development, trends, and laws of media convergence, and considering the multiple logics driving media convergence development from a theoretical dimension.

[1] Chinese Government Website. General Office of the CPC Central Committee and General Office of the State Council Issue “Opinions on Accelerating the In-Depth Development of Media Convergence” [EB/OL]. [http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2020-09/26/content\\_{5547310}.htm](http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2020-09/26/content_{5547310}.htm), 2020-09-

26/2023-04-28.

[2] Guangming Daily. Accelerating the Construction of County-Level Media Convergence Centers [EB/OL]. [http://www.cac.gov.cn/2019-02/19/c\\_{1124133012}.htm](http://www.cac.gov.cn/2019-02/19/c_{1124133012}.htm), 2019-02-19/2023-04-28.

**Author Bio:** Huang Chuxin, Director of the Digital Media Research Office, Institute of Journalism and Communication Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; Researcher, Professor, Doctoral Supervisor. Research interests: new media. (Illustrations by Wang Wenshu)

*Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.*

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