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Postprint: Strategies for Enhancing Editorial Planning Capabilities of Scientific Journal Editors in the Media Convergence Era

Authors: Wang Yunyan, Wang Lu, Li Songshan

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Abstract

【目的】 With the rapid development of information science, traditional print media has experienced extensive and profound impacts, and scientific journals disseminated through traditional print media are facing challenges from emerging communication modes, which imposes new demands on editors' planning competencies. This article systematically summarizes and investigates the competency requirements for editors of scientific journals in the era of integrated media. **【方法】** Employing literature review and enumeration methods, this study systematically reviews and summarizes the competency requirements for editors of scientific journals in the era of integrated media. **【结果】** Six dimensions of competencies are proposed, encompassing professional technical ability, organizational planning ability, editorial business ability, hot topic knowledge identification ability, and manuscript solicitation ability, along with strategies for enhancing planning capabilities. **【结论】** In the era of integrated media, editors of scientific journals undertake increased information processing responsibilities; editors must organically integrate these six dimensional competencies and continuously enhance their planning capabilities to support the healthy and high-quality development of scientific journals.

Full Text

Strategies for Enhancing the Planning Capabilities of Scientific Journal Editors in the Era of Integrated Media

Wang Yunyan, Wang Lu, Li Songshan

(Asia-Pacific Construction Technology Information Research Institute Co., Ltd., Beijing 100120)

Abstract

[Objective] With the rapid development of information science, traditional print media has faced widespread and profound impacts. Scientific journals disseminated through conventional print channels are encountering challenges from new communication methods, placing novel demands on editors' planning capabilities. This article systematically summarizes and examines the competency requirements for scientific journal editors in the integrated media era. **[Method]** Using a review and enumeration approach, this paper systematically 梳理 and summarizes the competency requirements for scientific journal editors in the integrated media era. **[Results]** The study proposes six dimensional capabilities: professional technical competence, organizational planning capability, editorial business competence, hot topic knowledge identification capability, and manuscript solicitation capability, along with corresponding enhancement strategies. **Conclusion** In the integrated media era, scientific journal editors undertake substantially more information processing and screening tasks. Editors must organically integrate these six dimensional capabilities and continuously enhance their planning capabilities to support the healthy and high-quality development of scientific journals.

Keywords: scientific journal editors; planning capability; professional technology; information screening; competency enhancement

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Introduction

The 21st century has witnessed rapid advancement in information science, with new media communication forms represented by network technology rising swiftly to dominate the market. Platforms such as public WeChat accounts and Weibo have been widely accepted as new media and communication formats, posing enormous challenges to traditional print media. Scientific journals that traditionally relied on print media have been transforming, continuously exploring new development directions and strategies, such as placing greater emphasis on database indexing and dissemination, exploring open access publishing, and establishing group-based or specialized publishing and technical exchange platforms. These changes present significant challenges for scientific journal editors. As the driving force behind scientific journals, editors' organizational and planning capabilities determine journal quality. Editors must fully recognize the characteristics of the integrated media era, proactively transform themselves, continuously improve article quality, enhance dissemination levels and academic influence, and make greater contributions to

advancing scientific progress.

Scientific journal editors serve as the navigators of their journals, and their planning capabilities determine the direction and competitiveness of the journal during a given period. These capabilities represent a concentrated manifestation of editors' comprehensive competencies and ultimately materialize in manuscript solicitation. Strategies for enhancing scientific journal editors' planning capabilities are primarily reflected in the following aspects.

1. Professional Technical Competence

Unlike popular or science popularization journals, the content of scientific journals represents, to some extent, the developmental level of a discipline. Generally, scientific journals require published articles to demonstrate theoretical correctness, cutting-edge content, scientific exposition, and guiding conclusions. This demands that editors possess sufficient understanding of research progress in their journal's discipline and certain predictive judgment about future development trends, enabling them to "recognize talent with discerning eyes" and become "talent scouts" who can identify excellent scientific papers without missing quality submissions. Consequently, scientific journal editors are typically required to have relevant professional backgrounds, often serving as comprehensive talents combining both technical expertise and editorial skills.

Taking the journal *Construction Technology* as an example, the editorial department comprises ten full-time editors, all holding bachelor's degrees or higher in civil engineering or related fields. Among them, two hold senior professional titles, one holds associate senior rank, four have intermediate professional titles, and three are junior-level editors. This solid professional and technical background provides a firm foundation for editors to review the technical advancement and correctness of submissions and to edit professional scientific papers.

2. Research Information Processing Capability

The work content of scientific journal editors differs from that of professional researchers at scientific research institutes. The knowledge structure of professional researchers is primarily characterized by "specialization"—that is, they conduct in-depth exploration of a specific research point within their field through theoretical, experimental, and demonstration studies aimed at solving particular problems, with deep investigation as their main feature. Scientific journal editors, conversely, require a knowledge structure characterized by "breadth." Editors must clearly understand disciplinary research progress during organizational planning, identifying which technologies represent advanced developments in the discipline, which institutions master these technologies, which experts are authoritative in the field, and which emerging young researchers might produce higher-quality scientific papers, thereby enabling targeted solicitation.

Under traditional conditions, scientific journal editors often obtained research

information through telephone interviews with experts or questionnaires distributed with journal issues, frequently resulting in lagging information that subsequently affected the timeliness of reported content in scientific journals. From an information acquisition perspective, the rapid development of integrated media has facilitated editors' research and learning. However, the "big bang" of massive research information simultaneously imposes new requirements on editors' organizational and planning capabilities when soliciting manuscripts. The specific competency requirements are illustrated in Figure 1 [Figure 1: see original paper].

3. Organizational and Planning Capability

After collecting and processing industry research information, scientific journal editors must determine journal or column planning directions. This requires editors to possess strong organizational and planning capabilities and qualities to translate analyzed reporting directions into solicited papers, including organizing and planning expert solicitation or summarizing relevant scientific research achievements, product trial production, and technology application effects. In the integrated media era, information is no longer "exclusive," making editors' organizational and planning capabilities following information tracking often the determining factor in whether a journal can obtain high-quality manuscripts for efficient dissemination.

Two implementation approaches can be referenced for enhancing the overall organizational and planning capabilities of editorial departments: directly improving editors' planning capabilities (exemplified by the *Chinese Medical Journal (English Edition)*) and fully leveraging expert strengths (exemplified by *Journal of Molecular Cell Biology*).

The *Chinese Medical Journal (English Edition)* emphasizes editors' roles in organizational planning, continuously improving their initiative and innovation in manuscript solicitation. Editors are required to focus on hot topics and priorities in their discipline and actively plan topics. The journal also values media linkage, such as recommending abstracts of key articles to the *Chinese Medical Information Herald* to increase reading probability. Additionally, editors actively participate in academic conferences, collaborating deeply with conference organizers to simultaneously publish outstanding papers presented at conferences. The journal also pays attention to social emergencies, playing a proper academic guidance role and enhancing journal visibility.

Journal of Molecular Cell Biology, meanwhile, has shifted from a full-time editor responsibility system to a deputy editor-in-chief responsibility system, fully leveraging scholars' organizational and planning capabilities. Specifically, the journal invited eleven renowned scholars to serve as deputy editors-in-chief, each responsible for influence in their key research directions and continuously enhancing author-journal engagement. The deputy editor-in-chief system's main practices include: leveraging deputy editors' enthusiasm and influence in

manuscript quality review and solicitation for excellent papers rejected by high-end journals, with full-time editors serving as assistants; having twelve deputy editors-in-chief act as the journal's "spokespersons," leading editors to recommend and promote the journal within their expert "social circles"; and enabling deputy editors to oversee the entire manuscript processing workflow while deeply participating in journal development strategy formulation and implementation.

4. Editorial Business Capability

The integrated media era places greater demands on editorial teams' comprehensive business capabilities, including manuscript quality processing, article editing techniques, layout aesthetics, and internet thinking. Compared with traditional editorial and publishing capabilities, this requires higher efficiency, more exquisite layout and graphics, higher publication frequency, and more flexible publishing methods. Based on professional learning, information processing, and organizational planning, editors must pay greater attention to respecting internet dissemination patterns, skillfully identifying and utilizing hot topics and breakout points, and even leading or creating hot topics to continuously enhance journal influence.

5. Hotspot Identification Capability

In the integrated media era, technological advancement and knowledge updating have accelerated, making innovative research achievements more diversified and integrated. New technologies, new achievements, and interdisciplinary results continuously emerge, requiring scientific journals to transform toward more scientifically rational and diversified models. A journal's disciplinary orientation directly affects its readership and citation targets, exerting profound influence on citation metrics. Therefore, scientific journals must maintain stable reporting directions while simultaneously focusing on new innovative achievements, particularly interdisciplinary results internationally, and keeping pace with disciplinary development directions. Only through targeted efforts can journals achieve balance between timeliness and academic quality, securing steady improvement in academic standards.

6. Manuscript Solicitation Capability

Manuscript solicitation represents the most concentrated manifestation of scientific journal editors' organizational and planning capabilities. Scientific journals are typical "content is king" products, and publishing excellent papers represents the relentless pursuit of quality scientific journals. Manuscript solicitation work can be developed through the following aspects.

6.1 Emphasizing Highly-Cited Articles and Authors

In top international journals such as the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Lancet*, *Nature*, and *Science*, the top 20% of frequently cited literature contributes over 80% to the impact factor. With accelerated updating of scientific innovation achievements and richer new research results, coupled with enhanced continuity in scientific research due to information technology development, hot fields are updating more rapidly. Scientific journal editors should skillfully utilize databases to track and analyze domestic and international disciplinary research hotspots and development trends, and promptly plan solicitation from highly-cited authors or institutions according to their journal's disciplinary reporting hotspots to ensure hot-topic articles are published as quickly as possible.

6.3 Strengthening Solicitation from Universities and Top Research Institutes

Domestic universities and research institutes often produce many high-contributing authors for scientific journals. Therefore, journal editors should fully emphasize research progress at university research personnel and designated research institutes. They must not neglect solicitation due to pressure from unsolicited submissions but should prioritize soliciting from high-quality and potential authors as the focus of manuscript solicitation work.

6.4 Relying on Editorial Board Experts for Solicitation

Scientific journal editorial board members are often industry experts who possess unique resources in academic level, industry influence, scientific research output, and cooperative institutions. Editors should maintain close communication with editorial board members and skillfully adopt various measures to enhance board members' roles in manuscript solicitation. Solicitation directions can include board members themselves, key researchers in their teams, their cooperative research institutions, and departments applying their research achievements, thereby fully leveraging board members' influence in manuscript solicitation.

For example, the *Journal of Rock Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering* appointed Academician Qian Qihu as editor-in-chief from its inception. Under his leadership and guidance, an editorial board comprising experts and scholars from over twenty countries and regions was established, with multiple meetings held. This played an important role in ensuring the journal's high starting point and sustained high-quality development, continuously enhancing its academic influence.

Conclusion

In the integrated media era, scientific journal editors undertake substantially more information processing and screening work than in the traditional print

media era. The six-dimensional organic integration of editors' professional technical competence, information processing capability, organizational and planning capability, editorial business capability, hotspot identification capability, and manuscript solicitation capability constitutes editors' organizational and planning capabilities, directly influencing the high-quality development of scientific journals. Therefore, enhancing scientific journal editors' planning capabilities from these six dimensions to improve information screening, application, and expansion capabilities is imperative for facilitating the high-quality development of scientific journals.

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Author Biographies

Wang Yunyan (born 1982), female, from Xingtai, Hebei, Associate Editor-in-Chief, research direction: scientific journal editing.

Wang Lu (born 1982), male, from Yangquan, Shanxi, Editor, research direction: scientific journal editing.

Li Songshan (born 1978), male, from Heze, Shandong, Editor, research direction: scientific journal editing.

(Executive Editor: Zhang Xiaojing)

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

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