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Reflections and Recommendations on the Integrated Development of Traditional Publishing and Digital Publishing: Postprint

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

Abstract

With the development of Internet technology and information technology, the ecological environment of book publishing has undergone significant changes. A trend of integrated development between traditional publishing and digital publishing has emerged. Based on the characteristics of digital publishing, this paper analyzes the challenges and opportunities that digital transformation of traditional publishing brings to the industry, and proposes recommendations for the integrated development model of book publishing.

Full Text

Preamble

Reflections and Recommendations on the Integrated Development of Traditional and Digital Publishing

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Abstract: With the development of internet and information technologies, the ecological environment of book publishing has undergone significant transformation. The trend toward integrated development between traditional and digital publishing has emerged. Based on the characteristics of digital publishing, this paper analyzes the challenges and opportunities that digital transformation brings to the traditional publishing industry, and proposes recommendations for integrated publishing development models.

Keywords: Internet technology; information technology; book publishing; digital transformation; integrated development

CLC Number: G237

Document Code: A

Article ID: 1671-0134(2022)06-122-04

DOI: 10.19483/j.cnki.11-4653/n.2022.06.036

Citation Format: Li Bing, G Hongxia. Reflections and Recommendations on the Integrated Development of Traditional and Digital Publishing [J]. China Media Technology, 2022(06): 122-124, 157.

1. Characteristics of Traditional Publishing

1.1 Advantages of Traditional Publishing

China has a long history in traditional publishing. Papermaking and movable-type printing laid crucial foundations for print media publishing. For centuries, people have been accustomed to traditional reading, which possesses unique advantages. For instance, in an age of information overload, identifying accurate and reliable content from massive amounts of information is extremely difficult. Traditional publishing has developed a highly mature process system encompassing research, planning, validation, writing, editorial processing, and printing. Through these rigorous and standardized procedures, publications reach readers only after multiple layers of quality control, resulting in high-quality products with strong public recognition. Additionally, traditional publications can feature exquisite binding design and printing materials, giving them collectible value that digital publications cannot match. Therefore, although people's reading habits have undergone some changes, traditional publishing still maintains a vital position in the industry and will not be replaced in the short term, particularly as digital transformation remains an ongoing process.

1.2 Disadvantages of Traditional Publishing

The inherent characteristics of traditional publishing also determine its disadvantages, including long production cycles, limited interactivity between publishers and readers, lack of portability, high costs, and technological lag. In the current era where digital reading is becoming increasingly prevalent, traditional publishing urgently needs iterative innovation. In terms of production, traditional publishing relies on paper and ink, consuming substantial raw materials and causing environmental pollution. In distribution, marketing methods for traditional publications are singular and suffer from serious homogenization. Moreover, the high costs associated with production, transportation, and distribution further constrain its development.

2. Characteristics of Digital Publishing

2.1 Advantages of Digital Publishing

The flourishing development of information technology has enabled rapid growth in digital publishing. Electronic publications have become a new reading trend, changing many people's reading habits and allowing them to access vast amounts of reading material without leaving home. Publishing has entered a broader space. E-books come in diverse forms with rich content sources, enabling very rapid updates, additions, and deletions. The massive resources of books break through temporal and spatial limitations. Coupled with diversified formats such as audio books and multimedia presentations that stimulate multiple senses, digital publishing can inspire enjoyment in information acquisition while organically connecting authors, publishers, and readers. Reader feedback and interaction are no longer distant, but become more convenient, humanized, and rapid, with more precise dissemination, propelling the development of digital publishing to new heights. Through information technology and code conversion, digital publications can store more extensive data information on smaller media, offering unparalleled convenience in information retrieval, data screening, and data analysis compared to traditional publications. This allows users to read on demand, breaking through temporal and spatial constraints and effectively utilizing their fragmented time. By eliminating the rigid requirements for paper, ink, and printing, digital publishing not only saves substantial human and material resources but also shortens publication cycles, significantly reducing production, transportation, and distribution costs while aligning better with environmental protection concepts.

2.2 Disadvantages of Digital Publishing

While internet technology has brought abundant resources to digital publishing, it still faces severe challenges in copyright protection. The publishing industry needs to rely on traditional copyright protection mechanisms to safeguard the rights and interests of all parties and promote healthy and stable industry development. E-book piracy is rampant, with unauthorized sales for profit being commonplace, causing damage to the interests of publishers and authors to a certain extent and constraining the development of e-book production. Therefore, how to implement stronger copyright protection from a technical perspective is also worthy of exploration. Furthermore, the structure of the domestic e-book industry chain is not yet entirely clear, and most publishing units remain cautious about fully launching e-book businesses.

4. Integration is the Inevitable Trend

In an environment where people's mindsets have shifted and technology has transformed, the deep integration of traditional and digital publishing is imper-

ative. On the one hand, the stable development of the traditional publishing industry over the years is closely related to effective copyright protection, yet measures to strengthen digital copyright protection remain incomplete. On the other hand, in the era of big data, the demand for timely and efficient information sharing is increasing, and the traditional publishing model, affected by its slow cycle, is gradually falling behind the times. Therefore, in this new historical environment, integrating traditional and digital publishing can compensate for the shortcomings of traditional publishing's long cycle and insufficient timeliness while addressing the deficiencies in digital publishing's copyright protection.

Publishing units must attach great importance to digital technology and actively utilize emerging media technologies—including big data, cloud computing, intelligent voice, and virtual reality—to launch diverse and content-rich products. Through flexible models such as specific authorizations and customized reading, combined with diversified marketing channels, they can achieve better business results. From the perspective of their own development interests, publishing units also urgently need to consider how to reconstruct their industrial structure, seize development opportunities, actively respond to industry changes, integrate resources, and adopt development models that better align with contemporary characteristics.

4.1 Technical Support Integration

Currently, many publishing units have adjusted their publishing processes to meet contemporary requirements, establishing specialized digital publishing departments and providing targeted technical and tool support, using internet and big data technologies to improve the quality and efficiency of book publishing. Some publishing units have established long-term cooperative relationships with relevant technology companies, leveraging their partners' strong technical capabilities to utilize their own resource advantages. Simultaneously, publishers need to consider how to protect copyright through a series of technical measures to prevent content theft and unauthorized dissemination, ensuring that the rights and interests of authors and publishers are fully protected, thereby maintaining a stable and high-quality author team and enhancing their core competitiveness.

4.2 Resource Integration

Digital publishing and traditional publishing have never been in an antagonistic relationship. After years of development, most domestic professional publishing units have accumulated massive amounts of high-quality publications and deep author resources through traditional publishing. These resources are undoubtedly extremely valuable for publishing in the new era and even possess monopolistic advantages in certain disciplines or professional fields. Since high-quality content resources are the cornerstone and core competitiveness for publishing units to expand their digital publishing business and achieve digital transformation, as well as the foundation and key for digital publishing operations, how can these quality resources be digitally integrated and disseminated more quickly

and effectively through multiple methods, platforms, and channels using the internet? Database product construction represents an important path for professional publishing units' digital transformation and an effective approach to resource integration. Publishing units should also clarify the general direction of resource integration based on their own characteristics and industry trends, and properly conduct content resource evaluation and clearly define the rights and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders.

4.3 Marketing Integration

Traditional publishing has single sales channels, and book promotion faces numerous limitations. With the development of the times, marketing models must transform from single-channel to multi-channel and from single-mode to diversified development. By integrating online and offline resources for joint marketing, publishers can expand the coverage of traditional publishing sales, innovate marketing models, accumulate a large base of regular consumers, and conduct remarketing. This not only increases profits but also generates brand effects, enhances corporate image, and achieves a win-win situation in both social and economic benefits.

4.4 Talent Integration

The new situation creates new demands, which also places higher requirements on the publishing workforce. The era is developing too rapidly, and the speed of technological updates is faster than ever. Publishing industry personnel must continuously learn and master new knowledge and new technologies to keep pace with the times. For publishing units, it is essential to attach importance to talent cultivation. Externally, they can recruit graduates from digital publishing-related majors from universities and introduce high-quality talents with new media operation experience from society. Internally, they need to focus on digital transformation training for talents with publishing experience. By combining external talent introduction with internal talent cultivation, publishers can introduce new concepts, knowledge, and ideas for the better development of the digital publishing industry, allowing practitioners to transform their publishing concepts and fully utilize new technologies to enhance their professional capabilities. Specific measures can include offering a large number of professional courses, participating in relevant seminars, and drawing on advanced concepts from domestic and international sources to strengthen the construction of a professional team for integrated publishing.

5. Cases of Digital Transformation Implementation

Integration is the major trend and direction, making it worthwhile to consider how to effectively integrate in publishing practice. Some existing cases are available for reference.

5.1 From Paper Book to E-book

After the publication of the bestseller *Managing Finances is Managing Life*, readers responded enthusiastically. The book's high-quality content, practical relevance, and accessible language created excellent word-of-mouth among readers. The publishing unit expanded its community marketing efforts, utilizing the China Publishing & Media Journal website and newspaper for promotion. After the paper book's publication, the e-book was launched immediately, achieving excellent sales performance. The publishing unit also opened a dedicated channel on Ximalaya, where professional broadcasters read the book aloud, further driving sales of both the paper book and e-book. This achieved diversified presentation of the "managing finances is managing life" concept and promoted brand value enhancement for the subsequent *Managing Finances is Managing Life (Hand-drawn Edition)*.

5.2 From Interview to Book

In early 2020, Ali Research Institute, together with China Industrial and Information Technology Publishing Group's Electronics Industry Press, 21st Century University, and the Digital Enterprise Research Society, jointly launched a digital new business interview program called *New Business Offense and Defense*. Positioned as a dialogue platform for the Ford and Taylor of the digital economy era, its purpose is to co-create new business knowledge and enlighten the digital future. The program focuses on digital transformation, inviting the most insightful and thoughtful business leaders and expert "influencers" in China to discuss forward-looking and leading issues in digital new business that society currently cares most about, capturing digital business trends, exploring cutting-edge insights, colliding ideas, discerning the future, and accompanying reflection to jointly create a digital transformation path in the tide of the digital economy. Based on the interview program materials, the book *Digital Infrastructure: The Migration Path to the Digital Twin World* was successfully published. To convert interviews into book content, in addition to copyright considerations, content supplementation is necessary. Books are systematic projects, and enhancing readability, systematicity, and ensuring logic and correspondence are key focus areas when undertaking such projects.

5.3 The "Strong Nation Cornerstone" Publishing Project

Industrialization is the core of modernization, and strengthening and expanding manufacturing is the necessary path for China to complete its industrialization process. China's manufacturing industry started from scratch, overcoming hardships to grow from small to large, establishing a modern industrial system with complete categories and becoming the world's largest in scale. This has supported China's transformation from a poor and backward agricultural country to a modern industrial nation and then to an economically influential global power. The China Media Group and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology jointly filmed the large-scale documentary *Strong Nation Cornerstone*,

showcasing the struggle and historic achievements of the industrialization and informatization cause under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. The film successfully paid tribute to the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. To further tell China's industrial and information technology story globally, the editorial team compiled book content based on the documentary material, editing, organizing, and reviewing the book content according to publishing standards to complete the publication. Through a compilation format combining text and images, the book *Strong Nation Cornerstone* was published and released in the first quarter of 2022. The book's publication effectively connected with the documentary, covering different channels and meeting the needs of different reader and audience groups.

The advantages of such projects: combining existing content with supplementary corporate content and compiling, organizing, and reviewing book content according to publishing standards can enable rapid finalization of book manuscripts, saving substantial writing cycles. By adding video discs/USB drives of the *Strong Nation Cornerstone* documentary to the book, it drives the dissemination and sales of both the book and video. This project embodies effective integration of traditional and digital publishing in terms of content. Simultaneously, by adding CCTV video addresses in the book's main text, cover, and back cover for readers to watch online, it brings convenience to readers.

6. Issues Requiring Special Attention

Based on development trends, several aspects require special attention in the process of integrated development between traditional and digital publishing.

6.1 Payment Model Acceptance Needs Further Improvement

People have long formed a mindset that they are accustomed to paying for newspapers, magazines, and books, but have become habituated to extracting fragmented information online for free. Many cannot accept paid online reading, which has also contributed to the proliferation of piracy. Publishing units must adopt a clear vision from a long-term interest perspective, actively and proactively undergoing digital publishing transformation, deeply understanding and promoting the integration of traditional and digital publishing, rather than focusing only on short-term interests, which would create obstacles for their own development and lose potential opportunities. Specifically in publishing, internet technology can be reasonably utilized to provide customized products or popular services based on users' actual needs.

6.2 Digital Publishing Must Focus on Quality Products

As digital transformation work in various publishing units proceeds vigorously, there is often an overemphasis on timeliness while neglecting quality content

creation. Some units blindly pursue keeping up with the digital publishing trend, seeking quick, low-cost, and rapid profits, while ignoring the need to fully combine their own traditional advantages and tailor high-quality content and packaging models according to audience needs. In the long run, this will inevitably have very adverse effects on publishing units' reputation and social benefits, requiring careful attention. Regardless of the publishing model, prioritizing content quality is paramount. Specific measures include fully considering actual market segmentation and users' real needs, and when necessary, creating specialized products for specific users to better serve product delivery.

6.3 Strengthening Digital Copyright Protection

Copyright is an issue that must be treated very seriously in the publishing industry. Particularly in digital copyright protection, relevant laws and regulations are not yet fully developed, and existing problems remain very severe. Many internet users lack copyright awareness, and digital publications are extremely easy to obtain, copy, and disseminate, making piracy still very common. For the healthy and orderly development of the publishing industry, laws and regulations must be improved according to the characteristics of digital publishing. Publishing units should also establish dedicated protection departments based on their own needs, with professional personnel responsible for digital copyright supervision and protection, enhancing technical protection measures, keeping pace with the times, and resolutely cracking down on piracy to protect their own and authors' rights and interests.

Since digital publishing employs extensive information technology and data management technology, there are cases where technical books are cracked, which requires effective technical prevention; otherwise, it would have a huge impact on paper books. Taking e-books on a certain platform as an example, documents have no encryption whatsoever. As long as one is a member, the text is directly presented when opening the book. Members can download all paper books, and with simple web scraping, page-by-page downloading can achieve piracy. Such technical issues require focused solutions. Additionally, platform supervision also needs to be strengthened.

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

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