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## Transformation and Innovation Pathways for Television News Editors in the Converged Media Era: A Postprint

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### Abstract

The rapid development of science and technology has facilitated the diversified presentation of media and placed higher demands on news editors. In the new media era characterized by increasingly digitalized information and services as well as wireless network terminals, the concept of integrated media is progressively permeating the media industry, rendering the exploration of innovative pathways for news editing pivotal to the long-term development of integrated media. Fully comprehending the characteristics of integrated media, capitalizing on the opportunities presented by the integrated media era, fostering innovative development, and actively exploring transformation and innovative pathways for news editing hold significant importance for enhancing media competitiveness within the integrated media landscape.

### Full Text

#### Exploration of Transformation and Innovation Paths for TV News Editors from the Perspective of Converged Media

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**Abstract:** The rapid development of science and technology has facilitated the diversified presentation of media while imposing higher demands on news editors. In the new media era characterized by digital information, wireless services, and networked terminals, the concept of converged media has deeply permeated the media industry. Exploring innovative paths for news editing has become key to the long-term development of converged media. Fully grasping the characteristics of converged media, seizing its opportunities, pursuing innovative development, and actively exploring transformation paths for news editors are crucial for enhancing media competitiveness in this new landscape.

**Keywords:** news editor; changing characteristics; role transformation; innovation path; TV news

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Converged media is characterized by “leveraging strengths,” fully integrating the advantages of newspapers, television, broadcasting, and other media in human resources, content, and dissemination [1], thereby achieving integration of resources, content, communication, and benefits. It transforms single-media competitiveness into multi-media competitiveness through fusion [2], comprehensively enhancing functions, means, and values. Converged media simultaneously utilizes digital technology, the internet, and television channel news, disseminating content through graphics and text on public accounts and Toutiao accounts, and through video on website media channels and short-video applications such as Kuaishou and Douyin. These different carrier functions impose varying requirements on content production and communication effectiveness. Consequently, television news editors face higher standards for skills and professional qualities, including mastering editing requirements for news materials, images, and videos across different platforms, as well as copywriting and planning skills. They must consider how to make content more accessible to audiences and how to increase news topicality—these are all essential editorial competencies. Editors must not only improve their ability to manage news and program production but also contemplate content depth and value orientation. The diversification of news communication methods in the converged media environment has transformed the singular production model of traditional television news gathering and editing, providing a practical arena for news editing skills to be exercised and expanded. This represents both an opportunity for traditional media transformation and upgrading and a training ground for enhancing editorial capabilities.

### 1.3 Role Transformation of TV News Editorial Departments in the Converged Media Era

In an environment where self-media and social media are gradually accepted and recognized by audiences, television news must continuously innovate its communication paths to meet diversified audience needs. Consequently, the role of news editorial departments has undergone significant changes. First, news produc-

tion principles have shifted from empiricism to data-driven journalism. Second, news expression methods have evolved from iconography to multi-dimensional approaches combining images, sound, animation, and other elements. Third, the ability to integrate news information has improved, transforming journalists from news disseminators into information integrators. Fourth, the positioning of news information has shifted from communicators to providers of social knowledge. Fifth, channels for user participation have been established, transforming news guardians into intelligent participants. In the development of converged media, news editors must not only enhance content production capabilities but also master media operation skills. News editors are no longer limited to traditional content gathering and editing but now participate in the entire process from content positioning, planning, and gathering to editing, operation, and even market feedback.

## **1. Changes in TV News Editing from the Perspective of Converged Media**

**1.1 Characteristics of Media Development in the Converged Media Era** From oral communication to broadcasting network dissemination, information communication has expanded human cognitive boundaries. From big data and live streaming to AR technology and the “metaverse,” media has achieved technological and formal upgrades. The converged media era has not only enriched communication channels and forms but also transformed communication subjects. In this environment, subjects have expanded, with self-media and social media also participating in information and content creation, intensifying media competition. Converged media integrates the advantages of traditional media, new media, self-media, and social media, disseminating through graphic media accounts, public accounts, and video accounts on websites, mobile terminals, and digital platforms, forming extremely strong integrated communication power. However, changes in the media landscape have created momentum for media convergence development and endowed new-era media workers with a brand-new mission and requirements.

## **2. Transformation Opportunities and Dilemmas for TV News in the Converged Media Era**

**2.1.1 Broader Sources for Topic Selection** Traditional television news production was constrained by broadcast forms and time slots, possessing specificity in both space and time. However, under the vigorous development trend of emerging media technologies, the widespread application of platforms such as “two micros and one terminal” (Weibo, WeChat, and news clients) has brought new development opportunities. In the converged media environment, television news reporting models are no longer limited to traditional patterns. Previously, radio and television news reporting pursued originality and uniqueness, requiring journalists to independently collect reporting materials and plan topics, which could only proceed after meeting discussions or approvals. The cum-

bersome processes and rapid development of the information environment made it difficult to obtain first-hand exclusive news. Additionally, content screening and editing were required until conditions for news broadcast were met, involving substantial human and material costs while information release remained lagging [3]. In the converged media context, channels for obtaining information have become increasingly diverse, ranging from short-video bloggers' timely commentaries to popular events circulating online, or even a picture appearing in WeChat Moments—all can provide creative inspiration for journalists. These materials can often be obtained through mobile terminals or PCs, significantly reducing costs. Simultaneously, as converged media brings media and audiences closer, audiences who become fans often turn into providers of news clues and creators of news content.

**2.1.2 Diversified Communication Forms** Under media convergence, people's access to information channels has become more diversified. Single-platform communication channels and forms can no longer meet audience needs. Television news needs to explore more communication possibilities. For instance, if a picture of a historically abandoned building demolition site appears in WeChat Moments, and this abandoned building is well-known, journalists can use this as news material or topic selection to quickly launch work. They can interview real estate developers and synthesize citizens' views to produce videos released on internet media accounts, simultaneously publish graphic-text combinations on public accounts, release through short-video platform media accounts via editing, or even conduct live broadcasts to communicate news events through multiple channels, platforms, and forms. Another example is when a city is flooded during the rainy season and citizens are concerned about travel. Television media can conduct on-site live broadcasts at multiple subway stations and plots, communicate with audiences in real-time, answer listeners' questions, and simultaneously monitor the development of the situation, making audiences witnesses to the news. Comments, forwarding, and interaction during live broadcasts will trigger traffic superposition and expand publicity effects, turning audiences into news disseminators.

**2.1.3 Urgent Need for Media Professionalism and Credibility** In the converged media environment, audiences have greater tolerance for media. In the past, being interviewed was considered “nothing good,” and many interviewees were indifferent or even resistant to cameras. However, with the development of the media environment, audience cognitive concepts have also changed. Many audiences are willing and even hope to be interviewed to express their viewpoints. This positive participation reflects audiences' affirmation of media professionalism and credibility. With the development of new media, self-media, and social media, everyone plays the role of information publisher and disseminator, making news information more complex. Media often competes for time and production to win opportunities. Although information is increasingly abundant, the verification of information lacks guarantees, leading

to the rapid spread of erroneous information and even the emergence of fabricated false news, causing adverse social impacts. Therefore, in the converged media environment, professional journalists with strong professional qualities are needed to safeguard news content communication and ensure the benign dissemination of information.

**2.1.4 Emerging Need for Media-Audience Interaction** In traditional media communication, audiences had single ways of obtaining information, and there was a clear gap in subject-object status between them and the media, making it difficult to form equal communication and interaction space, or even none at all. However, the converged media environment has greater media tolerance, with media development taking into account audience feelings to win mutual trust, even guiding interaction, opening comments, accepting audience suggestions, and timely adjusting content to optimize media content. In a media environment where everyone is an information disseminator and producer, ignoring audience participation is equivalent to working behind closed doors. However, in the converged media environment, “vehicles” also require open production. For example, a certain TV station’s media account opened a special report on a specific event on its website, which attracted many network influencers with different identities and professions to interpret and report on the topic in the short term, quickly forming a cluster communication advantage. A single topic achieved hundreds of millions of clicks through participation from audiences and self-media creators, which is difficult to achieve in traditional television news communication. In the converged media environment, media-audience interaction can expand communication power and is also an advantage that television news development should recognize.

## 2.2 Dilemmas in TV News Development in the Converged Media Era

**2.2.2 Insufficient Optimization of Content Dissemination** For a long time, television media has served as the government’s “mouthpiece.” News content follows institutional norms and needs to pursue quality and value orientation. However, the inclusive characteristics of new media development make media voice more flexible. “Media people” are more open in emotional expression and more diversified in content presentation forms, with “human-as-media” being more three-dimensional in manifestation. Audience demand for information no longer stops at guidance and understanding but inclusively accepts different voices, views, and even innovations in content presentation forms. Rich information presentation forms and three-dimensional media have won audience favor. In the converged media environment, television news also needs to innovate and optimize content production, requiring adjustments in news content and communication mechanisms. For example, Xinhua News Agency released a 10-second short-video news piece titled “Beijing Departure Flight Issues Emergency Code” on a short-video platform. The material consisted only of two gradually zoomed-in pictures and a news text of fewer than 100 words, accompanied by

tense background music. This news piece made it to the platform's daily hot list, with over ten million views, achieving news communication effects. On the one hand, traditional television news media find it psychologically difficult to make the leap, believing that arbitrarily changing content presentation forms damages professional qualities. On the other hand, in the converged media environment, it is difficult to grasp the scale of content optimization. For instance, short-video platform audiences' information needs tend toward entertainment [5], but television news belongs to public media. If content tends toward entertainment, its credibility and image will be affected. Therefore, how to highlight its own content presentation advantages in the converged media environment is also a question for news editors to consider.

**2.2.3 Lagging Operational Models** Media convergence seeks greater development space by fully integrating and giving full play to multimedia advantages with the support of media technology. Its operational model should also learn widely from others' strong points. However, television media operational models are deeply rooted. In terms of profit, traditional television media adopts advertising, government funding support, event planning, set-top box charges, copyright sales, and other forms of profit-making. With the development of all-media, television media audience loss has caused advertisers to gradually shift to new media with lower costs and broader audiences [5]. The richness of video platform content and the low cost for audiences to obtain resources make it difficult for set-top box charges to be effective. The benefits of related event planning are also difficult to sustain, causing the influence and competitiveness of television media to continuously decline. Traditional television media needs to have thinking outside the system while adhering to in-system principles. There are clear functional divisions in television media, such as reporters, editors, photographers, and editors, which increase both processes and costs. In the development of converged media, all practitioners must have business awareness to achieve all-staff, full-process, holographic, and full-effect operation [6]. However, television news practitioners have yet to adapt. They can produce content, but how to monetize content is another major issue.

## 3.2 Innovating and Improving the News Editing Work Platform

**3.2.1 Building a Digital Shared Information Database** Build a digital shared information database for media editing resources and information sharing. Update news materials and clues in the information database, and different platforms under self-media can download and select editing materials as needed. Collections can be formed for content on different platforms for online internal media exchange to comprehensively grasp the development dynamics of various platforms and communication forms, achieving multimedia and shared news content production. Simultaneously, establish a database to track and statistically analyze the editing processes and release effects of content on different platforms, enabling digital monitoring and management of converged media presentation, allowing for control and supervision of all links at any time to form

strong effective development.

**3.2.2 Optimizing Editorial Department Structure** Integrate personnel responsible for content production on different platforms into an editorial center in the form of editorial teams for collective office work. Assign team leaders to coordinate business, release tasks, and allocate human resources, ensuring that gathering and editing always serve the media center. Various platforms can share news materials from the editorial center, and editorial teams producing content for different platforms can communicate timely to avoid content homogenization and duplication, achieving differentiated competition. Optimize processes such as news gathering and editing, topic selection planning, production, and release, and allocate human resources reasonably. For instance, set up dedicated personnel for news material collection and classification into a database for internal editorial adoption; equip experienced news editors with strong sensitivity to platform content for quality control of content output; and employ editors with active thinking who can easily integrate new things for the operation of Zhihu, public accounts, and video accounts. Scientific integration of human structures can improve work efficiency.

**3.2.3 Creating a Good Team Collaboration Environment** Team building under the converged media model needs to highlight the utility of “people.” Human integration is similar to a symphony orchestra, so business exchange, interaction, and collaboration between departments and between internal individuals are extremely important in the converged media environment, requiring individuals to play their roles to promote team synergy. For example, in the past, news editors had low participation in media operations, but in the converged media environment, everyone needs to participate in operations and participate throughout the entire process. Therefore, cross-exchange of skills and mutual advancement are important for optimizing content production. This can be used as an opportunity to set up roundtable meetings and Tencent conference sharing exchanges. For instance, “Xigua University” interviews and shares with internal functional departments to achieve collaborative development.

### **3.3 Innovating TV News Brand Development from “Content Planning” to “People”**

In the converged media environment, brand development is the ultimate goal of all media. Brand is a marketing concept and also a label. The brand strategy development of TV news programs is an important means to enhance competitiveness, as brand advantages can generate chain effects. For example, Zhejiang Satellite TV’s variety show “Chinese Dream Show” attracted advertisers’ sponsorship, promoting the balanced development of the program. TV news can also develop through branding, which requires innovation starting from content topic selection planning and program planning, rather than blindly producing news content randomly, waiting for big news, and developing passively. For instance, actively planning rural tourism festivals, urban cultural stories, annual touching

city and rural figures, etc. In addition to content, TV news brand development can also start from “people.” In the converged media environment, “people are media.” Concretizing media to individuals can better close the distance with audiences. Therefore, it is necessary to cultivate excellent hosts, star anchors, and star reporters, amplify their styles to make their images more three-dimensional, and unify human character with news content more closely. The brand tension formed by well-known star hosts and reporters such as Sa Beining, Chai Jing, and Xiao Li is obvious.

### **3.4 Strengthening TV News Media Operation and Innovation Capabilities**

**3.4.1 Innovation in Content and Presentation Forms** **3.4.1.1 Content Innovation:** Traditional news ensures content authenticity, accuracy, and authority but lacks “groundedness.” It needs to be closer to the people in content topic selection and planning, such as creating people’s livelihood hotspots and keeping up with hot topics. For example, PHV vaccination has been relatively hot recently, and the public is also concerned. Media can use this as a topic selection for reporting, such as interviewing hospital experts and discussing vaccination precautions and necessity from a user perspective, approaching content from the psychological angle of user needs.

**3.4.1.2 Presentation Form Innovation:** Traditional news writing style is rigorous, and content is relatively dry. Under the premise of ensuring media principles and values and adhering to the core of serving the people, it can innovate language style, layout style, and text content structure style, and use internet buzzwords flexibly, such as “芭比 Q” (Barbie Q) and “不要太 Low” (don’t be too low), to enhance user experience through colloquial or dialect expressions. Meanwhile, policy interpretation can be expressed through comics, story graphics and text combinations, audio-visual, and other scene-based methods that are easy for the public to understand, meeting the information needs of audiences in different circles.

**3.4.2 Innovation in Media Communication Channels** Current media development has expanded from newspapers, television, broadcasting, and other media to short videos, media accounts, public accounts, etc., delivering information more efficiently and quickly to mobile terminals, computer terminals, and other digital terminals through sound, video, graphics, and text, achieving multi-dimensional information communication channels and three-dimensional content presentation, and further communication and development between media and audiences. Converged media has completed the expansion of traditional media in time and space. For example, some county-level media have actively explored media convergence practice by adjusting departmental structures and establishing new media centers, laying a foundation for accelerating transformation. When reporting on grand events, they use “mobile terminal + LED screen live broadcast” and “video + graphics and text” dual-track live broad-

cast, simultaneously employing aerial photography and other means to quickly complete editing and play videos on-site large screens. Additionally, they fully mobilize gathering and editing, technical, logistics, and other personnel to collaboratively release on all-media channels such as newspapers, WeChat, and App, achieving all-media integrated operation. Compared with self-media, television news has clear values and depth, but first-hand news information release effects on television media are inferior to the speed of new media communication. Therefore, platform advantages can be utilized to build public accounts, Toutiao accounts, video accounts, and short-video accounts, forming a media matrix on platforms such as Zhihu, WeChat, Himalaya, Douyin Kuaishou, Toutiao, and Weibo [7]. For example, first-hand news can be quickly released on short-video platforms, in-depth reports can be elaborately produced and broadcast as TV news programs, and graphic reports can be disseminated through channels such as Toutiao accounts and public accounts, completing flexible release of news content and breaking the barriers of time and space.

### **3.4.3 Innovation in Media Interaction Dimensions and Profit Models**

**3.4.3.1 Media-Audience Interaction Dimension Innovation:** In a media environment where everyone is media, there is no camp or status division between media and audiences. Therefore, strengthening interaction between media and audiences is one of the means to enhance media image. Traditional interactive manifestations of TV news programs are encouragement for clue providers and answers to information feedback. In the converged media environment, instant communication, answering, and opinion replying with users can be achieved through content guidance on public accounts, Weibo comments, and Q&A. Guide information can be published in content releases and replied to in the next issue, such as “Hello ! **I am reporter** answering your question ” and “ Hello ! We have received your opinion. Thank you for your support of our program.” Fixed position modules can be selected for voice or text replies. Additionally, future program previews can be added to content, and content can be released on time to cultivate user habits and strengthen user stickiness. Audiences also have the psychological need to “contribute ideas and strategies.” Therefore, opening comment permissions to obtain user experience feedback is also a method to optimize content. Live broadcast interaction can tend to be civilian-oriented without affecting reporting plans, thereby closing the distance with audiences. TV news media need to be deepened and valued in content, while also having multi-platform and multi-form characteristics, achieving new breakthroughs in time and space dimensions, and being more flexible in social, topical, and interactive dimensions to make progress in interaction.

**3.4.3.2 Profit Model Innovation:** Content planning drives revenue. For example, opening columns on short-video platforms such as “Famous Things” to conduct in-depth reporting on regionally characteristic cultures and enterprises from points that people care about, such as enterprise human resource management systems, enterprise culture construction, enterprise party building, or figures’ entrepreneurial history and brand development history. This enriches

content attributes, can attract local enterprise advertising resources, and even enable enterprises to obtain substantial returns through media communication, such as promoting local users' experiential consumption of enterprise products [8]. Additionally, advertising can be connected in Toutiao, public accounts, and short videos. For example, some media have planned story-based news columns on short-video platform media accounts, disseminated in episodes, and implanted book list information in one episode, achieving profit through video-based product promotion (content e-commerce). Media communication power drives social benefits: for example, participating in agricultural assistance activities to provide help for enterprises and farmers' product sales. Media can release agricultural assistance information on public accounts to promote agricultural product sales. Additionally, participating in large-scale county and city activities and conducting live broadcasts of events can expand social benefits using media advantages. Expanding new forces in fields: for example, signing self-media bloggers with representative professionalism in specific fields to achieve expansion of content ecology and multi-dimensional profit channels. Existing successful cases such as "Traveling Couple" and "Detective Lei" demonstrate that self-media individuals are more flexible than in-system media. Therefore, compatibility between in-system and out-of-system content and operation forms can compensate for each other's functional gaps and optimize profit models.

In the converged media environment, traditional media news editors need to enhance their sense of crisis regarding profession and skills, fully grasp media environment characteristics, and based on media technology...

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

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