

Media Convergence Communication Strategies for the Short-Form Video Transformation of Television Programs in the New Media Environment: Postprint

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Abstract

With the advent of the mobile internet era, mobile intelligent terminals have become fully pervasive in people's lives and work, and new media has consequently experienced rapid development. Nowadays, people's information acquisition habits have gradually shown a fragmented trend. In this context, the short video dissemination method has been favored by the masses and has now become the mainstream channel for people to obtain information. As a representative of traditional media, the ratings of television media programs continue to decline, and the development and survival situation is not optimistic. To promote the sustainable development of the television media industry, television programs should innovate in content and form, move closer to the short video direction, while actively exploring media convergence dissemination strategies, in order to expand the social influence of television programs. Based on this, this paper will conduct research on the media convergence dissemination strategies for the short-video transformation of television programs in the new media environment, aiming to provide reference for media practitioners.

Full Text

Media Convergence Strategies for Short-Video Transformation of TV Programs in the New Media Environment

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Abstract: With the advent of the mobile internet era, mobile intelligent terminals have become ubiquitous in people's daily lives and work, ushering in rapid development for new media. Nowadays, information consumption habits have gradually become fragmented, and short-video content has gained widespread

popularity as the mainstream channel for information acquisition. As a representative of traditional media, television has experienced declining viewership, facing an unfavorable situation for development and survival. To promote sustainable development in the television industry, TV programs must innovate in both content and format, pivot toward short-video models, and actively explore media convergence strategies to expand their social influence. Based on this context, this paper investigates media convergence strategies for short-video transformation of TV programs in the new media environment, aiming to provide references for media practitioners.

Keywords: new media; TV programs; short videos; media convergence; dissemination

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With the gradual maturation of 5G networks, mobile internet has gained a foundation for high-speed development, coupled with the popularization of smartphones and adjustments to data plans, fundamentally transforming how people access information. Information consumption habits have increasingly become fragmented, and short videos, characterized by concise content, brief duration, and visual intuitiveness, align perfectly with this trend. Within just a few years, short videos have achieved rapid growth in China, with mainstream platforms like Douyin and Kuaishou gaining extensive social influence. These new media platforms have created a massive impact on traditional media represented by television, outperforming TV programs in both audience reach and viewership. Under this pressure, television media must adapt to the times by innovating program content and format, actively promoting short-video transformation, and seeking viable media convergence pathways to secure its position in the media market.

1.1 Enhancing Competitiveness of TV Programs

Traditional TV programs typically run for extended durations, which conflicts with modern audiences' preference for fragmented, efficient, and convenient information consumption. Consequently, TV programs have faced declining ratings amid the short-video surge. Short videos feature concise content and novel creativity that matches contemporary information needs, with creators from diverse fields using the medium to share viewpoints, showcase talents, and comment on current affairs. Promoting convergence between TV programs and short

videos facilitates television' s transformation, helping reverse declining viewership and identify new growth opportunities, thereby continuously enhancing market competitiveness.

1.2 Attracting Greater Traffic

Today' s short-video platforms command enormous traffic flows. Facilitating media convergence between TV programs and short videos can bring greater traffic to television stations and programs, recapturing lost audiences and benefiting program promotion. As 5G networks mature and mobile internet develops rapidly, combined with smartphone penetration and data plan adjustments, people' s information channels have undergone monumental shifts, making fragmented consumption the new norm—a context in which short videos thrive.

1.3 Improving Profitability Levels

The short-video development model has matured considerably, with creators and platforms leveraging their traffic advantages to collaborate with e-commerce and advertisers, monetizing through live-stream sales and splash-screen advertisements. Promoting media convergence between TV programs and short videos not only generates additional advertising revenue by adopting proven operational experience but also builds loyal user communities through interactive engagement, attracting advertisers whose target demographics align with these audiences for program sponsorship, thereby improving television stations' profitability.

2.1 Innovation and Dissemination of Variety Shows

Variety shows have gained significant audience favor in recent years, with different program types attracting distinct demographic groups. To maintain stable audiences, producers must analyze viewer psychology and interests to determine program themes, processes, and content. Pre-broadcast promotional activities are crucial entry points for short-video transformation, where highlight moments can be extracted to create compelling short videos with “selling points.” These clips, distributed on short-video platforms with guided topics, generate attention-grabbing events that boost program visibility. Promotion can be conducted through official media channels or individual content creators.

For instance, Dragon TV' s outdoor reality show *Go Fighting!* runs approximately two hours per episode—a duration incompatible with fragmented consumption patterns. By adopting short-video strategies, classic moments can be extracted into five-minute clips for new media distribution. Attention-grabbing titles like “Sun Honglei Breakdances to Flirt” or “Zhang Yixing' s Brilliant Deduction” allow viewers to watch highlights during fragmented time slots, stimulating interest in the full program. Similarly, Zhejiang TV' s *Ace vs Ace*, now in its sixth season with a mature production team and stable viewership, has achieved

top ratings partly through effective short-video promotion. By strategically releasing edited highlights during audience commute times with eye-catching titles like “Shen Teng Becomes Game Black Hole” or “Yang Di Cheats,” the program generates substantial pre-broadcast attention, translating into high ratings upon premiere.

2.2 Innovation and Dissemination of TV Drama Programs

TV dramas inherently possess compelling storylines and broadcast at fixed daily time slots, making them highly suitable for short-video innovation and dissemination. Based on plot development, producers can create trailers, previews, and behind-the-scenes clips—established short-video strategies. Editing dramas into one-to-three-minute clips featuring bloopers, plot summaries, or behind-the-scenes moments for distribution on Douyin, Kuaishou, Weibo, and other platforms with dedicated sections effectively attracts program audiences.

For example, during the broadcast of *Eternal Love*, the production team intensified promotion by creating numerous short videos featuring theme songs like “Liang Liang” as background music, including spoiler clips that attracted viewers eager for advance plot knowledge, resulting in exceptionally high click rates and successful promotional outcomes.

2.3 Innovation and Dissemination of TV News Programs

Compared to other program types, news programs possess inherent compatibility with short videos, as news reporting shares characteristics of conciseness, brevity, and factual accuracy, facilitating short-video transformation. Television stations should leverage this unique advantage for innovation and dissemination. Most audiences maintain strong interest in TV news but lack sufficient time for complete broadcasts in today’s fast-paced life, preferring efficient ways to access current events and participate in discussions. Consequently, numerous news short videos exist on Douyin, Kuaishou, and Weibo, essentially condensed versions of TV news programs summarizing core themes in minutes for efficient information consumption.

For example, Henan Radio and Television’s “Xiao Li Talks” news segment, though similar in content to traditional televised civic news focusing on local social issues, gained popularity on short-video platforms primarily through frequent host-audience interaction, including live streams presenting entire events from the public’s perspective. This approach earned the program acclaim as “a voice for the people” while steadily increasing ratings. Similarly, official media outlets like *People’s Daily*, *CCTV News*, and *Xinwen Lianbo* have established Douyin accounts, delivering real-time information across social, economic, entertainment, and sports domains. Hot topics like the Tokyo Olympics and Sanxingdui archaeological discoveries have been disseminated as short videos, generating widespread discussion and high user engagement.

While pursuing high ratings and click rates, TV news programs bear the primary responsibility of correctly guiding public opinion and leading value system construction. Particularly for official news programs, short-video innovation must preserve credibility and authoritative image while embracing public supervision and fulfilling the “mouthpiece” function for the Party and state.

3.1 Establishing Media Convergence Philosophy

In the current new media environment, achieving media convergence between TV programs and short videos requires first innovating traditional communication philosophies and deeply understanding the advantages of new media and short videos, particularly regarding content production and platform operation models. Television professionals must identify convergence points between TV programs and new media short videos based on program characteristics. Therefore, practitioners should establish a media convergence philosophy, clearly recognizing the undeniable reality of declining TV ratings, and actively leverage short-video advantages to promote TV program transformation. Combining TV program formats with new media forms creates diverse, content-rich programs that lay the foundation for expanding influence.

3.2 Enhancing Production Personnel Competencies

Modern audiences, “nurtured” by diverse short-video content, have become increasingly discerning. Low-quality TV programs struggle to attract attention and may even invite criticism, placing enormous pressure on producers. However, pressure generates motivation, requiring enhanced program quality through improved personnel competencies. Production staff must strengthen professional capabilities while actively learning new technologies and concepts. Television stations should vigorously promote industry-education integration, emphasizing talent acquisition and cultivation to reserve high-quality personnel for short-video convergence development. Since short-video dissemination is internet-based, training should prioritize information technology, video processing, editing, and convergence innovation skills while transforming production mindsets to break free from traditional broadcasting constraints, laying the foundation for media convergence.

3.3 Advancing Program Reform and Applying Advanced Technologies

To promote short-video media convergence, television programs must undergo reform and adopt advanced technical methods. First, deeply analyze short-video development advantages and incorporate more interactive elements, such as pop-up voting buttons during climactic moments, allowing audience participation via mobile terminals to attract attention through novel formats. Second, apply advanced and innovative technical methods to video editing and program visuals, referencing short-video shooting styles to enhance program effects. Combined

with host performance, this achieves integration of TV program characteristics with short-video features.

3.4 Optimizing Programs Based on Audience Psychology

As a traditional medium, television produces relatively rigorous, long-form content related to its institutional operational model—inefficient and inconvenient in today’s fragmented consumption era. To attract audiences and bridge distances, TV programs must optimize content based on audience psychology, such as appropriately shortening duration and marking highlight timestamps for quick access to interesting segments. During promotion, 精华部分 can be compiled into short videos for distribution across social platforms, serving both promotional and influence-enhancing functions. Additionally, production should fully grasp modern audience psychology, particularly young viewers’ interests, by analyzing currently popular short-video works to determine program themes. TV programs can adapt successful short-video content, leveraging television’s resource integration advantages to create more distinctive programs.

3.5 Creating Diversified Media Convergence Pathways

Media convergence between TV programs and short videos should also emphasize host engagement and understanding of short-video platform operation models to create distinctive convergence pathways. Television stations can establish official accounts across multiple short-video platforms to release program previews, with hosts participating in live-stream interactions to create diversified scenarios encompassing content support, traffic assistance, and commercial empowerment, thereby enhancing program influence. Television programs can also leverage celebrity effects by inviting internet influencers and film stars to enrich short-video content. Recognizing short videos’ vast market prospects, television stations should actively build diversified media convergence pathways to expand influence and strengthen market competitiveness during short-video transformation.

4.1 Multi-Screen Linkage to Meet Social Needs

TV content satisfies people’s daily social interaction needs, which drives television development. With mobile internet popularization, sharing video content has become a social norm. In the new media era, short videos have emerged as a new social carrier, with traditional large-screen media needing to demonstrate social value through small screens to enhance dissemination influence. Many TV programs leverage short-video platforms’ unique social relationship chains to create dedicated topic communities, continuously updating materials and topics according to broadcast schedules, encouraging community participation, and striving to “break circles” by penetrating real-life social interactions to enhance influence through real-world interpersonal communication.

Beyond leveraging audiences' real-world social relationships, TV programs can establish “para-social relationships” between viewers and hosts/guests through short-video platforms. By inviting hosts and guests to interact and discuss via short-video content, programs can generate buzz, increase ratings, and gradually build loyal audiences by reducing psychological distance.

4.2 Multi-Channel Distribution to Reshape Communication Advantages

In the new media perspective, communication power depends on whether audiences can receive information. High-quality content cannot generate discussion if inaccessible. Therefore, TV programs must emphasize multi-channel distribution, particularly through short-video channels, deeply cultivating representative platforms like Douyin and Kuaishou while actively building proprietary short-video platforms to reshape media market advantages through content strengths.

External layout involves both horizontal and vertical strategies. Horizontal layout means distributing TV program content across different short-video platforms through official accounts for comprehensive multi-platform coverage. Notably, content should be 微调 according to each platform' s style and audience demographics. For instance, Douyin primarily attracts younger users, while Kuaishou' s audience concentrates in third- and fourth-tier cities. Television media must conduct thorough platform research to distribute the most suitable content. Vertical layout refers to establishing multiple accounts within a single platform to promote different program columns, forming an account matrix. For example, Jiangsu TV has created numerous “Lychee” -branded accounts on Douyin, such as “Lychee Drama Power” and “Lychee News,” sharing Jiangsu TV' s IP with high recognition. Additionally, individual programs like “Jiangsu TV News Eye” and “New Blind Date” have opened 同名 accounts, effectively amplifying the broadcast “volume” of news, drama, and variety content.

Internal proprietary media is equally important. While external layout expands coverage, it risks management disorder, content homogenization, and varying fan engagement. Therefore, television media should adopt platform thinking to integrate program resources comprehensively, produce more high-quality short-video content, and build proprietary platforms guided by mainstream values. Recognizing that short videos primarily function as guides and showcases, television media should leverage their 引流 role to direct viewers toward long-form video content—the core strength of television—gradually 导流 audiences back to TV media.

4.3 Process Reconstruction to Encourage Audience Participation

The popularization of mobile internet and smart terminals enables everyone to become an information producer. With increasingly accessible video editing

software, people can shoot and share videos instantly, making user-generated content a potential source for TV programs. This indicates that the relationship between television media and audiences is evolving, with the one-way reception model disappearing and active audience participation in program production processes becoming increasingly prominent.

Although TV editorial teams consist of professionals with limited time and energy, audiences distributed across various event scenes become “frontline correspondents.” Short videos captured from their perspectives effectively extend information sources for TV programs. While not professionally produced, such 原生态 content demonstrates authenticity. For example, during the initial COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, when mainstream media couldn't access the city, a vlogger named “Lin Chen's Hearing” filmed numerous “Wuhan Lockdown Vlog” clips that were adopted by CCTV and other stations, conveying authentic pandemic conditions to audiences.

4.4 Technical Assistance to Optimize Content Ecology

In today's big data era, both short-video platforms and television media can leverage data mining and analysis technologies to customize and distribute more personalized content. Using massive data accumulated through internal and external short-video platforms, television programs can optimize production and distribution. In content production, user behaviors like clicks, shares, and comments directly reflect program quality, enabling data-driven understanding of audience preferences to inform optimization. In content distribution, user “tags” and profiles facilitate targeted short-video distribution for precision 推送.

In conclusion, amidst the information overload on new media platforms, media convergence provides television media with viable innovation pathways. Facing short-video platforms that increasingly dominate the media market, television media must fully absorb short-video advantages while actively exploring short-video transformation for different program types and practicing media convergence. Television professionals need to innovate communication philosophies, enhance personal competencies, advance program reform, apply advanced technologies, optimize content based on audience psychology, and develop diversified convergence pathways to achieve “innovation-driven development” and consolidate television media's mainstream position.

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

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