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## Media convergence is the inevitable path for traditional media to develop in depth postprint.

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### Abstract

As the mobile internet enters its golden age of development, new media has become the primary channel for information dissemination today. The rapid expansion of new media poses a significant threat to traditional media, with user attrition and declining advertising revenue leaving its future fraught with crises. “Adapt or perish.” At present, traditional media should proactively adapt to the current patterns and trends of media development, actively implement a media convergence strategy, fully embrace new media, and construct an integrated online-offline all-media communication landscape. It is essential to continuously extend the influence of traditional media into cyberspace, advance into the main battlefield and consolidate the primary position, innovatively develop content advantages, improve the omnichannel integrated communication platform, promote the accelerated transformation, upgrading, and in-depth development of traditional media, and empower and strengthen the effort to build new mainstream media for the new era.

### Full Text

## Media Convergence: The Inevitable Path for Traditional Media to Develop In-Depth

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**Abstract:** As the mobile internet enters its golden age of development, new media has become the primary channel for information dissemination. The rapid expansion of new media poses a significant threat to traditional media, with user attrition and declining advertising revenues creating a precarious outlook. As the adage goes, “change brings life, stagnation brings death.” Currently, traditional media must actively adapt to the evolving media landscape and trends, vigorously implement media convergence strategies, fully embrace new

media, and construct an integrated online-offline omnimedia communication framework. It is essential to continuously extend the influence of traditional media into cyberspace, advancing into the main battlefield and consolidating the primary position. By innovating content advantages and improving integrated multi-platform dissemination systems, traditional media can accelerate transformation, upgrading, and in-depth development, thereby empowering the creation of new mainstream media for the new era.

**Keywords:** Media convergence; Television communication; Development trends; Development roots; Content construction

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With the arrival of the mobile internet era, media convergence represents an unavoidable self-revolution, as television news confronts new communication formats and contexts. The news production process is undergoing fundamental transformation, with changes emerging in dissemination methods, content, two-way interaction, and service models. Traditional media must proactively leverage new media tools for integrated innovation, reform production workflows, advance technological upgrades, promote institutional innovation, and actively explore the direction of omnimedia development.

## 1. Development Trends: In the New Media Era, Traditional Media Faces Severe Challenges

In a harsh survival environment, the media industry should achieve deep integration to forge new mainstream media, strengthen its core values, and consolidate its primary position. From an international perspective, news media revenues began to plummet around 2000, while advertising revenues for social networking sites like Facebook experienced exponential growth. According to the American Society of News Editors, over 500 daily newspapers in the United States had ceased publication by 2016 [1]. Survivors have fared little better, cutting news coverage, reducing newspaper size, discontinuing print editions, or implementing all these measures while still failing to reverse the decline. The decline of print media, in particular, reflects the collapse of traditional business models. The digital revolution has shattered the monopoly of traditional media, with emerging media forms devouring traditional advertising shares. Against this backdrop, media layoffs have become commonplace, and newspaper closures seem routine—organizations must either transform or slowly perish.

Currently, media convergence remains in its experimental stage, and the journalism industry faces an arduous path to revitalization. Particularly in exploring new profit models, there are few successful templates to reference. However, one consensus has emerged: technology is the solution to all problems, and media convergence must prioritize technology. In China, traditional media is accelerating its transformation, constructing new communication systems and formats. The scale, scope, and depth of media convergence are unprecedented. Simultaneously, convergence faces process reengineering, which can be analyzed by dividing it into production and distribution ends. At the production end, traditional media possesses government resources and professional capabilities with unshakable credibility. At the distribution end, social media has capital, technology, and high platform integration, enabling efficient aggregation and rapid distribution. Each has distinct advantages that complement rather than replace one another. Traditional media cannot focus on the market and prioritize profit like social media. Therefore, it should optimize its strengths while avoiding direct competition on its weaknesses. Currently, traditional media is breaking down technical barriers at the production end to drive content creation and achieve coordinated synergy, while seeking partnerships with dominant platforms at the distribution end—a wise strategic choice.

How can traditional media accelerate transformation and integrate with new media? With online advertising seizing market share, how can sustainable profit models be found? These are critical and urgent questions. To achieve media convergence, internet thinking must be established. Traditional media operates through one-way broadcasting, while the internet enables two-way interaction—what is “audience” for media becomes “users” for the internet; what is “viewing” becomes “operation” ; what is “narrative” becomes “information” ; what is “content” becomes “interaction.” Media professionals must shift from editorial thinking to product thinking and cultivate internet genes to adapt to new media’s characteristics of instant, massive, and interactive dissemination [2]. By fully considering user needs, news gathering and editing processes can be reshaped, connections with users reestablished, and “one-time collection, multi-format generation, multi-channel distribution” can be realized.

## 2. Exploring the Roots: Extending Traditional Media Influence into Cyberspace

With the popularization of internet development, online communication has become modern society’s primary dissemination method, online public opinion constitutes the main component of public sentiment, and netizens have become primary targets and participants in communication. China’s internet user population now equals Europe’s total population. According to China Internet Network Information Center statistics, the country’s netizen base reached 772 million, exceeding the global average by 4.1 percentage points. Mobile netizens totaled 753 million, with a significant increase in mobile internet usage. The internet has integrated into all aspects of social life, profoundly transforming

people' s production and lifestyles, increasingly becoming a new space for learning, work, and living, and a new platform for accessing public services.

On February 21, 2019, “Mi Meng” and its subsidiary “Talented Limited Youth” were permanently banned across all platforms without possibility of reincarnation. Before the ban, Mi Meng was one of the most influential self-media accounts, operating without any values of its own. It relied on cold data mining to identify the most popular content, allowing the market to guide its viewpoints and writing style entirely. This case demonstrates that when healthy food and poisonous chicken soup compete freely, the poisonous chicken soup is likely to prevail. Currently, people' s values are increasingly complex, interest appeals more diverse, and new media development patterns more varied. These phenomena indicate that information dissemination has undergone profound changes in the internet era, primarily in channels, methods, and audiences. Various ideological concepts spread widely through the internet and social media, influencing people' s cognition, behavior, and values. Media convergence aims to occupy the high ground of public opinion and consolidate the mainstream ideological position. To champion the main melody, traditional media must extend into cyberspace.

On January 25, 2019, the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee held its twelfth collective study session at People' s Daily on the all-media era and media convergence. President Xi Jinping emphasized, “We must use the achievements of the information revolution to promote in-depth media convergence, strengthen mainstream public opinion, and consolidate the common ideological foundation for the entire Party and people of all ethnic groups to unite and strive.” He stressed, “Develop various new media including websites, Weibo, WeChat, electronic newspaper columns, mobile newspapers, and internet television. Actively develop interactive, service-oriented, and experiential news and information services to achieve comprehensive coverage, all-weather extension, and multi-domain expansion of news communication, enabling the Party' s voice to directly reach various user terminals and striving to occupy new public opinion fields.”

President Xi Jinping pointed out: “Under new era conditions, the responsibilities and missions of the Party' s news and public opinion work are to hold high the banner, guide the direction, focus on the center, serve the overall situation, unite the people, inspire morale, shape customs, gather consensus, clarify fallacies, distinguish right from wrong, connect China with the world, and communicate with the world.” These six aspects, comprising 48 characters, inherit and develop our Party' s consistent spirit regarding news and public opinion work responsibilities and missions. They represent the most concentrated, explicit, and accurate summary of these responsibilities and missions, embodying new requirements for news and public opinion work in the new era and indicating the direction of effort. Traditional media must serve as the main force and advance into the main battlefield.

Shanghai Media Group integrated its former television news center, the formerly

independent subsidiary Knews, and Shanghai Television's foreign language channel to establish a converged media center. This center consolidates the main news gathering and editing forces of Shanghai Television, reorganizing them into a fused organization. The most significant change is embedding new media production within the organizational structure. The converged media center produces content primarily for traditional television channels while using the Knews client as the main distribution platform for new media products, achieving unified yet separate operations with interconnected channels.

In Hangzhou, 175 kilometers away, Zhejiang Media uses technology to lead content, building a technical system centered on the China Blue Cloud intelligent platform. It has created a cross-department, cross-media, cross-platform news gathering and editing "central kitchen," enabling integrated planning and one-stop operations across multiple radio and television channels and new media matrices, exploring a convergence innovation path with "China Blue" characteristics.

In October 2017, Zhejiang Media built a "central kitchen" around "converged communication" –the China Blue Converged Media News Center. Personnel from Zhejiang Satellite TV News Center, Zhejiang Voice News Center, New Blue Network News Center, Zhejiang News Radio, TV Public News Channel, Group Chief Editor's Office, Converged Media Technology Center, and Resource R&D Center moved into the converged media center. Daily "converged media morning meetings" strengthen integrated planning, converged collection, and integrated dissemination, implementing all-weather, normalized office operations.

In 2019, Zhejiang Media adhered to a dual-core driven integration strategy for radio/television and emerging media, advocating mobile-first and technology-led approaches to better achieve expanded coverage, improved quality, and enhanced efficiency. This accelerated the shift of the main news propaganda force to the main battlefield. The Zhejiang Media Converged Media News Center intensified deep integration between traditional broadcasting/television technology and internet new media technology, giving full play to the important role of new technology in interviewing, editing, and dissemination. With powerful technical support for quality content production, it broadened news reporting methods and formed dissemination advantages on new media terminals.

### **3. Shifting to the Network: Traditional Media Should Serve as the Main Force in the Main Battlefield**

Traditional media should leverage their authority and professional advantages, maximize propaganda effects, respond to social concerns, and win new development advantages through content construction. At the end of 2018, Hubei Radio and Television Station was awarded the "2018 IDC China Digital Transformation Award for Operational Model Transformation Leader." This recognition resulted from its planned implementation of the "Yangtze River Cloud Platform," which provides valuable reference for domestic broadcasting media convergence.

In 2016, construction officially launched on the Yangtze River Cloud converged media content production platform. Using internet thinking, big data, and cloud computing technology, it seamlessly integrated with existing news production, broadcasting, and media asset business systems within the station, efficiently integrated the gathering and editing system, and built an intelligent media convergence cloud platform with unified command and dispatch, multi-channel integrated production, and intelligent big data analysis. The Yangtze River Cloud Platform has now achieved convergence across provincial, municipal, and county-level media platforms. As the nation's first provincial-level new media cloud platform, it has built and launched 119 city and county client terminals, connected 8,000 government and media Weibo and WeChat accounts, and hosted 74 provincial departments to create a mobile new media "aircraft carrier" platform of "government affairs + news + services." It has connected content, users, and operational data across media outlets throughout the province, achieving cross-industry, cross-regional media sharing and linkage.

In the mobile internet era, traditional media possesses professional gathering and editing talent, authoritative information channels, and standardized gathering and editing processes [3]. Through converged development, these advantages can be leveraged and extended to new media, further building concentric circles online and offline. Traditional media should increase support for new media projects and WeChat public accounts, attaching greater importance to original reporting, first releases, and first broadcasts, even using one exclusive news story per day to build influence. It should fully excavate and integrate information resources to meet users' diverse and personalized information needs.

#### **4. Strength Through Convergence: Traditional Media Must Actively Explore New Media Development Patterns**

Traditional media must adapt to market demand, consolidate main channels, clear main arteries, and forge new mainstream media. In the "Internet Plus" era, every challenge is also an opportunity. Taking radio as an example, while traditional media faces a winter, advertising shares have grown counter-trend, benefiting from the application of intelligent voice devices on mobile phones. People can listen anytime and anywhere without temporal or spatial limitations. Artificial intelligence can also push exclusive information content and even mix news + music + interesting service functions. This information helps people live more efficiently, healthily, and intelligently. "Internet Plus" has brought a turning point for the radio industry.

Television, as a video product, will not disappear either. Video remains the highest form of communication, still occupying the high end of the communication chain. However, program production departments must respond to user changes through content strategy shifts. In the digital age, the essence of change is data-driven content distribution. Having lost platform advantages, traditional media must engage in collaborative production through "convergence" to demonstrate its value.

Relative to developed regions, Jilin Radio and Television should base itself on its own conditions in media convergence: creating variables rather than increments, pursuing excellence rather than comprehensiveness, emphasizing quality over quantity. Compare purity, not size. Whether gold bars or gold bricks, the purity is 99.99%. There may be differences in weight, but not in purity or quality. By maximizing existing resources and seeking breakthroughs within the framework, true value will shine through.

Traditional media' s digital transformation essentially involves production process reengineering that breaks traditional news boundaries [4]. With technology as the forerunner, content as king, and institutional guarantees as the foundation, what changes are organizational operational structures, journalists' working methods, news production processes, and even deeper-level thinking and values. At the platform level, internal and external integration is achieved; at the technical level, sharing is realized; at the product level, mobile-first is implemented. This collaborative system can be summarized as "three ones" : one Tianchi Cloud Platform, one technical standard, and a series of content products. It should be noted that technological development is a gradual process. Currently, traditional media' s technical applications primarily address internal content production integration needs, with cautious steps toward mature external business models and prudent investment.

At the product level, the popularity of short videos + social interaction behind algorithmic recommendation + precise distribution reveals that media transformation importantly involves shifting tools to platforms or interfacing with them, improving information matching efficiency and quality, and maintaining relevance between content and user interests. President Xi Jinping proposed that through media convergence, we should "focus on building a batch of new mainstream media with diverse forms, advanced methods, and strong competitiveness." Promoting institutional and mechanism innovation requires greater courage and determination to integrate various resources, adjust production processes, streamline relationships, eliminate institutional obstacles, and build a scientific, standardized, and effective system. To advance institutional innovation, news media must focus on audiences and markets to enhance communication power, guidance, and influence.

In new media transformation, traditional media' s "internet thinking" also manifests in recognizing technology' s limitations, rediscovering human value, and developing in directions where machines cannot replace humans [5]. Media format transformation triggers capability crises. On one hand, assessment indicators should be established for survival of the fittest; on the other hand, talent must be cultivated and discovered to build a strong workforce. Only with superb professional capabilities and ideological awareness can media organizations produce content products with thought, warmth, and quality.

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

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