

# Gatekeeping Behavior Standards and Reform Pathways of Mainstream Media in the Context of Media Convergence: A Postprint Study

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## Abstract

[Objective] To ensure that mainstream media occupies a dominant position in information dissemination, it is necessary to leverage information technology to enhance the efficiency and quality of information dissemination, strengthen content gatekeeping, and promote the reform and development of mainstream media.

[Methods] This study analyzes the possibility and necessity of strengthening gatekeeping behaviors in mainstream media, investigating changes in gatekeeping standards at the levels of communicator selection, news content selection, and news processing and updating. Based on the news carriers presented by different platforms and their response mechanisms, it provides an in-depth examination of the transformations occurring in current mainstream media gatekeeping behaviors.

[Results] Mainstream media adjusts its dissemination methods according to the characteristics of different platforms and adopts corresponding gatekeeping measures, thereby occupying new public opinion dissemination positions through an internet-based model.

[Conclusion] In the industry gatekeeping process, mainstream media must break away from previous prejudices, strengthen internal alliances, leverage platform process optimization to further review information elements, broaden cooperation, and enhance the element integration and innovative application capabilities of mainstream media.

## Full Text

### Preamble

**Title:** Research on Gatekeeping Behavior Standards and Reform Paths of Mainstream Media from the Perspective of Media Convergence

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#### Abstract:

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**[Method]** This paper analyzes the possibility and necessity of strengthening mainstream media gatekeeping behavior, examining changes in gatekeeping standards at the levels of communicator selection, news content selection, and news processing and updating. Based on news carriers presented on different platforms and their response mechanisms, it reflects deeply on the transformations currently emerging in mainstream media gatekeeping behavior.

**[Result]** Mainstream media adjust their communication methods according to the characteristics of different platforms, with each platform adopting corresponding gatekeeping measures to occupy new public opinion dissemination positions through an internet model.

**[Conclusion]** In the process of industry gatekeeping, mainstream media must break through previous prejudices, strengthen internal collaboration, optimize platform processes to further review information elements, broaden cooperation, and enhance the ability to integrate and innovatively apply mainstream media elements.

**Keywords:** media convergence; mainstream media; gatekeeping; platform; short video

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In the era of media convergence, information science and technology are developing rapidly. Artificial intelligence and virtual reality technologies are gradually transforming how people receive information, prompting communication paradigms to adjust accordingly and accelerating the turnover of news media equipment. Traditional media are breaking through their inherent constraints to achieve integration across various media forms. In this context, mainstream me-

dia are continuously optimizing news resources and leveraging multi-platform advantages to realize diversified operations in converged media, necessitating enhanced professional competence among practitioners to ensure adaptation to the media convergence environment.

Currently, many mainstream media outlets have individual hosts produce Vlogs beyond regular news broadcasting, using personal initiatives to drive national attention, seize trending topics, and enhance the mass appeal of mainstream media.

### **1.1 Changes in Standards for Selecting Communication Personnel**

First, establishing a team of versatile talent is essential. Due to media development impacts, contemporary journalists require not only professional expertise but also expanded knowledge in short video planning and production. Professional demands even necessitate operational skills in AI and drone technologies. The widespread popularity of short videos requires journalists to possess corresponding audio-visual language processing capabilities, with constantly escalating technical ability requirements for practitioners. Many mainstream media outlets have established dedicated video teams within their news departments, requiring pre-production planning, direction setting, and decision-making implementation, while post-production involves technical work including video editing and soundtrack mixing, consuming substantial manpower. Team members should also possess directorial capabilities, combining these with news communication patterns to enhance user attention to news content.[1]

Second, media construct complete character images during news communication, creating personas that align with anchors' personalities and external characteristics to enhance brand recognition of news products through different anchor images. For instance, mainstream media have focused on developing news products that align with current value orientations, with many journalists emphasizing audience needs analysis to elevate the overall quality of new columns and content, screening news content according to multi-platform features to select material that fits platform characteristics.[2]

### **1.2 Changes in Standards for News Content Selection**

Current media convergence has broadened channels for obtaining and disseminating news content. The public no longer relies solely on television, radio, or newspapers and magazines for information. People's attention is easily attracted by more convenient and efficient information dissemination models—this is also the primary reason for the expansion of short, rapid information dissemination forms like short videos and Weibo, with rich content satisfying people's spiritual and cultural needs.[2] To ensure mainstream media's position in the communication landscape, news product content must be innovated to create more diversified news content for different user needs, establishing more diversified gatekeeping standards according to different platform audiences.

First, attention must be paid to different platform needs to screen content that aligns with platform values, age demographics, and audiences. To meet current media imperatives, mainstream media have focused on developing news products that align with contemporary value orientations, with many journalists emphasizing audience needs analysis to screen news content that fits platform characteristics.[3] Weibo and short video platforms, due to their requirement for brief and fragmented content, are unsuitable for in-depth reporting; generally, published news content features strong timeliness. Forum-style platforms can accommodate more text, allowing in-depth analysis of issues, making them suitable for publishing interviews or commentary articles on economic development, sports events, and cultural entertainment activities. Traditional newspapers, television, and radio have broad audiences but concentrated primarily among middle-aged and elderly demographics, thus focusing mainly on people's livelihood issues and national policy propaganda while also accommodating advertising.

Second, adaptation to the current topic-based dissemination model is necessary to screen corresponding news content. With the rapid development of the internet and accelerating information turnover, public attention to news events is often driven by topics. As topic heat continues to rise, public discussion of events increases, forming a topic-oriented public opinion dynamic. For media workers, grasping topics becomes crucial for capturing attention and shaping public discourse. Mainstream media can use online platforms, especially Weibo hot searches, to determine news content and the direction of current affairs commentary for the foreseeable future. This user-choice-oriented news content screening can determine the direction of public opinion in fragmented cyberspace, thereby enhancing mainstream media's news dissemination effects and guiding positive social discourse.

### 1.3 Changes in News Processing and Updating Methods

Traditional news media's processing methods focused primarily on editing. However, with network technology development, people's thinking patterns have gradually adapted to internet structures. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen convergence across various media while transforming traditional media to adapt to current communication trends toward segmentation and differentiation.

First, the overall expression style of the current news broadcasting industry is undergoing transformation. Under internet development's impact, mainstream media are gradually placing users and platforms in equally important positions. While strengthening news dissemination, they are also enhancing communication between media and individual users, satisfying the public's right to question and express themselves.[4] The transformation of mainstream media represents a milestone in new media communication development and an inevitable outcome of new mainstream media ecology. Today's mainstream news programs are beginning to move away from formality, enhancing host affinity and making content more accessible and understandable. By shortening the distance

with audiences, they enhance news appeal to transmit information faster and more conveniently, using language close to people' s lives to guide the masses toward mainstream ideology. In news communication, it is necessary to establish practical personified images—not traditional broadcasting styles, but rather developing images that suit hosts' personal styles, speech manners, and clothing expressions, enabling hosts to disseminate news content through life-oriented expression methods. Additionally, anchors' broadcasting language systems must be transformed, reducing written language and adopting popular language as the dominant mode, using distinctive patterns to enhance language affinity to meet audience needs and attract diverse demographic groups.

Second, news reporting patterns should be innovated from diversified perspectives. Current information technology has made news reporting patterns more diversified, providing effective support for mainstream media to develop varied reporting approaches. Using technology to coordinate the relationship between media content and processing methods enables news products to gain greater display space. Current mainstream news media generally aim for popularization, continuously attempting to optimize dissemination methods by integrating new media platforms, using short videos, Weibo, and public accounts to increase dissemination speed, thereby achieving better communication effectiveness.

## 2. Platform-Based Gatekeeping Extensions

First, for open content-sharing platforms like Sina Weibo, temporal patterns should be utilized to enhance communication expression effects, with different content types set for different time periods to cultivate users' reading habits aligned with publishing patterns. Develop H5-based graphic and audio content adapted for clients to enhance news reading convenience. Exploit Weibo' s explosive transmission model to make news products more vivid and rich, effectively attracting more audiences. On this basis, leverage Weibo platform' s own tools to enhance dissemination strength, such as follow, repost, and interactive lottery models to increase readership, while screening out spam users and identifying quality users to strengthen mainstream media' s market competitiveness.

Second, analyze short video platforms. Since short video content focuses on timeliness and viral points to gain traffic, the use of sound and visuals becomes extremely important. Leverage timely news viral points to enhance mainstream media attention, innovate news communication methods, and customize dissemination content for short video platforms.[6] Currently, short video durations mainly concentrate within ten minutes, with fast reporting speeds and keyword-focused message content, displaying partial video content to attract people' s attention within short timeframes.

Third, analyze video platforms with bullet comment systems. Bullet comments themselves serve as emotional conveyance, featuring immediacy, fragmentation, and diversification, enabling interactive content and experience during video playback. This virtual community-based platform can guide social discourse

toward positive directions.[6] On one hand, it should be audience-centered, understanding the composition of most users on the platform to determine content styles; on the other hand, content should lean toward humor and wit, providing a more relaxed environment for bullet comment posting.

### **3. Analyzing the Context of Mainstream Media Gatekeeping**

From a macro perspective, the news industry systematically collects, edits, processes, and disseminates information. With the rapid development of the internet, mainstream media gatekeeping behavior has also undergone corresponding changes under the media convergence perspective, not only screening information but also analyzing news value, user needs, and platform characteristics, intervening and controlling various processes in news editing and processing.[7]

#### **3.1 Technological Updates and Upgrades**

The rapid development of media convergence is primarily based on new media technology' s high-speed development. Technological updates and upgrades inevitably change traditional demand and consumption patterns. Technology updates and upgrades also affect the forms through which users obtain news, simultaneously influencing factors that mainstream media gatekeeping behavior must consider.

Taking CCTV as an example, the traditional media model primarily conducted news dissemination through television and radio, deeply cultivating news content to form more professional and scaled communication chains. However, in recent years, it has rooted itself in network platforms, developing new operational models through original technology to achieve comprehensive technological upgrades in system, interface design, network architecture, project management, application development, project implementation, daily operations, and service technology output, meeting different users' information needs. After transformation, it has obtained more stable industrial support, integrating media network resources to form a larger-scale public resource database.

Media technology development has enriched news content, transforming it from planar to three-dimensional. Photography and video equipment used in news gathering and editing are also continuously upgrading, with technology permeating every stage from interview to production to publication.[8] In the context of rapid 5G technology development, mainstream media have achieved 4K panoramic live broadcasting by integrating 5G technology with media and reforming original information transmission models.

#### **3.2 Promoting Convergence of Communication Channels**

Under the convergence perspective, the unification of communication channels has become an inevitable trend. In the news information acquisition stage,

communication channel convergence means information channels are broadened, which promotes more convenient dissemination of news works and improves publishing process efficiency. In this high-speed news collection, editing, processing, and dissemination process, mainstream media must exercise comprehensive gatekeeping over communication channels.

The high-speed development and widespread application of smartphone technology have prompted mainstream media to strive to grasp the mobile terminal market, developing Apps and web pages that conform to market development, and registering social media accounts like Weibo, WeChat public accounts, and Toutiao accounts based on different platforms. Developing the mobile terminal market has made news publishing patterns more diversified, even enabling remote interviews by connecting with on-site parties when reaching the scene is impossible, obtaining news information firsthand. In addition to news media, established newspapers and magazines have also registered mobile platform accounts, publishing corresponding news and messages based on people' s livelihoods.

### 3.3 Changing User Demands

Mainstream media are controlled by external communication and media factors, mainly including political and economic systems, audience groups, and internal media control. Among these, audience groups also possess certain controlling power, with user demands as an important component of audience control also influencing gatekeeping standards and interventions in various stages.

From the perspective of the general public, media convergence can satisfy different users' demands for different content. Economic development has ensured that most users have resolved basic subsistence issues, shifting people' s demands from pure material levels to spiritual levels. At the media level, corresponding content and communication methods must be formulated for different audiences to enhance user reading and usage experiences, ensuring media content is not restricted by external time and space limitations, and audiences can obtain news and information content through relatively simple means. In traditional media models, users only passively received media output content, but now users stand in a dominant position, independently screening desired content. To enhance user stickiness, mainstream media must satisfy changes at the demand level, increase user attention to media, and thereby ensure media obtain further development.[9]

## 4. In-Depth Study of Changes in Mainstream Media Gatekeeping

### 4.1 Social Responsibility of the News Industry Driving Media Gatekeeping

**4.1.1 Adhering to People-Centered Gatekeeping Principles** Adjusting selection standards for news practitioners, delivering more talent to the news industry, fully utilizing information technology to change news production models, and expanding differentiated and diversified news content can ensure mainstream media obtain relevant news information faster, effectively guide public discourse, and provide for people's cultural needs.

In socialist countries' news communication, mainstream media shoulder the responsibilities of reporting news content to the public, educating the masses, guiding public discourse, and enriching the public's spiritual and cultural life. The core of mainstream media's information gatekeeping lies in serving the people. Regardless of era changes or technological development, mainstream media should closely adjust their authority scope and standards according to primary gatekeeping responsibilities.[10]

**4.1.2 The Core of Gatekeeping Is Facing Changes Directly** The reason mainstream media enjoys broad public trust and can walk at the industry forefront, besides possessing corresponding technical backgrounds and policy support, is its keen perception of current era changes. The growth of industry frontier personnel stems from sensitivity to era development, continuously adjusting themselves on this basis to adapt to evolutionary trends brought by era changes.

**4.1.3 Guarding Against the Rhetoric of “Sophisticated Blackening” and “Naive Praising”** “Sophisticated blackening” mainly manifests as insufficiently rigorous attitudes in propaganda, insufficiently deep understanding of dissemination content, often treating content with a teasing tone. Due to this series of errors, negative topics easily emerge, resulting in “smearing” effects. “Naive praising” stems from improper grasp of current events, simple writing styles, and exaggerated content, causing user aversion.

The main reason for generating these two rhetorical styles is that some media attitudes are too rigid, assuming they occupy the high ground of discourse, discussing current affairs in rigid and stereotyped ways from a position of discursive dominance. This posturing causes users to feel emotional imposition when receiving information. This requires using the Marxist view of journalism as guidance for mainstream media gatekeeping, establishing correct news concepts, adhering to fast and correct information transmission, achieving unbiased emotions, not being vulgar, not being one-sided, not being sensationalist under the premise of describing objective facts—being able to discover news facts, clarify logical relationships, convey sincere emotions, and guide public discourse toward

more positive directions.[11]

## 4.2 Media Convergence as the Main Path for Future Development

With the continuous development of information technology, precision delivery and market segmentation have become the foundation for the media industry's commercial development and the basis for the current communication industry to expand markets. The news industry must also keep pace with the times, meeting current precision delivery needs. On one hand, current society is in a market economy environment, and the news communication industry is also developing toward enterprise-based management, requiring combination with its own development policies and national related policies to achieve communication industry reform and innovation. On the other hand, attention must be paid to coupling with current audiences to strengthen communication effects and ensure the news industry fulfills corresponding social responsibilities.

Currently, mainstream media have expanded their perspective from pure radio and television to social media accounts and short videos, attempting communication through multiple media forms from new media and converged media perspectives, deepening relationships between various communication channels, promoting market regional subdivision work, continuously innovating communication methods and news content according to content that different groups pay attention to, thereby leading public opinion trends.

As the main force in political propaganda, public opinion guidance, and news communication services, mainstream media shoulder major social responsibilities and play a leading role in industry development. Therefore, they should rely on technological development to continuously optimize communication systems and reporting models, optimize news product content according to different audience preferences, pay attention to being cautious in words and deeds, disseminate higher-quality news content within reasonable scope, promote mainstream ideas that align with socialist core values, and ensure mainstream media's own influence and credibility.[12] In an era of high media convergence, media workers' internet thinking must be strengthened, using different platforms and audiences for segmented communication to ensure content targeting and enhance news effects.

**4.2.2 Precise Positioning to Reflect Humanistic Value** The news industry is in a continuous process of commercialization. To generate lasting stickiness between users and media, the emotional connection between the two must be strengthened to ensure media can obtain long-term benefits. On one hand, advantages must be strengthened while genuinely focusing on core users' core values.

Currently, many media place communication at the service level, using membership systems, fan benefits, etc., to enhance platform influence. This service approach can ensure mainstream media stay close to the masses. Some news

clients have introduced Q&A modes, online answering questions or difficulties from users and netizens, transforming their service positioning to effectively solve dilemmas users face in life, consumption, and public services.[13] On the other hand, mainstream media must position themselves according to their own tone and different platforms, demonstrating humanistic care. They should interact with users in different styles across different platforms, abandon serious and formatted patterns, form more distinctive style positioning, display different account attributes, and create unique brand styles.

**4.2.3 Multi-Channel Convergence to Achieve Cross-Border Media Cooperation** Currently, mainstream media have conducted a series of effective attempts in cross-platform convergence, but gradually exposed content homogenization issues. Therefore, it is necessary to promote characteristic news products for different platforms or carrier models to strengthen deep cooperation between media.

On one hand, based on current different platform characteristics, achieve cross-border convergence at the platform characteristic level, formulate targeted optimization measures. In an era of rapid information technology development, present different news perspectives on the same news theme, while using big data-assisted support to achieve effective push, ensure users can have effective two-way interaction with media, and encourage the broad masses to participate in public topics.[4]

On the other hand, achieve content-level cross-border convergence on the basis of establishing one's own brand. Mainstream media should rely on their own advantages to achieve integration between various channels, attempt cross-industry cooperation. Media can cooperate with science popularization, humanities, history, international organizations, and brands to produce targeted news products for different news content, use all-channel models for all-platform release, strengthen the product attributes of news itself, and enhance media's own influence through offline promotional activities.

Mainstream media are the main public opinion positions guiding current people's values and era trends, shouldering the responsibilities of disseminating news content, constructing a sound media ecology, and enhancing media communication efficiency. Therefore, further gatekeeping of news products is necessary. On the basis of improving news communication rules, continuously enhance media's own innovation capabilities, and effectively play mainstream media's role in maintaining public opinion.

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

*Source: ChinaXiv – Machine translation. Verify with original.*