

## Postprint: Exploring News Dissemination Strategies for Local Traditional Media Through Vlog Utilization

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### Abstract

Vlog, as a novel short-video format for documenting everyday life, has been increasingly utilized by diverse population groups and has attracted considerable attention from the media industry. Within the converged media communication ecosystem, how to flexibly employ Vlog in the domain of news communication to expand the influence of news dissemination and elevate media image has emerged as a research subject for experts and scholars. This article analyzes the advantages of the Vlog news communication program format, which emphasizes the restoration of factual truth, is unconstrained by duration, possesses highly distinctive personalized features, maintains relatively complete narratives, and exhibits more professional filming and production. From a media perspective, it proposes that local traditional media should enhance localization, leverage strengths while avoiding weaknesses, conduct thorough pre-production planning, narrate news stories effectively, increase program stickiness, and develop strategies to attract audience attention to media development by opening new communication fields based on Vlog news advantages, thereby providing reference for local media practitioners to flexibly apply Vlog in news reporting.

### Full Text

#### Introduction

In recent years, Vlog has emerged as a novel short-video blog format, where content creators typically serve as protagonists documenting daily life or social phenomena from a first-person perspective. Characterized by its documentary nature and strong personal branding, Vlog production involves editing, soundtrack selection, and subtitling to create highly individualized video diaries. Compared to text-based blogs, Vlog offers greater visual appeal, and compared to entertainment-focused short videos, it provides enhanced authenticity. This

mode of communication has rapidly attracted vast audiences, particularly on major platforms like Douyin and Kuaishou. The application of Vlog to news communication has already begun at China's central media outlets. CCTV and *People's Daily* have integrated Vlog news reporting into major events such as the Two Sessions and COVID-19 pandemic coverage, combining it with traditional reporting formats to achieve remarkable results in viewership and audience engagement. However, local traditional media lack the advantages of central media outlets. Under the current media convergence ecosystem, a key challenge for practitioners is how to leverage Vlog for news communication to enhance dissemination effectiveness and build media brand image.

While Douyin, Kuaishou, and other new media platforms primarily host entertainment-oriented short videos with fragmented, self-amusing content that lacks strong narrative coherence, Vlog news adopts a different approach. Journalists or anchors appear as bloggers, documenting and introducing news events from a first-person perspective that immerses audiences in the news scene, allowing them to experience events firsthand and even engage in direct dialogue with news subjects. This makes news events feel as though they are unfolding directly before the audience's eyes. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, CCTV News released its *Battle Against Epidemic Vlog* series on Douyin, in which journalists used the Vlog format to authentically document the daily experiences of doctors, nurses, quarantined patients, Huoshenshan Hospital construction workers, community staff, volunteers, inbound travelers, and media reporters on the front lines. These reports transformed the traditionally serious news presentation style, using first-person perspective to bring audiences directly into the news scene, narrowing the distance between media and audience while creating a strong sense of participation.

## 1. Analysis of Vlog News Communication Advantages

With the widespread adoption of 5G technology, Vlog short-video production and publishing have become highly convenient. The integration of Vlog into news communication first emerged during the 2019 Two Sessions coverage. *China Daily* launched a series of Two Sessions Vlogs, while *The Paper* introduced Vlog news on social platforms under the theme “*Two Sessions Vlog: Male God Wang Yi*,” sparking a trend of “Vlog + News” in journalism. According to online data, during the 2019 Two Sessions, major media outlets led by the People's Daily Mobile Center collaborated with over 600 local mainstream media organizations in Vlog news dissemination. Many works were distributed across major new media platforms including Tencent News, Weibo, and Bilibili, significantly increasing Weibo click-through rates and achieving topic readings of 150 million, demonstrating remarkable effectiveness. Utilizing the Vlog format for news communication has become a new pathway for traditional media to innovate news reporting methods. Compared to Vlogs posted on personal social platforms, Vlog news offers distinct advantages.

Vlog news represents the media organization behind it. These videos are typ-

ically filmed and produced by news professionals in connection with media-covered events. Once published, they serve as extensions of media news reports, with their dissemination constituting the voice of the represented media organization. This carries the authority that the media holds in the public mind and directly or indirectly influences audiences and society. Whether during the Two Sessions or the COVID-19 pandemic, journalists' Vlog news dissemination represents mainstream media voices, influencing social culture and shaping public opinion.

Since November 2019, CCTV anchors Kang Hui and Gang Qiang have released a series of Vlog news reports on CCTV News' s official Weibo under the theme "Frontline of Major Power Diplomacy," documenting their personal experiences accompanying national leaders on foreign visits. In these Vlogs, the anchors abandoned their usual serious on-screen personas, appearing as ordinary individuals and documenting their journeys from a first-person perspective with humorous language and a relaxed, lively tone. The reports included interactions with cameramen and foreign welcoming ceremony staff, offering audiences rare glimpses into diplomatic scenes. This down-to-earth, personalized style directly narrowed the distance between media and audience, sparking enthusiastic discussions among viewers. Many netizens commented that watching these Vlog news reports made them feel as though they were participating in the state visits themselves. These Vlog news reports carried the distinct personal style of Kang Hui and Gang Qiang, demonstrating strong individual characteristics.

Unlike ordinary short-video news, Vlog news exhibits diverse program formats without strict duration constraints. Vlog news released by media organizations and major platforms typically runs under 15 minutes, covering various subjects but maintaining relatively complete storylines and content structures. Generally speaking, Vlog news from various media platforms contains news information elements similar to the traditional five W' s (Who, What, When, Where, Why). The videos are vivid and engaging, effectively capturing audience attention. Since June 2020, Xinhua Net has launched the *First Secretary Vlog* series, using first-person expression to document the work and life reflections of first secretaries stationed in impoverished mountainous villages nationwide, vividly narrating their stories of leading poverty alleviation efforts. These Vlog news reports allowed audiences to genuinely experience the touching stories of first secretaries leading masses out of poverty, attracting numerous comments and likes.

While personal Vlogs on social media often consist of fragmented records without central storylines, Vlog news employs a narrative style that differs from Weibo bloggers' storytelling while incorporating the media organization' s personalized communication characteristics. This creates completeness in both expression and content. For example, during the 2019 Two Sessions, most Vlog news from mainstream media followed a linear narrative structure, documenting journalists' entire day from waking up, morning routines, and breakfast to traveling to the Two Sessions venue, conducting interviews, writing and filing

stories, and finishing work. Similar to reporters' notebooks but interspersed with content unrelated to news interviews, these Vlogs allowed audiences to see journalists in different life scenarios, supplementing single-scene news coverage and diversifying news reporting settings while extending the Vlog news reporting chain. Additionally, audiences could directly observe journalists' on-camera appearance, attire, and interview flexibility, generating both intimacy and novelty while satisfying curiosity about the personal lives of authoritative media professionals.

## 2. Current Bottlenecks in Vlog News Communication

Currently, many traditional media organizations have launched Vlog news communication on new media platforms, but they face various challenges and tests:

First, the discrepancy between news authenticity and Vlog personalization. American communication scholar Hoffman once stated, "The most important aspect of news reporting is telling a good story. The narrative must deeply capture audience attention. Once this attention is disrupted by too many interactive elements, the viewing experience is damaged and communication effectiveness is discounted." He argued that journalists should integrate personalized elements into their news reporting roles to achieve communication effectiveness through compelling storytelling. In current Vlog news reporting, many videos prioritize personalization, either deviating from the principle of news authenticity or creating a disconnect between personalization and factual accuracy. Additionally, many non-media professionals have begun experimenting with Vlog-form news reporting, but without foundational news business knowledge, they struggle to achieve effective integration between personalization and authenticity. Balancing Vlog news personalization with authenticity—preserving individual narrative style while accurately reporting news—should be the primary consideration for communicators, aiming to produce the best news works rather than merely pursuing traffic and eye-catching content.

Second, the journalistic professionalism of non-media professionals is being tested. In the current communication market, many cross-over news practitioners are engaged in Vlog news reporting. However, their thinking patterns, narrative angles, and content production forms differ from professional journalism requirements, challenging their comprehensive journalistic qualities. These untrained non-media professionals typically employ 单向的、直线型思维 (unidirectional, linear thinking), believing that simply expressing a fact through 流水式的线性叙述方式 (flowing linear narrative) is sufficient. However, today's audiences no longer live in an era of traditional media dominance. The diversification of information channels forces journalists to employ networked thinking to multi-dimensionally excavate plots behind news facts, while these cross-over participants' thinking patterns have not yet fully transformed. This issue imposes higher and stricter requirements on journalists' thinking models. Moreover, Vlog news reporting requires more professional on-site language control capabilities from journalists, who must handle unexpected situations

during live reporting swiftly and professionally—skills that non-professional cross-over participants often lack and need to develop.

Third, Vlog news faces an entertainment-oriented trend. Audience groups have diverse orientations when accepting news reports. Due to the diverse communication forms of Vlog news, many exist between news reporting and entertainment videos. This entertainment-biased presentation style can easily attract audience attention to external performance elements, distracting them from the reported news content and diminishing communication effectiveness. After breaking traditional news reporting's fixed patterns, Vlog news also presents a trend where some media editors and reporters, in pursuit of news traffic, over-emphasize entertainment elements during news gathering and production, deviating from news authenticity and neglecting content dissemination. Only by properly balancing the degree of entertainment in Vlog news reporting can this reporting format better serve as an innovative path for media development.

### 3. Strategies for Local Media Utilizing Vlog News

Local traditional media generally possess unique advantages in filming, producing, and publishing Vlog news. Most journalists understand both planning and writing, especially broadcast media professionals who possess professional filming and production skills, can appear on camera, and are familiar with post-production, making their Vlog news more credible to audiences. Local traditional news media can approach Vlog news reporting from several dimensions:

#### **Leveraging Local Characteristics and Advantages**

According to communication psychology theory, news communication emphasizes audience psychological proximity. Geographic proximity is paramount—mass audiences typically focus on familiar people and events in their surroundings while remaining indifferent to external matters. Therefore, local characteristics should be the primary consideration for local traditional media in Vlog news reporting. Generally, audiences prefer information about people and events near them; the closer the distance and relationship, the greater the audience attention. This is because, beyond factors like information intensity, contrast, timeliness, and interest, proximity-seeking psychology represents an important mental set. Local traditional media should ground themselves in local contexts, emphasize distinctive features, and attract and retain audiences through geographic proximity of information, content relevance, and timely dissemination. Reporters or anchors using Vlog news can supplement news facts with locally distinctive cultural backgrounds and geographical features to capture local audience attention and enhance communication effectiveness.

#### **Strengthening Planning and Storytelling**

Telling good stories is the primary task of news reporting. Before producing Vlog news, thorough planning is essential. Local traditional media, already disadvantaged in the current communication environment, must plan meticulously

and tell compelling stories. To enrich program content, Vlog news production should employ divergent thinking to fully excavate details related to news stories, establish clear reporting themes, and supplement the main storyline with detailed 铺垫 (foreshadowing and elaboration) to satisfy audience psychological needs for news narratives. When planning, consider the target audience and select high-interest topics for follow-up reporting. For instance, using Vlog news format to present hot issues of audience concern can attract attention to breaking news, trigger participation and sharing, and achieve ideal dissemination through multi-level diffusion.

### Leveraging Brand Influence

Media influence serves as the best measure of communication effectiveness. Jiangxi Satellite TV's *Gold Medal Mediation* program represents a brand established by local traditional media. The stories behind the mediation process are undoubtedly rich and colorful. Media organizations can leverage existing brand programs to excavate behind-the-scenes storylines or extend coverage of different mediation subjects' stories, then employ Vlog news presentation techniques with first-person linear narrative methods to significantly enhance communication effectiveness. Local traditional media can also draw from new media platform experiences by utilizing the influence of renowned reporters or anchors' personal brands to create symbolic personas, disseminate positive energy through Vlog news reporting, and strengthen relationship chains with audiences—providing a viable path to retain audiences through effective planning and management.

Vlog application in news communication represents an upgrade and transformation of traditional media's news production concepts and workflows. Vlog news helps local traditional media enrich news reporting formats, expand media communication space, and achieve goals of enhanced communication power and influence. This provides a reference basis for media practitioners to boldly explore other communication methods, accelerating the transformation of media practitioners' thinking, skill enhancement, and adaptation to all-media communication.

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

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