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On Transformation Strategies for Newspaper Editors in the New Media Era (Postprint)

Authors: Du Hui

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Abstract

As China enters the new media era, all industries and sectors are confronted with unprecedented opportunities and challenges. In this novel media landscape, traditional media practitioners must not only perceive shifts in their surrounding context, but also engage with journalism through a more professional and distinctive perspective, captivating audiences with high-caliber news content to ensure the sustained and stable development of the print media industry.

Full Text

Preamble

A Brief Discussion on Newspaper Editor Transformation Strategies in the New Media Era

(Beijing Shunyi District Convergence Media Center, Beijing 101300)

Abstract: With China's entry into the new media era, all industries have encountered unprecedented opportunities and challenges. In this novel media environment, traditional media professionals must not only perceive environmental changes but also approach news from more professional and unique perspectives, attracting readers with high-quality content to ensure the sustainable and stable development of the print media industry.

Keywords: newspaper editor; reader demand; resource integration; editor transformation; innovative layout

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Against the backdrop of internet development, new media platforms have become the primary direction of technological advancement, necessitating that newspaper editorial work adapt to the characteristics of the new media era. However, the actual transformation process faces problems and obstacles, requiring editors to incorporate more innovative thinking to enhance the effectiveness and quality of newspaper editing.

1. Challenges Faced by Newspaper Editors in the New Media Era

1.1 Meeting Reader Demands

The new media era poses significant challenges to traditional media such as newspapers, particularly in meeting reader demands. For instance, newspaper design often fails to analyze readers' actual needs, preventing selective reading based on personal preferences.[1] In the new media era, recommendation algorithms deliver information tailored to public reading demands and preferences, enabling people to access relevant information more conveniently. Current new media industry practices involve selecting keywords based on trending social events, then using big data technology to push related information to readers, completing the entire information delivery process. New media content is typically concise and vivid, attracting reader clicks. Furthermore, as people's lives accelerate, fragmentation affects all aspects of life, including information consumption. How to accommodate audiences' fragmented and personalized news consumption habits has become a new challenge for newspaper editors.

1.2 Resource Integration

Newspaper editing requires integrating and categorizing information according to current reading demands while highlighting key content to enhance editorial effectiveness. However, with continuous internet technology development, online information volume is massive and spreads explosively. When an event occurs, new media's information acquisition and dissemination speed is extremely rapid, allowing people to quickly obtain relevant information through internet platforms. For newspaper editors, ensuring information timeliness is difficult; even after obtaining relevant information, verification, processing, and categorization are required before publication, making immediate pushing impossible. This lag, compared to new media, has significantly impacted the stable development of China's newspaper industry. In 2020 alone, over 20 newspapers announced cessation, including *Legal Evening News*, *Beijing Morning News*, and *People's Public Security Daily*.

1.3 Increasing Competition

As the news industry continues to develop, the need to push and collect information within short timeframes has intensified competition among various organizations, with the impact on the newspaper industry being particularly evident. Beyond news acquisition, funding sources have become increasingly difficult for traditional media, as substantial advertising investments flow into new media. Compared to newspaper advertising, new media display methods are more direct and convenient, better serving advertisers' interests. However, traditional media possesses deeper credibility and influence with a relatively stable audience base. To enhance fan stickiness and provide advertisers with greater investment confidence, traditional media must approach news from more unique perspectives and conduct professional processing. Simultaneously, they should leverage their platform advantages to explore more diversified profit models.

2. Opportunities for Newspaper Editors in the New Media Era

Every coin has two sides. While the new media era has brought numerous shocks to the newspaper industry, it has also created new development opportunities. Newspaper editors can grasp these opportunities by aligning with the era's direction, achieving successful transformation and upgrading of work models and concepts, thereby improving editorial effectiveness. Newspapers possess unique advantages in the industry; through rich experience and talent cultivation, they can tap into their potential in the new media era, accelerate the integration of old and new media in practice, fully leverage new media's inherent advantages, compensate for shortcomings in traditional work models, and achieve innovative development in newspaper editing.

2.1 Advantages of Professional Authority

In the new media era, information types are diversifying, inevitably introducing disruptive information that affects public judgment. Therefore, it is essential to leverage newspapers' inherent authority and maintain a responsible attitude to gain reader trust and promote sustainable industry development. On new media platforms, some news outlets excessively pursue sensational headlines to attract attention, yet their content is hollow. Some platforms even suffer from serious falsehood issues, fostering public distrust. In this context, newspapers must fully utilize their authoritative advantage while accelerating information dissemination speed to enhance actual communication effectiveness.

2.2 Advantages of In-Depth Reporting

In the new media context, newspapers also hold advantages in in-depth reporting. While new media features massive information volume, diverse categories, and strong timeliness, some outlets deliberately pursue immediacy, reporting on hot topics as they emerge but abandoning them once interest wanes. This often

results in unprofessional and non-standardized coverage of trending news. Traditional newspapers, however, can conduct more thorough follow-up reporting. With stronger authenticity, they enable people to understand events' subsequent developments and most truthful content, continuously enhancing newspapers' standing in the public mind and fully excavating the value behind news stories.

2.3 Innovative Editorial Choices

During the development of network technology, emerging communication methods have provided newspaper editors with numerous options. Previously limited to print media, the newspaper industry could not achieve optimal news dissemination and editing, significantly impacting practical work. Therefore, in the new media context, it is necessary to align with new media technology' s advantages and information dissemination characteristics to innovate communication carriers. This grants newspaper editors more choices in daily work, such as editing news within new media platforms. With high comprehensive quality, editors can quickly deliver authentic information to the public, meeting information acquisition demands and standards while breaking previous spatial and temporal limitations.[3] Additionally, editing news on new media platforms can enhance engagement, gaining broader dissemination space. Information dissemination can also involve extensive interaction and communication with the public, updating follow-up news anytime and anywhere, continuously leveraging the professional advantages of news editors.

3. Transformation Strategies

3.1 Acquiring High-Quality Information

To enhance newspapers' influence among the public, editors must obtain high-quality information in practice, meeting people' s information acquisition needs from multiple dimensions. The new media era provides robust technical support for rapid news production and dissemination; everyone is a proponent of free speech with deeper spaces for exchange and discussion, and similarly, anyone can become a news producer. In this era, news editors must handle complex and voluminous information, possessing certain news judgment and acuity to extract valuable information for editing based on event authenticity, thereby achieving multi-dimensional shifts in editorial perspective. Additionally, they need to deeply understand news audiences' information needs, integrating this understanding into newspaper editing to truly serve the masses, enabling them to access and disseminate more authentic, high-quality information. This not only allows readers to obtain more authentic and appealing information quickly but also helps improve newspaper editing efficiency.[4]

3.2 Excavating News Depth

In daily newspaper editing work, it is also necessary to fully excavate the depth behind news stories, achieving multi-dimensional information integration and

analysis to improve work efficiency. Editors should explore stories behind the news in their routine work to achieve successful transformation in the new media context. In this environment, competition between new media and traditional media like newspapers is increasingly fierce, often involving problematic practices. For instance, some new media platforms use exaggerated and false headlines to attract attention; such content lacks depth and, while gaining short-term public attention, cannot achieve sustainable development.[5] Therefore, newspaper editors must disseminate positive news that aligns with socialist core values, enabling the public to perceive the depth and connotation of newspapers. To enhance reporting depth and capture public attention, editors must obtain profoundly meaningful news that withstands new media era challenges and secures further industry development. Newspaper editors need to excavate more in-depth content, achieving multi-dimensional coverage through planning and layout, conducting thematic reports, and continuously focusing on news events that the public cares about, highlighting the industry's superiority. Simultaneously, editors must summarize key points of upcoming news within short timeframes, improving information organization skills to obtain core news content. By accurately reflecting newsworthy content in newspapers and conducting deeper multi-dimensional value excavation, editors can continuously optimize newspaper content through effective news evaluation based on their comprehensive professional capabilities and political acuity. The following aspects should be considered when excavating news depth:

[Figure 1: see original paper] Hierarchical Classification

3.3 Innovating Layout Patterns

In the new media context, newspaper editors must achieve successful transformation and upgrading of work models in daily practice to enable rapid information delivery. In practical work, it is essential to innovate newspaper layout patterns. As new media technology continuously develops, information volume is increasing, but homogenized content also emerges. Therefore, to improve information dissemination effectiveness, newspaper editors must innovate news page layout methods and patterns, employing creative thinking in daily work.[6] When designing newspaper layouts, artistic thinking should be integrated to optimize the entire page, while enhancing information appeal based on reader demands. Editors must elevate their cultural taste and optimize news layout patterns according to readers' spiritual needs and standards, enabling new development in layout design. Practical work requires comprehensive consideration of layout requirements, primarily because massive information volumes severely hinder public information screening, necessitating greater emphasis on newspaper page composition. While improving overall page attractiveness, it is crucial to highlight news subjectivity, enabling readers to obtain needed information quickly and gain more intuitive reading experiences. For example, *Shanxi Economic Daily* covered a recently concluded forest music festival through continuous three-day follow-up reports, presenting the event to readers in a high-quality, unique lay-

out format. Another example is the ‘People Feel the New Era’ column, for which Shanxi New Media provided manuscripts that the newspaper placed in prominent positions on key pages. Each article includes a QR code that readers can scan to access the full text. This approach combines complete textual reporting with image displays, compensating for traditional layout limitations and creating new possibilities for the newspaper industry.

[Figure 2: see original paper] Newspaper Layout

3.4 Transforming Reader Consciousness

In the new media era, to highlight newspapers’ current development advantages, editors must transform their work thinking and role positioning, focusing on promoting stable industry development, establishing proactive service consciousness, paying greater attention to readers’ inner needs, and utilizing new media technology’ s advanced advantages to facilitate widespread information dissemination. This involves constructing novel editorial models and approaches, demonstrating newspapers’ important status in the new media context, and correctly guiding public opinion.[1] To satisfy people’ s information needs and requirements in newspaper editing, editors must understand readers, selecting topics and organizing interviews from the readers’ perspective. Practical work requires effective information integration and categorization, improving dissemination targeting based on reader interests and concerns. In recent years, some newspapers have fully utilized various online interactive platforms, such as Weibo and blogs, to conduct extensive interaction and exchange with the public, collecting information and soliciting public opinion.[7] This model not only helps understand public psychological dynamics and interests but also enhances the scientific nature and targeting of subsequent newspaper editing. Conducting sample surveys in practical work also enables more thorough and comprehensive understanding of readers’ reading preferences.

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Author Information

Author: Du Hui (1985-), female, from Xingtai, Hebei, journalist. Research direction: news gathering and editing.

(Responsible Editor: Yang Hu)

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