

## ‘Conservatism’ and ‘Innovation’ in the Development of Party Newspapers in the Context of Media Convergence: Postprint

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### Abstract

The rapid development of the Internet has propelled the advancement of social informatization and spurred the rise of the new media industry. The advent of the information age has gradually transformed the public’s reading patterns, thereby subjecting print party newspaper media to tremendous impact, with substantial transformations occurring in its thematic layout, reporting methods, and platform interactivity. This paper conducts a brief analysis on the “conservatism” and “innovation” in the development of party newspapers under the context of integrated media, hoping to better integrate the respective advantages of new media and print party newspapers to achieve efficient and optimized development of party newspaper media.

### Full Text

#### Preamble

**Title:** “Conservation” and “Innovation” in Party Newspaper Development Under the Background of Media Convergence

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**Abstract:** The rapid development of the Internet has propelled societal informatization and spurred the rise of the new media industry. The advent of the information age has gradually transformed public reading habits, subjecting print party newspapers to tremendous impact and fundamentally altering their layout design, reporting methods, and platform interactivity. This paper offers a brief analysis of the “conservation” and “innovation” in party newspaper development within the context of media convergence, aiming to better integrate the respective strengths of new media and print party newspapers to achieve efficient and optimized development of party newspaper media.

**Keywords:** Internet; media convergence; party newspaper development; conservation; innovation

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Under the powerful trend of media convergence development, print media has been profoundly influenced by online information. To better adapt to the arrival of the information age, traditional print media must advance with the times and achieve transformative innovation. As a crucial component of print media, party newspapers require even greater innovation and development. In the process of optimizing print party newspapers, journalists must uphold the original mission of party newspapers and defend the nation’s news and public opinion front, while simultaneously gathering spiritual strength across the news frontlines to further consolidate the core competitive strength of party newspaper media.

## 1. Media Convergence Era Background

Media convergence represents an emerging phenomenon in China’s “media integration” that has mushroomed in scale in recent years. The term “media convergence” primarily refers to mutual cooperation among various media forms, becoming an inevitable direction for media transformation and innovative development in the new era. Following the publication of “Accelerating the Integrated Development of Traditional and Emerging Media” in the *People’s Daily*, the Central Committee for Comprehensively Deepening Reform passed the “Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Integrated Development of Traditional and Emerging Media” at its fourth meeting on August 18, 2014. In 2015, a series of additional policies and guidelines related to media convergence were promulgated, elevating the importance of media integration to the national policy level.

With continuous innovation and optimization of network technology, big data information has achieved explosive growth, and Internet terminal platforms have become increasingly diversified. The arrival of the self-media era under the trend of media convergence has further innovated news dissemination channels and information transmission speed and efficiency. News information acquisition through mobile devices has become remarkably convenient and fast, prompting many traditional media industries to recognize both the opportunities and challenges presented by online converged media. They have actively implemented development strategies transitioning from traditional to modern, from singular to composite, to enhance their core competitive strength. Network media technology provides prerequisite conditions for the integration of information

dissemination channels, and audiences have effectively achieved convenient and efficient news acquisition through converged media technology. The robust development of media convergence represents the inevitable trend for the future information industry. [1]

The application of various advanced new media technologies in the development trend of media convergence has deeply impacted the audience's field of vision, further deepening the ideological impact of information and strengthening readers' information awareness while enhancing media information interactivity. Many traditional media outlets have gradually registered and launched new online media platforms—including websites, Weibo, WeChat public accounts, and mobile client apps—on the basis of consolidating and strengthening their own publicity efforts. This not only satisfies the information needs of the general public but also enriches the information dissemination channels of traditional media, essentially giving traditional media “Internet wings.” [2] Media convergence combines traditional and new online media under informatized and intelligent social operations, broadening channels for party newspaper innovation while providing new development opportunities and challenges. This simultaneously enhances the competitive strength of the media industry and intensifies market competition, while achieving higher operational advantages in media functions, communication methods, and information value, thereby further realizing the innovation and development of contemporary media. [3]

## 2. Specific Development Issues in Party Newspaper Media

Party newspapers, as organs of Party committees, embody social values and functions that directly reflect the Party and government's governance concepts. They subsequently interpret newly issued policies and guidelines, while playing an efficient social public opinion guidance role and establishing communication channels between the Party and the masses. In today's social media landscape, party newspapers play a crucial mainstream media role, not only quickly reflecting the information needs of the masses but also promoting the formation of the spirit of the times and the positive development of social civilization. Under the background of media convergence, achieving diversified development of party newspapers requires addressing issues such as monotonous content in news event coverage, fixed communication forms, media credibility, and information lag. Compared with emerging media industries, party newspapers under the media convergence background exhibit significant limitations in information dissemination methods, information transmission speed, and news coverage scope. Their layout design, thematic content, reporting methods, and reader interaction all require substantial improvement and attention.

### 2.1 Layout Constraints Limiting News Effectiveness

Typically, party newspaper layouts feature more text and fewer images. Large sections of theoretical text can easily cause reader fatigue, yet excessive image placement makes layouts appear chaotic and prevents readers from patiently

completing articles, significantly impacting effective information transmission. Simultaneously, news-related illustrations are highly constrained by the newspapers' positioning and media characteristics; selected images must achieve special publicity effects and fulfill certain political missions, substantially reducing visual impact and failing to effectively attract audience interest. Some party newspaper layouts also suffer from low relevance between illustrations and content, where added images fail to strengthen news effectiveness or adequately fulfill the information dissemination and public opinion guidance functions of print party newspapers. [4]

Additionally, party newspaper information sometimes exhibits ungrounded thematic thinking. Party newspapers serve as the mouthpiece of the Party and government, possessing direct political functions that focus on reflecting and reporting the latest Party organizational developments. Typically, party newspaper thematic content divides into “mandatory content” and “optional content” sections. Mandatory content refers to Party leadership speeches, relevant meeting spirits, and Party-government activities, characterized by top-down information transmission. This mandatory approach causes passive information reception among readers, preventing audiences from fully understanding information content and achieving efficient information dissemination. Optional content refers to independently completed coverage based on the newspaper's reporting characteristics, Party-government directives, news release rules, and audience cognition patterns. However, both mandatory and optional content forms suffer from low readability due to the serious nature of party newspapers. If thematic information content becomes too profound, comprehension costs rise, gradually shrinking audience size, which is detrimental to the diffusion and promotion of Party-government information and fails to enhance the comprehensive influence of party newspaper media. Furthermore, party newspaper content exhibits obvious timeliness weaknesses. While coverage depth of current affairs and social news may surpass that of contemporary new media reporting, timeliness lags behind in relative terms.

### **2.3 Straightforward Objective Reporting Style Hinders Comprehension**

Party newspaper reporting methods somewhat resemble hard news reporting forms. Hard news refers to serious reporting topics emphasizing Party-government ideological, guiding, and knowledge-based information content, including political, economic, scientific, and technological news types—such as Party and state policy formulation and modification, social situation changes, market conditions, stock markets, and weather forecasts. When reporting hard news, party newspapers employ straightforward and objective narrative forms with minimal explanatory commentary, causing delayed gratification effects for audiences when reading or viewing news information and constraining party newspaper information transmission functions.

## 2.4 Inadequate Reader Interaction and Communication

In the media convergence environment, new media's impact on traditional media is prominently reflected in news information transmission methods. For a long time, party newspaper media have lacked effective interaction with readers, treating readers merely as information recipients rather than as users who internalize information, thus failing to establish effective information exchange with reader communities. The correct concept should involve developing user-friendly party newspaper platforms. Moreover, party newspaper delivery follows a top-down format, largely causing deficiencies in reader feedback. This not only prevents editors from understanding reader priorities but also fails to better align reported content with social groups or specifically improve section content, severely hindering innovation and optimization of party newspaper reporting internal systems.

## 3. Development Strategies for Party Newspapers Under New-Era Media Convergence

Effective media convergence can further enhance media information dissemination effectiveness and fully realize the specific social value of information transmission. Under the social background of new-era media convergence, party newspaper journalists seeking to achieve deep integration between print media and contemporary innovative media must actively carry out reform and optimization work to conform to media convergence trends. This involves continuously improving the public opinion guidance power, information dissemination power, and reporting influence of party newspaper journalism while strengthening the authority and credibility of traditional party newspaper media, enhancing the affinity of party newspaper information, improving interactivity, strengthening timeliness, and focusing on audience groups.

### 3.1 Strengthening Authority and Credibility of Party Newspaper Information

The authority and credibility of party newspapers possess irreplaceable developmental characteristics. The authority system of party newspapers lies in the information screening and review process for news reporting, maintaining a resolute attitude against false and inaccurate news messages and ensuring published information is correct and authoritative. However, under media convergence trends, an increasing number of new media platforms resort to sensational headlines and content to attract followers and enhance influence, fabricating false news that does not withstand scrutiny or excessively emphasizing personal subjective consciousness in event reporting. Although some media achieve rapid short-term development through false information, their information credibility and authority are actually not high. To achieve long-term, stable operation, traditional party newspaper media in the new era must strengthen their own reporting credibility. In party newspaper journalism, they must strictly im-

plement the “three-review” system for news content and intensify industry supervision to achieve high-level positioning of party newspaper media platforms. During this process, various media enterprises within the party newspaper industry can adopt mutual supervision operational models to achieve synchronized, innovative development across the entire party newspaper industry.

### 3.2 Enhancing Affinity of Party Newspaper Information

Compared with online media, print party newspaper media lack certain affinity, specifically reflected in total readership numbers. New media platforms often interpret national policies using accessible language with visually appealing graphic layouts and sometimes employ relaxed, teasing tones—advantages that formally published party newspapers do not possess. Therefore, to enhance information affinity, party newspaper media must actively pursue conceptual innovation and version optimization in news reporting. For example, *People’s Daily* has effectively optimized and transformed its news propaganda reporting: during the National Two Sessions, in addition to daily print coverage, it innovatively launched an online live broadcast room format that could answer audience questions at any time and invited relevant experts to provide colloquial analyses of Two Sessions spirit, better transmitting Party-government information to the public. Simultaneously, *People’s Daily* published big data comparisons of Two Sessions-related reports on its WeChat public account, making specific party newspaper content clear at a glance through scientific information processing. This not only enhanced article readability but also shortened the distance between editors and readers, further improving *People’s Daily’s* credibility and influence.

### 3.3 Improving Interactivity of Party Newspaper Information

New media information platforms have built excellent interactive communication channels for party newspapers, not only better aligning content with reader needs but also attracting readers to participate in party newspaper reading and enhancing their reading experience to better understand relevant news information. During the National Two Sessions period, in addition to converged media reporting formats like those of *People’s Daily*, an H5 animation design titled “Two Sessions Invites You to Join Group Chat” emerged. By opening the application, users could directly enter cyberspace for group chats, associating not only with the opening time of the Two Sessions but also fully demonstrating the natural advantages of information media technology. Features like WeChat red packets and friend circle links in chat groups enabled real-time multi-person interaction, further enhancing party newspaper media information interactivity. This novel Two Sessions interpretation model, compared with lengthy party newspaper transcriptions of Two Sessions spirit, offers greater communicative performance. [5]

### 3.4 Strengthening Timeliness of Party Newspaper Information

The development of traditional print media like party newspapers is greatly constrained by publication cycles and other factors, exhibiting delayed transmission characteristics that poorly satisfy audience news information needs. Cooperation between party newspaper media and converged media platforms effectively resolves this operational issue. For instance, in reporting breaking news events, party newspapers can leverage converged media platform technological advantages to produce brief, clear news flashes immediately after events occur, making news coverage more timely. Through collaboration with converged media, party newspaper editors can also further investigate event backgrounds and subjects based on event reporting, extending social effects of events to launch comprehensive reports with deep connotations while simultaneously increasing party newspaper media information timeliness.

### 3.5 Focusing on Party Newspaper Audience Groups

Due to the dual influence of new media convenience and the “Internet Plus” development concept, the vast majority of young people today choose new media reporting and reading methods to understand contemporary international and domestic political and life realities. Party newspapers can utilize media technology information transmission advantages to identify entry points for connecting with readers during information reception, further improving interaction quality and efficiency between party newspapers and readers. Under the background of new-era media convergence, party newspapers that follow the pace of the times to optimize structure and innovate reporting can not only retain older print readers but also engage younger readers according to their reading habits, thereby attracting more young readers and exerting the ideological influence effectiveness of party newspapers. [6] In the party newspaper construction process, diversified news information dissemination channels can expand party newspapers’ public opinion guidance capabilities while enhancing information influence, achieving optimized development of both party newspaper authority and innovation through quality public opinion guidance functions, and actively promoting orderly construction of socialist spiritual civilization and comprehensive social progress.

In summary, under the background of new-era media convergence, the organic integration of party newspapers with new online media can better transmit social and current affairs news information while satisfying the optimized development needs of party newspaper media, better meeting the news information needs of contemporary mass audiences. By strengthening the credibility of party newspaper media information, enhancing affinity, improving interactivity, strengthening timeliness, and focusing on audience groups during party newspaper journalism construction, we can further advance the informatization, intelligence, and modernization development of party newspaper media, achieve innovative transformation of the party newspaper cause, and provide efficient momentum for the media industry in the new era.

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

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