
AI translation · View original & related papers at
chinaxiv.org/items/chinaxiv-202310.00923

On the Live Broadcast Format of Large-Scale Cultural Galas: A Case Study of the 2021 Hunan TV Spring Festival Gala (Postprint)

Authors: Li Qingfei

Date: 2023-10-08T00:00:00+00:00

Abstract

In the ongoing fight against the pandemic, although a year of battle has elapsed, the entire nation continues its struggle against the epidemic. The Spring Festival of 2021 represented the first Spring Festival following the pandemic's emergence, with themes concerning the epidemic and nostalgia for one's hometown manifesting in the Spring Festival Gala broadcasts of major satellite television stations. These programs conveyed not merely the joy of ushering in a new year, but also aspirations for the future and the fervent wish for the pandemic's swift conclusion. Precisely due to the pandemic, large-scale cultural galas throughout the past two years have consistently adopted online broadcast formats. This paper takes the "2021 Hunan Satellite TV Spring Festival Gala" (hereinafter referred to as the "Hunan TV Spring Festival Gala") as a case study to investigate the broadcast methods and formats of large-scale cultural performances.

Full Text

A Brief Discussion on Live Broadcasting Forms of Large-Scale Cultural Galas: A Case Study of the 2021 Hunan TV Spring Festival Gala

School of Journalism and Communication, Bohai University, Jinzhou, Liaoning 121000

Abstract

As the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the Chinese people remain united in their efforts despite having battled the virus for over a year. The Spring Festival of 2021 marked the first celebration since the outbreak, and themes of pandemic resilience and hometown sentiment were prominently

featured across various provincial satellite TV Spring Festival Galas. These programs not only conveyed the joy of welcoming a new year but also expressed hopes for the future and wishes for an early end to the pandemic. Precisely because of the pandemic, large-scale cultural galas have adopted online broadcasting formats for the past two years. This paper examines the broadcast methods and forms of such galas, using the 2021 Hunan TV Spring Festival Gala (hereinafter referred to as “Hunan TV Spring Gala”) as a case study.

Keywords: cultural gala; live broadcasting; media; personalization; post-pandemic era

CLC Number: G624

Document Code: A

Article ID: 1671-0134(2021)08-133-03

DOI: 10.19483/j.cnki.11-4653/n.2021.08.040

1. Live Broadcasting in the Pandemic Era

In recent years, live broadcasting has injected fresh vitality into the media industry. As the pandemic persists, an increasing number of galas are utilizing live streaming to broaden their reach and enhance audience engagement. This approach not only expands dissemination but also generates trending topics, driving viewership and stimulating development across the media sector.

As a provincial satellite TV event, the Hunan TV Spring Gala created a festive atmosphere that allowed viewers to experience the New Year spirit despite not being physically present. However, the visual presentation risked monotony and aesthetic fatigue. Employing red as a dominant color with warm tones as the main palette could have yielded better visual results. The broadcast facilitated cultural exchange through interactive bullet comments, showcasing customs from across the country—not just from Hunan. This interactive format enabled nationwide cultural expression and promoted cultural dialogue.

To align with mainstream values and attract diverse viewership, many programs were tailored to the gala’s overarching theme. The entire event was structured to progress from broad societal narratives to intimate personal stories, ultimately focusing on individual families and ordinary people to reflect universal truths. This grounded approach resonated with audiences’ sense of national and family identity, elevated the thematic content, satisfied aesthetic demands, and generated emotional pleasure while simultaneously driving audience interaction. A memorable gala is a successful gala, and every successful event must evoke emotional resonance among the majority of viewers. Producing such an event requires deep understanding of audience needs and preferences, telling relatable stories about ordinary people and societal concerns in accessible language to achieve emotional connection between performers and viewers. With pandemic prevention ongoing, using the anti-pandemic theme as a narrative thread

throughout the gala effectively resonated with audiences.

2. Impact of Live Broadcasting on the Media Industry

Television cultural galas represent a highly comprehensive, artistic, and ideologically sophisticated program format in television arts. Their strong sense of presence and lively, festive nature easily captivates live audiences. With the advent of the new era, live broadcasting's influence on the media industry has grown increasingly significant, requiring directors and planners to keep pace with the times and actively develop positive marketing strategies.

Due to pandemic restrictions on audience capacity, online live broadcasting has become the norm. While conservative, traditional live broadcasting might follow standard procedures, prolonged uniformity leads to tedium. Live streaming elements must be innovative. For instance, this gala featured not only the standard director's cut but also multi-camera live streaming, better accommodating audience preferences by providing viewing options and thereby attracting viewers.

Multi-camera live streaming not only created a vibrant atmosphere but also facilitated online bullet comment exchanges. Through various programs, the broadcast showcased the enthusiasm and festive spirit of Hunan residents while presenting folk customs from across the province, generating cultural resonance among local audiences and offering cultural insights to television and online viewers nationwide.

In today's fiercely competitive new media landscape, strength determines competitiveness. The Hunan TV Spring Gala's ability to attract large audiences primarily stems from its comprehensive capabilities: timely adoption and application of new media, continuous innovation, and keeping abreast of industry developments—all of which positively impact platform growth. Furthermore, timeliness and freshness are crucial for the media industry. Maintaining a sense of novelty during live broadcasts places immense pressure on production staff. When unexpected issues inevitably arise, the ability to respond promptly and manage crises represents a new challenge for personnel.

Content remains paramount for television cultural galas, followed by aesthetic appeal and entertainment value. Entertainment is essential for driving the overall atmosphere. Given the real-time nature of online broadcasting, the viewing experience differs significantly from attending in person. Media platforms must therefore engage viewers' emotions and capture their attention through dynamic pacing that resonates with audiences, elevating the gala's atmosphere to its climax.

A common challenge involves coordination between directors and camera operators. While performers themselves may be captivating, broadcast shots sometimes fail to capture the most compelling visuals or suffer from awkward transitions, resulting in poor visual effects. Careful consideration of shot transitions

during rehearsals is therefore essential.

Both online and offline audiences watch these programs, with each segment uploaded to platforms individually after broadcast, providing greater convenience for fans. Consequently, post-broadcast click rates for individual segments serve as valuable data for future gala planning, offering more direct insight into program quality and value while enabling production teams to gain additional experience.

3. Personalized Live Broadcasting of Cultural Galas

A successful gala requires immense effort. While each event has unique characteristics, homogenization remains a serious issue. Spring Festival Gala formats across various networks are remarkably consistent. Although maintaining tradition is valuable, personalized innovation is necessary to highlight distinctive features within conventional frameworks.

In recent years, cultural galas have continuously improved their performance forms and explored new broadcasting methods, evolving from recorded broadcasts to today's multi-camera live streaming. After years of experimentation, stage effects have been showcased with stunning results, attracting millions of viewers and achieving increasingly successful outcomes.

Stage innovation is crucial. Elevated stages typically serve purely as aesthetic elements, and while they enhance stage quality, they often result in rigid, unnatural performer movements. In this Hunan TV Spring Gala, however, the elevated LED stage was integrated with the performance content itself, enhancing program integrity and achieving effects impossible through backup dancers or props alone, resulting in smoother presentations. Coordinated movements with the elevated stage added interest and represented an innovative approach to performance, enabling more natural blocking and more engaging content that improved overall program integrity.

Personalized scene design constitutes a vital component of atmosphere creation. Without appropriate scene setting, programs fail to achieve desired emotional impact, diminishing overall quality and leaving both live and online audiences with suboptimal experiences. For musical performances, stage design should accentuate the intended mood. For example, the group wedding segment in the Hunan TV Spring Gala used romantic ambiance paired with white scenery to convey the sanctity of collective matrimony. Simply using white spotlights and accompaniment with performers following predetermined sequences would have been insufficient for emotional immersion and would have significantly compromised the broadcast's impact.

Actor selection requires careful consideration by directors in conjunction with the live broadcast format. A cultural gala's content must align with its theme, with details adjusted accordingly to achieve optimal broadcast results. Additionally, hosts play a critical role in successful gala live broadcasting. During

filming, hosts control the overall situation, drive atmosphere, and connect audiences with the event—making their selection directly related to the gala’s success. Of course, effective hosting depends on a complete, logically coherent script. Only with sound logic can the entire gala maintain tight pacing and complete its live broadcast successfully. This demonstrates how the development of live broadcasting influences the media industry: continuous improvement in live streaming drives new developments in media while stimulating novel operational forms that deliver unique audiovisual experiences to the public.

4. Gala Live Broadcasting in the Post-Pandemic Era

The post-pandemic era does not mean the complete disappearance of the virus and a return to pre-pandemic normalcy. Rather, it refers to a period of intermittent outbreaks with periodic small-scale resurgences that profoundly impact social life across multiple dimensions. Although domestic outbreaks are currently under control through national efforts, pandemic prevention remains necessary. Consequently, large-scale cultural galas will increasingly adopt live broadcasting formats.

Live streaming not only stimulates greater audience desire to watch but also effectively reduces population movement and gathering. In the post-pandemic era, this format can increase online audience entertainment while generating more benefits for sponsors and facilitating pandemic prevention efforts—a model worth continuing.

With societal development, broadcast forms for large-scale cultural galas will become increasingly diversified, with online live streaming becoming more common and mature. Therefore, the key challenge for gala live broadcasting is delivering optimal audience experience. Diversified program formats create powerful atmosphere and engage emotions among both live and remote audiences. Moreover, focusing content from broad themes to specific details makes it more relatable, eliminating audience alienation and facilitating emotional resonance.

References

- [1] Liu Jun. A Brief Discussion on Theme Planning for Large-Scale TV Cultural Galas: Taking *2020 New Year Concert—Setting Sail in the Greater Bay Area* as an Example[J]. *TV Research*, 2020(5): 89-90.
- [2] Lan Tian. Hunan TV’s *2019 Mid-Autumn Night*: A New Exploration in Film-Style Immersive TV Cultural Galas[J]. *Science and Technology Communication*, 2020(4): 76-79.
- [3] Zhou Zhihong. Planning and Directing TV Cultural Galas Under New Circumstances[J]. *Media Forum*, 2018(23): 105.
- [4] Wang Zhuli. How Should Education Transform in the Post-Pandemic Era?[J]. *E-Education Research*, 2020(4): 13-20.

- [5] Hu Zhifeng, Chen Yin. Content Innovation in Chinese TV Arts and the Construction of a World-Class New Mainstream Media[J]. TV Research, 2020(1): 10-13.
- [6] Peng Zhenyu. On the Personalized Creation and Planning Awareness of TV Arts Directors[J]. Media Forum, 2020(13): 65-67.
- [7] Chen Chen. Discussion on the Application of Big Data and Integrated Media Technology in Broadcasting[J]. China Media Technology, 2020(12): 78-79.
- [8] Su Zhe, Dong Zhongqiu. Research on the Dilemma and Transformation of Traditional TV Media in the New Media Era[J]. China Media Technology, 2021(4): 44-45.

Author Profile: Li Qingfei (1999-), female, from Shijiazhuang, Hebei. Research focus: radio and television arts.

(Responsible Editor: Li Jing)

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

Source: ChinaXiv –Machine translation. Verify with original.