

## Deep Media Convergence: Practical Requirements for All-media Talent and Cultivation Pathways (Postprint)

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### Abstract

As media convergence continues to deepen, society's demand for high-quality applied all-media talents is increasing day by day, urgently requiring higher education institutions to intensify their efforts in cultivating all-media talents to adapt to the overarching trend of deep media convergence development. Based on this, this article analyzes issues including the concept of all-media talents and the essential competencies they must possess, the demand for all-media talents arising from the development of media convergence, and the challenges faced by local universities in cultivating all-media talents. Building upon this analysis, and taking the Converged Media College of Sichuan University of Media and Communications as a case study, it proposes fundamental pathways for cultivating all-media talents, such as optimizing the talent cultivation curriculum system, creating simulation-based teaching platforms, implementing multi-course integrated practical training, establishing diversified on-campus communication media practice platforms, conducting real-scenario live streaming practical teaching, and expanding internship bases at external media institutions, thereby meeting society's demand for all-media talents.

### Full Text

## Media Deep Convergence: Real-World Demand and Cultivation Pathways for Omnimedia Talent

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**Abstract:** As media convergence advances in depth, society's demand for high-quality applied omnimedia talent grows daily, urgently requiring universities to

intensify omnimedia talent cultivation to adapt to this major trend. This paper analyzes the concept of omnimedia talent and its essential competencies, the demands of media convergence development for such talent, and the challenges facing local universities in cultivating omnimedia talent. Building upon this analysis and taking the Converged Media College of Sichuan University of Media and Communications as a case study, the paper proposes fundamental pathways for cultivating omnimedia talent: optimizing talent cultivation curriculum systems, creating simulation-based teaching platforms, implementing multi-course integrated practical training, establishing diverse on-campus media practice platforms, conducting real-scenario live streaming practice teaching, and expanding off-campus media internship bases to meet societal demand for omnimedia talent.

**Keywords:** media deep convergence; omnimedia talent; local universities; talent cultivation pathways; simulation-based practice

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Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has profoundly grasped the trends of the times and informatization, making a series of major decisions and deployments to promote the integrated development of traditional and emerging media, elevating media convergence to a national strategic priority. On June 30, 2020, the 14th meeting of the Central Committee for Comprehensively Deepening Reform reviewed and adopted the “Guiding Opinions on Accelerating the Deep Integrated Development of Media,” a programmatic document guiding China’s media convergence development and the latest strategic deployment proposed by the Party Central Committee at a time of “profound changes unseen in a century.” On November 3, 2020, the “Proposal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China for Formulating the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035” made important arrangements for deep media integration, omnimedia communication, and county-level media convergence center construction, incorporating media convergence into the 14th Five-Year Plan, fully demonstrating the Party Central Committee’s high regard for deep media convergence.

Since 2014, media convergence has unfolded vigorously across the nation. By the end of 2020, media convergence development had achieved remarkable results and entered a new phase of comprehensive efforts and systematic construction.

The core competitiveness of media lies in talent, and talent is also the key to achieving integrated development. As media convergence advances in depth, demand for new media talent continues to grow across regions, with talent scarcity becoming increasingly prominent. The Party Central Committee's "Guiding Opinions on Accelerating the Deep Integrated Development of Media" explicitly calls for vigorously cultivating omnimedia talent and optimizing talent team structure. Local universities, as cradles of talent cultivation, must combine their own characteristics to undertake the work of cultivating and delivering reserve talent for the media industry. Based on this, this paper examines how local universities can cultivate omnimedia talent equipped with modern communication skills against the backdrop of deep media convergence development, drawing on the teaching practices of the Converged Media College of Sichuan University of Media and Communications.

Currently, the initial construction of media convergence centers in Sichuan Province has been completed, with the first-phase tasks of media convergence preliminarily finished and deep media convergence at the starting stage of its second major development. By the end of 2020, Sichuan's 21 prefecture-level city and autonomous prefecture radio and television stations had established omnimedia centers while retaining their radio and television program production departments. All 183 county-level radio and television stations had transformed into media convergence centers, completing platform construction, institutional setup, staffing allocation, process reengineering, and management activation, entering normal operation. Media convergence organizations across the region have generally launched news communication businesses across television, websites, Weibo, WeChat, and App clients, forming a communication matrix with diverse carriers, rich channels, and extensive coverage. Some media convergence centers have actively attempted "media + government + commerce + services" initiatives beyond their basic functions of news information product production and release. However, after some county-level "media convergence centers" were inaugurated, they simply bundled together television, newspapers, websites, Weibo, and WeChat public accounts. Although they unified their communication messaging under the banner of "one-time collection, multiple generation, and diversified dissemination," the communication channels remained unchanged, and content expression forms did not adapt to the different characteristics of various communication platforms.

Faced with the mobile internet era, media convergence represents the general trend, but it is not simply a matter of placing traditional media content on the internet. The talent needed for current media convergence development is not just personnel who understand and can operate new media, but professionals who can master the characteristics and patterns of various media types to enhance information reach and improve content conversion rates. Today, the main problems facing the development of media convergence centers across regions are backward talent concepts, unreasonable talent structures, and severe shortages of omnimedia talent, particularly technical personnel who understand algorithms and programming. Due to this talent gap, media organizations

struggle to independently develop attractive mobile information products. For instance, when handling “news + government affairs,” where are the boundaries for mainstream media in government affairs processing? When handling “news + commerce,” where are the projects and profit points? These are all gaps for traditional media personnel. Therefore, only through transformation and upgrading can traditional media personnel adapt to the needs of media convergence development. According to incomplete statistics, Sichuan Province’s county-level media convergence centers alone urgently need approximately 5,400 people, while prefecture-level city and autonomous prefecture radio and television station-affiliated media convergence centers need about 1,000 people. If we include talent demand from media convergence centers and new media institutions nationwide, the number would be in the tens of thousands. Consequently, as media convergence develops rapidly across regions, the demand for high-quality applied omnimedia talent is imminent.

## 1. Analysis of Talent Demand Trends in Media Organizations

Experts point out that so-called omnimedia talent refers to specialized personnel with internet thinking, possessing capabilities in omnimedia creativity, production, communication, operation, and management, competent in omnimedia process and platform construction, and omnimedia business format and ecological development. Omnimedia talent is hierarchical, needed from the grassroots to the top levels. This paper refers to grassroots omnimedia talent, primarily personnel engaged in frontline positions such as reporters, editors, technicians, and operators. Such talent can utilize omnimedia means, follow media convergence business processes, produce omnimedia products, release them on omnimedia platforms, integrate online and offline businesses, actively connect related communication formats, and thereby maximize communication effectiveness.

## 2. Essential Competencies for Omnimedia Talent

**2.1 Possessing Solid Political Qualities** Journalism has strong political characteristics and distinct ideological features. Therefore, as new media professionals, they must resolutely support the leadership of the Communist Party of China, uphold correct political positions, adhere to socialist core values, uphold the Party spirit principle of journalism, possess good journalistic professional ethics and professional spirit, and have the conscious awareness to disseminate mainstream values and promote excellent Chinese culture. Only with solid political qualities can they ensure the provision of converged media products with influence, communication power, and credibility for users.

**2.2 Possessing Professional Convergence Thinking Ability** Media personnel must enhance program integration capabilities. Therefore, they must strengthen convergence thinking awareness, establish deep convergence development concepts, and possess abilities in news interviewing and network information collection, photography and audiovisual shooting, graphic editing and

audiovisual editing and converged media editing, professional writing and applied writing, creative planning, oral expression and story narration, and the ability to engage in professional communication on converged media platforms. They must master theoretical knowledge in communication, journalism, radio and television studies, network and new media theory, advertising, journalism communication ethics and regulations; possess good humanistic literacy, rigorous scientific spirit, and high-level aesthetic ability.

**2.4 Possessing Strong Innovation Capability** Omnimedia talent should have the ability to discover, propose, analyze, and solve problems in the field of communication media; be able to engage in innovative activities with independent thinking and innovative exploration spirit; and be able to effectively carry out teamwork. They should be familiar with new changes and developments in the field of journalism and communication.

### **3. Challenges Facing Omnimedia Talent Cultivation in Local Universities**

As media convergence continues to advance, the media industry is undergoing profound transformation. The omnimedia communication ecology based on the media convergence background is rapidly changing the strategic landscape and development goals of the media industry, driving changes in media production content positioning, work processes, and division of labor relationships. The popularization and application of information technology have greatly changed traditional social production and lifestyles, spawning numerous new data communication channels. Today, deep media convergence development has ushered in major changes in the media field, leading journalism and communication toward higher and newer directions. The key to deep media convergence development is product-centric resource reorganization, with the core being enhancing media communication power and influence through new converged media products. Therefore, as news communication channels, forms, and content have undergone earth-shaking changes, local universities, as important bases for cultivating media talent, should consider how to cultivate high-quality journalism and communication talent that adapts to media convergence development trends and meets societal and industry needs—this is a major issue urgently needing resolution in journalism and communication education.

In recent years, local universities have never stopped exploring and reforming communication talent cultivation models, but the results have been unsatisfactory. Some universities have inadequate understanding of the changing media convergence ecological environment, causing their teaching, especially practical teaching, to fall behind the demands of media convergence for omnimedia talent. Some universities suffer from outdated teaching concepts, backward classroom teaching methods, some teachers lacking media work experience, curricula that do not match societal needs, practical teaching systems disconnected from media demands, incomplete teaching quality assessment and evaluation systems, and

journalism education talent cultivation methods and teaching content detached from market needs. These issues directly affect local universities' cultivation of new communication talent and, in the long run, make it difficult to achieve sustainable, high-quality development in cultivating new applied talent.

#### 4. Paths for Local Universities to Cultivate Omnimedia Talent

As deep media convergence develops, news content production processes, communication and operation systems, and management concepts have undergone disruptive changes. These changes have not only transformed traditional news reporting concepts, news content forms, and news management concepts and practices, but also placed higher demands on media talent cultivation in local universities. Therefore, local universities must adapt to deep media convergence development trends, explore and reform corresponding talent cultivation models and pathways, and cultivate applied omnimedia operation talent who can comprehensively utilize multiple media and terminals to display communication content around the clock, in all directions, and three-dimensionally, thereby changing the severe shortage situation of omnimedia talent.

In October 2018, Sichuan University of Media and Communications took the lead in renaming its Journalism and Communication College to the Converged Media College, becoming the first secondary college in China named after “converged media.” Facing the current situation of drastic changes in the communication environment and talent demand, the college seized the opportunity to actively advance the integration and innovation of theory and practice. Through unremitting efforts, the college's four undergraduate majors—Radio and Television Studies, Journalism, Network and New Media, and Digital Publishing—promptly revised and improved their talent cultivation programs, establishing the college's talent cultivation goal: to cultivate high-quality omnimedia talent with high political quality and social responsibility, broad omnimedia vision, and multiple capabilities including interviewing, writing, photography, recording, editing, and network skills application to meet societal demand for omnimedia talent. In this regard, the college has taken the lead nationally in media convergence teaching practice and talent cultivation, making cutting-edge explorations for local universities cultivating omnimedia talent in the context of media convergence. Based on this talent cultivation goal, we propose the following fundamental ideas and pathways.

**4.1 Optimizing the Talent Cultivation Curriculum System** Applied omnimedia talent must systematically master basic communication theories, possess network and new media professional literacy, master new communication skills, be adept at using multiple media means for integrated communication, be competent in news gathering and editing for traditional media, and be able to create new media products for “two micros, one end, and one TikTok” (Weibo, WeChat, client apps, and Douyin). Simultaneously, as omnimedia talent, they should understand both content and technology, news and social

media, management and planning. Therefore, local universities should further optimize and enrich talent cultivation programs, improve teaching content according to talent cultivation goals and current industry demands, emphasize both theory and skills, and integrate, add, or delete existing courses in a targeted manner so that students can truly learn useful, applicable, and practical professional knowledge in the classroom. Taking the Converged Media College of Sichuan University of Media and Communications as an example, the college adheres to the principle of “broad caliber, solid foundation, strong capability, and emphasis on practice,” establishes new talent cultivation concepts, and adjusts and optimizes course content according to practical needs: optimizing four course modules of “theoretical foundation,” “comprehensive quality,” “professional capability,” and “practice and innovation capability”; enriching and perfecting seven major professional capabilities that students must possess under converged media communication conditions—interviewing and data collection, photography and videography, audiovisual editing and converged media product editing, professional writing and applied writing, creative planning, storytelling and oral expression, and engaging in communication work on converged media platforms; strengthening innovation and entrepreneurship courses and practical training teaching; and adding new media and media convergence professional courses including “Converged Journalism,” “Web Design and Production,” “Data News Visualization,” “Converged Media Operation Practice,” “Converged Media Community Management,” and “Converged Media Operation Practice,” initially constructing a talent cultivation curriculum system that can meet current media development needs.

**4.2 Creating Simulation-Based Practical Teaching Platforms** The ability to quickly transform learned knowledge into hands-on capability and practical skills is a necessary condition for university students entering the workplace and a concrete manifestation of graduates’ competitiveness. Mature converged media institutions prefer to hire talent who can transform theory into practice or have actual work experience and can work independently. Therefore, local universities should place practical teaching on an equal footing with theoretical teaching, closely centering on quality improvement and capability development to construct a “platform + practice” teaching model, building various simulation-based practical teaching platforms to provide students with comprehensive practical training opportunities and enhance their practical and hands-on abilities. In recent years, Sichuan University of Media and Communications has systematically added practical teaching equipment. On the basis of existing high-end teaching and research facilities such as the “Internet Application Research Laboratory,” “Panasonic Ultra HD 4K Studio Experimental Classroom,” and “Audio-Visual Program R&D Laboratory,” the university invested over 12 million yuan in 2018 to newly build the nationally first-class “Chuanchuan Cloud · Converged Media Experimental Teaching Center” for practical teaching. This allows students to uniformly produce news information products on converged media platforms, especially simulated county-level converged media platforms,

and implement releases on various terminals with “two micros, one end, and one TikTok” as the main carriers. They can also engage in public opinion big data processing, enhancing students’ ability to engage in multiple types of work and their capacity to transform theory into practice, thereby better adapting to the ever-changing media convergence era.

**4.3 Implementing Multi-Course Integrated Practical Training** Practical teaching is a crucial link in cultivating and enhancing students’ practical and innovative abilities. Therefore, local universities should strengthen practical teaching and guide students to participate in practical teaching activities. To effectively enhance students’ practical and innovative abilities, the Converged Media College has carried out the “Focus on Langzhong · Large-Scale Simulation Multi-Course Integrated Practical Teaching” activity, providing students with a new model for enhancing professional and practical abilities under simulated conditions. This activity integrates course content from “Television Camera,” “Non-linear Editing,” “News Interviewing,” “Omnimedia Writing,” and “Feature Film Creation” for simulation training. Conducted in the second semester of the first year, each training session lasts five days with over 500 participating students and more than 10 professional teachers and teaching management staff. Teachers and students carry over 100 HD cameras or digital cameras, forming shooting groups of 5-7 people. Using the thousand-year-old city of Langzhong as the shooting environment, they seek out good characters and stories in the ancient city. Starting from research and topic selection, each student personally practices every link of the news reporting process until the work is successfully completed. While completing one television news piece or three Weibo/WeChat posts, each group must also complete a 5-minute feature or 5-minute artistic or documentary audio-visual work according to certain artistic standards. The works are counted proportionally in course grades. Through practice, students effectively apply classroom knowledge to interviewing, reporting, shooting, and production, transforming innovative thinking into concrete gathering, editing, and broadcasting practice, enabling students to initially possess the ability to transform learned professional skills into actual work capabilities in simulated scenarios.

**4.4 Establishing Diversified On-Campus Media Practice Platforms** Journalism and communication majors are practice-oriented disciplines, so the construction of practice platforms is crucial for students. To provide students with extracurricular practice conditions, universities should establish official Weibo, WeChat, campus radio, campus television, and other communication media within the school, providing students with diversified practice platforms. This not only helps break boundaries between experimental courses but also enables students’ communication abilities to be truly enhanced in diversified practice platforms. For example, the Converged Media College of Sichuan University of Media and Communications has established the Chenguang News Channel on campus, which has departments including news, social education,

commentary, broadcasting, and recording. In the operation of the news channel, except for two teachers serving as channel directors responsible for guidance, all work—including planning, shooting, editing, operation, and management—is specifically implemented by students. Additionally, the college operates official websites, Weibo, WeChat, and other new media, providing students with on-line practice platforms. Due to the variety of communication media practice teaching platforms on campus, students can obtain practice opportunities both online and offline, effectively enhancing their practical abilities.

**4.5 Conducting Real-Scenario Live Streaming Practice Teaching** To enhance students' professional skills, local universities should optimize teaching methods, implementing teaching methods such as “on-site situational teaching,” “integrated theory-practice teaching,” and “flipped classroom teaching,” and promoting the application of the five-in-one three-dimensional teaching method of “theory,” “writing,” “expression,” “observation,” and “creation,” implementing project-based teaching to enhance students' ability to effectively apply theoretical knowledge to practice and strengthen their teamwork capabilities. In recent years, the Converged Media College of Sichuan University of Media and Communications has organized a series of real-scenario live streaming practice teaching activities based on projects. For example, in May 2019, the Converged Media College organized students to travel to Guangyuan to carry out a Three Kingdoms culture tourism converged media promotion activity. During the activity, students fully utilized the “Chuanchuan Cloud · Converged Media Experimental Teaching Center” converged media platform to conduct three-dimensional synchronized online broadcasting of Three Kingdoms culture, achieving converged media promotion through graphics, images, and video live streaming, further pushing the Guangyuan Three Kingdoms culture tourism project to the whole country. This was not only a real-scenario live streaming practice teaching activity but also an innovative practical activity, highly praised by cooperating units.

**4.6 Expanding Off-Campus Media Internship Bases** Local universities should cooperate hand-in-hand with media organizations, learning from each other' s strengths to form positive interactions and constructing a production-study-research linkage mechanism to provide students with more practice platforms, thereby cultivating high-quality applied omnimedia talent with strong practical abilities to meet the needs of deep media convergence development. To this end, universities can utilize off-campus media to arrange students in batches for rotating internships at radio and television stations, video websites, new media companies, and cultural media companies, providing students with workplace practice opportunities and laying a solid foundation for their smooth entry into and quick adaptation to the workplace. Strengthening cooperation with various social media institutions not only provides students with workplace practice opportunities but also provides valuable professional talent for local media organizations, achieving multi-win outcomes. For example, the Converged

Media College of Sichuan University of Media and Communications has signed agreements with over 20 radio and television stations, media convergence centers, and cultural media companies to jointly build internship bases, regularly sending students for professional practice and graduation internships. Additionally, local universities should strengthen communication with local media, establish university-media alliances taking advantage of industry transformation and upgrading opportunities, and allow students to participate through signed cooperation projects to effectively improve their skill levels and innovation capabilities.

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

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