

Exploring Academic Journal Publishing and Dissemination Models under Multimedia Convergence: Withdrawn Postprint

Authors: Wang Tiejun

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Abstract

Currently, academic journals are facing significant transformations, as multimedia convergence has exerted a profound impact upon them. Regarding publishing, the dual options of print and internet formats have rendered models more diversified, thus warranting greater emphasis on the comprehensive expansion of academic journal content. Concerning the communication environment, academic journals should proactively adapt to reading habits under the current internet paradigm and make timely self-adjustments, leveraging big data to achieve personalized customization of journal content and realize precise, effective dissemination. Future academic journals should be grounded in the advantages of the internet and big data, utilizing multimedia convergence to forge targeted academic communities, thereby achieving the objectives of academic resource sharing and resource conservation.

Full Text

Preamble

Exploring Publishing and Communication Models for Academic Journals from a Multimedia Convergence Perspective

(Reader Publishing & Media Co., Ltd., Lanzhou, Gansu 730000)

Abstract: Academic journals today face significant transformation, with multimedia convergence exerting profound influence. In terms of publishing, the availability of both print and internet formats has diversified models, necessitating comprehensive expansion of journal content. In the communication environment, academic journals should proactively adapt to reading habits shaped by the internet, make timely self-adjustments, leverage big data to achieve personalized content customization, and enable precise and effective dissemination. Future academic journals should capitalize on the advantages of the internet and

big data to build targeted academic communities through multimedia convergence, thereby achieving academic resource sharing and resource conservation.

Keywords: Academic journals; Multimedia convergence; Publishing and communication; Model exploration; Innovation and reform

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Traditional academic journals were entirely dependent on print publications, with physical circulation forming people's initial impression of scholarly periodicals. However, as information technology has advanced and new media forms have emerged continuously, the proliferation of smartphones and portable laptops has provided new pathways for journal presentation, freeing academic journals from the constraints of print and enabling greater flexibility. Particularly in an era when various websites and social media platforms like Weibo and WeChat public accounts continue to emerge, people's reading habits have changed significantly, with fragmented reading becoming a primary form of consumption. Yet academic articles are typically characterized by specialized content, lengthy formats, and dense text, demanding high professional competence from readers and limiting their audience. For a long time, their dissemination modes have been restricted. In this transformative era, how to pioneer new publishing and communication pathways from a multimedia convergence perspective has become a critical issue for many academic journal practitioners. Given the unique characteristics of China's academic journals, research on their transformation and innovation has been increasing. Furthermore, the 19th National Congress report explicitly stated that China's principal contradiction has transformed into the gap between the people's ever-growing needs for a better life and unbalanced and inadequate development. In the publishing domain, this manifests as the contradiction between people's growing demands for reading academic articles and the current development level of academic journals. Based on the two dimensions of communication and publishing, this paper investigates the current state of academic journal publishing, hoping to provide reference and guidance.

1.1 From Text to Comprehensive Publishing Models

Since their inception, printing has been crucial for journal dissemination, and for rigorous academic journals, it has been the sole means of large-scale circulation. A traditional academic paper comprises sections such as abstracts, discussions, conclusions, and analyses, which were printed on paper in text and

chart formats according to established layouts. To underscore the seriousness of academic journals, China has typically employed black-and-white printing to ensure optimal visual clarity. In the new era, however, the popularization of the internet and mobile terminals has led an increasing number of academic journals worldwide to prioritize website publication, including detailed experimental methods, procedures, and raw data. With continuous development, even author introduction videos have appeared on websites, with rich images and video materials breaking the stereotypical seriousness of traditional academic journals and enhancing their appeal and readability. Meanwhile, website indexing functions have greatly facilitated journal retrieval. Chinese enterprises have also begun exploring value-added services for academic journals, attaching QR codes at specific locations in journals. Interested readers can scan these codes to access more paper-related materials or even contact the authors. This approach not only enriches publication formats but also provides a better platform for academic inquiry, making the research process more open and transparent. However, due to the developmental lag of many academic journals, this model, despite its numerous benefits, has not been effectively promoted. Some authors remain unaware of such formats, rendering QR code content hollow and defeating its original purpose.

1.2 From Print to Internet Journals

Due to their physical nature, print journals are periodic, typically monthly, bimonthly, or semimonthly, with some even quarterly or semiannual. Each academic journal follows its own publication schedule, creating hectic periods for editors before each issue. While regular publication schedules allow editors to organize their work systematically, page limitations restrict article capacity, necessitating cuts to some submissions. Although rigorous, this publication method suffers from long cycles and insufficient timeliness. Research shows that some Chinese core journals have publication cycles of approximately one year, causing some articles to lose relevance by the time they are published. With internet popularization, academic journals no longer content themselves with traditional publishing formats. While retaining print journals, they have begun emphasizing online journal development, creating their own portals to achieve paperless operations for peer review, finalization, and publication. Some journals have even made their print journal PDFs openly accessible online. However, the online journals discussed here extend far beyond mere PDF versions of print journals. Online journals should carry the same publication authority as print journals without being constrained by print limitations. Articles can be published immediately after peer review and editing, without waiting for other articles to be bundled together. Many online journals have already obtained internet serial publication numbers equivalent in authority to print publications, though their numbers remain limited, preventing true integration with print journals. Currently, CNKI has introduced single-article priority publishing rights for some journals, but due to editors' adherence to traditional publishing models, this has not been widely promoted or valued, with implementation limited to pre-

print online release. Since some universities only recognize print journals for professional title evaluation, the role of online publishing remains weak. Internet technology has provided the foundational conditions for academic journal transformation, but actual innovation requires conceptual shifts among staff to truly meet developmental needs.

2.1 Transformation of Reading Patterns in the Internet Era

The emergence of various mobile terminals has permeated daily life like bamboo shoots after rain, transforming reading habits. In the past, portal websites attracted readers with their comprehensive coverage, but years later, Weibo's 140-character limit swept through, making fragmented information acquisition increasingly popular. Subsequently, WeChat balanced social and information needs, with private friend circles enabling more targeted demand capture. Meanwhile, some individuals have recognized the negative impacts of fragmentation and reduced their engagement. To capture users, new clients must understand their real needs and reading habits, providing targeted professional knowledge services. As primary media for disseminating academic viewpoints, academic journals must keep pace with the times by establishing their own online journals to effectively spread academic perspectives and expand influence. However, numerous problems have emerged during this exploration process requiring follow-up solutions. For instance, many journals have created public WeChat accounts to publish journal tables of contents or article content, using concise text with engaging images, voice commentary, or music to satisfy public entertainment demands while achieving academic dissemination. The persistent issue is that many academic journals merely adapt their articles to fit public account publishing characteristics without truly understanding the communication features of these platforms. Moreover, public account operation requires substantial human, material, and financial resources that many academic journals lack, making follow-up work difficult to sustain. Whether academic journal editors can fully grasp internet-era reading patterns and adapt their working methods accordingly has become a crucial factor determining whether journals can rejuvenate themselves.

2.2 Personalized Customization Models Based on Big Data

In the big data era, increasing media emphasize the importance of customization, collecting user browsing information to understand preferences and achieve precise delivery of topics of interest, enabling users to continuously acquire knowledge in specific fields effortlessly. The emergence of big data and algorithms represents not only a technological rise but also a new way of thinking. For example, searching for a product on Taobao results in continuous push notifications for similar products during subsequent browsing; searching for a TV show on a video platform leads to continuous recommendations for related content based on your preferences, anticipating your needs without requiring active selection. Therefore, single print media publishing cannot meet users' precise

and massive information demands in the digital publishing era. Simultaneously, the big data environment features “fragmented” information dissemination—presenting information resources to users in various “fragmented” forms through text, graphics, images, sound, and other formats to satisfy “fragmented” reading needs. Correspondingly, modern information dissemination has cultivated “fragmented” reading habits among users. However, academic journal articles are lengthy, requiring high concentration and extended time periods for complete reading, which conflicts with users’ fragmented reading habits. This requires academic journals, when planning topics and editing content, to precisely extract points of reader interest while publishing complete research content, aligning with modern information dissemination’s “fragmented” characteristics and user habits. Academic journals can also adopt this model to classify users and build targeted communication systems based on backend browsing data.

2.3 Intensive Development of Journals Under Multimedia Convergence

In the media convergence context, single journals increasingly struggle to maintain authority in the international academic journal industry, facing significant elimination risks. Under China’s press and publication system reform requirements to “optimize and strengthen a batch, integrate and reorganize a batch, and eliminate and withdraw a batch,” intensive and scaled operations have become new development directions for China’s academic journal industry. For example, cooperation between academic journals and large databases such as Beijing Wanfang Data Co., Ltd. has driven journal digital transformation and laid foundations for media convergence development. The primary challenge for current journal intensive development lies in significant differences in management and industry influence among various academic journals. Journals must comprehensively consider their own characteristics, realistic foundations, and multimedia era development factors to achieve intensive operations categorically and step-by-step for better results. Additionally, relevant authorities should actively promote editorial quality reforms, integrate journal resources, and provide financial and human resource support to help academic journals develop toward multimedia convergence, shifting from single journal publishing to intensive and diversified business directions.

2.4 Upholding Academic Foundations Amidst Era Development

Despite evolving content dissemination formats, the core function of academic journals remains publishing disciplinary research findings and disseminating scientific research trends. Therefore, selecting quality manuscripts and enhancing academic authority remains the essence of academic journals. Faster and better dissemination of innovative and scientifically valuable academic information to the public to serve and promote disciplinary development constitutes the mission of academic journals. To keep pace with research trends, academic

journals should actively connect and interact with experts in vertical 细分领域, building disciplinary expert databases and forming healthy expert ecosystems using digital means, positioning themselves at disciplinary frontiers to seek business breakthroughs. Accessing the latest academic information and publishing academic papers are common needs for researchers, while seeking new technologies and related talent represents enterprise needs. Academic journals can serve as connection points between researchers and enterprises, facilitating the translation of research achievements into outputs, transforming from simple science progress reporting to in-depth technology transformation services.

2.5 Proactively Building Digital Platforms in the New Media Era

In the new media era, traditional academic journal publishing methods can no longer adapt to the continuously evolving information communication landscape, making the establishment of academic journal digital publishing systems a common choice for many journals. When building online platforms, academic journal editorial departments should proactively participate in developing new media collection-editing-distribution systems. Independently developing academic publishing systems can better adapt to user habits and continuously optimize user experience. The core competitiveness of digital publishing platforms lies in their ability to provide massive and high-quality information resources, forming resource aggregation power that helps academic journal authority achieve qualitative leaps. Therefore, occupying the strategic high ground of digital publishing and distribution holds significant meaning for academic journals to form irreplaceable competitive advantages. Furthermore, building digital publishing platforms can enhance interaction with users. Traditional academic journal distribution features unidirectional and delayed characteristics, making it difficult for editorial departments to obtain timely and direct reader feedback on journal content. With the new media era, users can discuss and provide feedback on academic journal content through multimedia platforms, placing higher demands on editorial staff's topic selection and editing capabilities while also providing opportunities to directly obtain reader opinions and suggestions. Academic journal editorial departments should utilize digital publishing platforms and other multimedia platforms to actively interact with users, establish user ecosystems, enhance reader stickiness, better grasp user needs, and improve journal quality.

The development of academic journals faces tremendous impact from era development while also encountering unprecedented opportunities, with publishing and communication models facing major transformations. Opportunities and risks coexist—only by seizing development opportunities, keeping pace with the times, and bravely taking the first step in innovative transformation and upgrading can academic journals thrive. Poor management, conservatism, and adherence to tradition will not only cause journals to miss the pace of development but also lead to their elimination due to backward communication methods. Every academic journal editor should clearly identify their challenges, face

them calmly, strive for greater development space, and promote innovation in academic journal publishing and communication models from a multimedia convergence perspective.

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Author Biography: Wang Tiejun (1973-), male, from Longxi, Gansu, Associate Editor. Research Direction: Journal Publishing.
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