

Postprint: Intrinsic Motivation-Oriented Construction of University Media Ecosystem

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Abstract

Given the civil aviation industry's distinctive features of strong political orientation, high internationalization, and close-knit teamwork, and focusing on the fundamental mission of moral education and talent cultivation in higher education institutions, this initiative adopts an all-staff, whole-process, and all-round education orientation. It establishes the construction of a media convergence center as the primary pathway for practical education, exploring and implementing a "1+5" work model. This model stimulates the intrinsic creative motivation of faculty and students throughout the reporting process, utilizes communication formats that are both popular and readily accepted by the academic community, fully exploits the potential of internal and external media matrices, thereby consolidating and elevating the creative capacities and ideological sophistication of faculty and students to achieve synchronized resonance in communication effects.

Full Text

Preamble

Building a University Media Ecosystem Oriented Towards Stimulating Intrinsic Motivation

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Abstract: In light of the civil aviation industry's distinctive characteristics—strong political orientation, high internationalization, and close-knit teamwork—this study centers on the fundamental task of moral education in universities. Guided by the principle of comprehensive education involving all personnel, throughout the entire process, and in all aspects, the construction of a media convergence center serves as the primary pathway for practical education. The paper explores the creation of a "1+5" operational model that stimulates the creative intrinsic motivation of faculty and students during the reporting process.

By adopting communication forms that resonate with and are readily embraced by the campus community, this approach fully leverages both internal and external media matrices to consolidate and expand the creative capacity and ideological sophistication of faculty and students, thereby achieving synchronized resonance in communication effects.

Keywords: industry-specific university; media convergence; media matrix; mechanism; practical education

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As social media ecosystems evolve, university public opinion arenas have also transformed. From the perspective of media stance, these can be divided into the “official university media public opinion field” (a rational discourse arena reflecting national, central, industry, educational, and institutional policies) and the “faculty-student self-media public opinion field” (a popular and emotional discourse arena arising from individual interests). “Winning over youth means winning the future.” As a crucial ideological front, universities must grasp the ideological dynamics of young faculty and students and guide their thinking effectively—this concerns the Party’s future, national stability, and industry prosperity. University Party Committee Propaganda Departments bear the mission of “holding high the banner, uniting the people, educating new generations, invigorating culture, and showcasing positive images.” As the supervisory body for campus mainstream media, the Propaganda Department should recognize the current trend in ideological communication that combines rationality with popularization and emotional appeal, construct a well-functioning campus media convergence center, take initiative in planning, build platforms, and achieve unification of the two public opinion fields through innovative communication methods.

The construction of a media convergence center should align with the “six coordinations” of propaganda and ideological work: coordinating ideological work, promoting the cultivation and practice of socialist core values, coordinating campus culture construction, coordinating news propaganda and public opinion guidance, coordinating online culture construction and management, and coordinating faculty ideological and political work. This integration consolidates routine tasks such as “news propaganda,” “cultural construction,” “theoretical study,” and “public opinion monitoring” into the broader framework of ideological work, thereby establishing a comprehensive propaganda structure.

1.1 The Inevitable Trend of University Media Convergence Center Construction

With the mobile-first strategy and the advent of the Web 3.0 era, self-media has gradually become mainstream. Under these new circumstances, the content, methods, channels, and carriers of ideological communication have undergone profound and dynamic changes. The democratization of communication power and the socialization of communication resources have shifted communicative force from the state to society, with an increasing number of people obtaining information through social media. The trend toward popularization in ideological communication has created a dilemma of channel failure for mainstream media. To rebuild credibility and influence and gain audience recognition, the only solution is to adjust traditional communication methods—shifting from monologic, self-centered communication to dialogic interactive exchange, and from one-way hard indoctrination to participatory, two-way soft indoctrination.[1]

1.2 Building an Ecosystem to Stimulate Faculty-Student Creative Drive

Faculty and students constitute the primary groups in university media convergence construction. They are not only recipients of media communication but also initiators, participants, disseminators, and commentators of news events, and even guides of public opinion and monitors of public sentiment. To effectively develop a university media convergence center, we must closely align with current media communication characteristics, clarify the internal connections between self-media public opinion fields and ideology, strengthen top-level design and agenda-setting, and simultaneously stimulate faculty-student creative intrinsic motivation during media operations. This approach transforms “enthusiasts” into energy sources for the official public opinion field, consolidates and expands faculty-student creative capacity and ideological sophistication, and produces targeted works oriented toward “effect” to trigger resonance, thereby achieving synchronized communication effects.

The “1+5” work model explored by Civil Aviation University of China revolves around the overarching goal of creating a synchronized-resonance media ecosystem. This is achieved through five key approaches: establishing an evaluation system as the foundation, building a platform as the vehicle, streamlining processes as the standard, forming a team as the guarantee, and creating a training system as the method. Through innovative operational mechanisms, this model stimulates faculty-student creative intrinsic motivation during reporting, employs communication forms that resonate with the campus community, fully leverages internal and external media matrices, and consolidates and expands creative capacity and ideological sophistication to achieve synchronized resonance effects.

2.1 Building the Foundation: Establishing a Comprehensive Media Convergence Reporting Evaluation System

While effective “central kitchen” content production ([Figure 1: see original paper]) constitutes only one component, the overall operation relies on participation from all units, faculty, and students. Therefore, a corresponding evaluation system must accompany the substantive construction of media convergence[3] ([Figure 2: see original paper]) to support a virtuous operational cycle.

As [Figure 2: see original paper] illustrates, a sound evaluation system forms the foundation for solid media convergence platform construction and should continuously improve the institutional mechanisms of the media convergence center.[4] For instance, the university has formulated the “Civil Aviation University of China News and Public Opinion Work Excellence Evaluation Management Measures” and the “Civil Aviation University of China News Work Remuneration Management Measures.” These measures recognize outstanding Party organizations and individuals in news and public opinion work, as well as excellent quarterly and annual works. Throughout implementation, the university has focused on the critical link of two-level management (university and college), strengthening the primary responsibility of grassroots Party committees (general branches) and enhancing the leadership of news media teams. Specifically, outstanding Party organizations in news and public opinion work must actively participate in and support news work, abide by relevant discipline, and organize news personnel to deeply explore the university’s achievements and characteristics in reform and development, with clear guidelines and implementation plans. The university has established robust, highly active news teams with relevant regulations and systems, conducting regular theoretical and professional studies. This approach enhances enthusiasm for topic planning and evaluates work quality based on timeliness, appropriateness, and effectiveness. Under the mobile-first requirement of media convergence, works are provided in diversified and three-dimensional forms.

2.2 Rebuilding the Media Convergence Platform: Expanding the Extension and Connotation of the Media Matrix

Matrix-style media development currently represents the optimal approach for expanding news and public opinion guidance effectiveness. Since 2016, Civil Aviation University of China has gradually explored campus media convergence paths, emphasizing top-level design and building new communication platforms. This has gradually formed a “11345” “newspaper-network-terminal-micro-screen” media management pattern while establishing regular cooperation with central and local media. Internally, the university has built a mainstream media matrix favored by faculty, students, and the public; externally, it has perfected a mainstream media matrix covering four dimensions: authoritative mainstream media, Chinese education media, Chinese civil aviation media, and Tianjin local media.

[Figure 1: see original paper] Content Production and Publication Flow of the “Central Kitchen” of Civil Aviation University of China Media Convergence Center

On this media matrix foundation, the university fully leverages the extension function of the media matrix to expand the influence of mainstream values. Through cooperation with Tianjin Channel of People’ s Daily Online and Tianjin Branch of Xinhua News Agency, Civil Aviation University of China combines brand building, professional services, and artificial intelligence applications with team training to jointly build a campus media convergence center. By “borrowing ships to sail the ocean,” the university actively integrates into national media reporting matrices, interacting with media platforms such as People’ s Daily, Xinhua News Agency, and People’ s Daily Online by opening accounts, providing high-quality content materials, and leveraging their powerful overseas publicity capabilities to tell CAUC stories effectively.

Based on different media attributes, multiple cultural innovation and entrepreneurship projects emerge during matrix product production. The Propaganda Department of Civil Aviation University of China established a “Cultural Media Innovation and Entrepreneurship Base” despite the university having no journalism or communication majors. The base centers on experiential guidance and orients toward output results, enabling teachers and students to grow together during project guidance. Starting from solving practical problems encountered in news reporting, they formulate and improve plans, jointly transforming from “enthusiasts” to energy sources. Due to the high integration of cultural media projects, the base has attracted many other projects at the same level within the university, achieving win-win cooperation and deriving new incubated projects. Over the past five years, the “Cultural Innovation Base” has derived nearly 50 innovation and entrepreneurship projects, including multiple Tianjin municipal-level projects such as “Three-Dimensional Design of Civil Aviation Knowledge and New Media Communication,” which was rated as an “Excellent Project” upon completion.

[Figure 3: see original paper] QR Code for Dynamic Model of “Civil Aviation University of China Media Convergence Center Construction Mechanism”

2.3 Standardizing the Editorial Process: Improving Reporting Quality and Standards

Employing new technologies, mechanisms, and models accelerates the pace of integrated development.[5] By optimizing software systems to achieve “one-time collection, multi-channel release,” workflows are simplified, efficiency is enhanced, and news and public opinion integration is improved. The university has built a media convergence management platform that opens business channels between secondary departments and the Propaganda Department, establishing a unified online business system, resource management system, control system, and media display platform. This realizes integrated news collection, editing,

and distribution, constructing a closed loop for campus news production.

Relying on the software system's review mechanism, the university manages monthly clue reporting, task distribution, work review, resource pool compilation, and data statistics. Heads of secondary departments participate throughout the process, forming a news and public opinion work mechanism where executive leaders take overall charge, division leaders handle specific responsibilities, and Party branch functional departments specialize in implementation. Focusing on quality and efficiency improvement, the university innovates forms and emphasizes relevance and timeliness to enhance agenda-setting capabilities. Rather than simply pursuing quantity, the university prioritizes proper timing, measurement, and effect. Reporting intensity is strengthened in talent cultivation, discipline construction, and scientific research, increasing proactivity and planning in news work and making the provision of quality news clues the closing point and summary of various tasks.

2.4 Building an All-Media Team: Coordinated Faculty-Student Communication

Breaking the inherent management model of propaganda teams, the university has expanded from the original faculty correspondent team and student journalist group to include Party branch secretaries, publicity committee members, new media responsible persons from secondary units, and online commentators, adopting team-based and product-based management approaches.

Under the guidance of Marxist journalism, team members serve as campus news disseminators, recorders, promoters, and watchdogs.[6] On the 30th of each month, secondary units report news clues for the following month. The News Center categorizes and aggregates topics based on media matrix needs, promoting effective resource integration throughout the processes of news collection, production, distribution, reception, and feedback. This facilitates shared integration of information content, technology applications, platform terminals, and talent teams. Training sessions are simultaneously conducted for topic discussion and task distribution. During media product formation, content continuously evolves and splits according to different media characteristics, coordinated with online commentary to comprehensively improve public opinion guidance capabilities.

During the pandemic, a collaborative virtual choir performance of “Tomorrow Will Be Better” between Civil Aviation University of China and Wuhan University was published on Xinhua News Agency, North Net, China Civil Aviation Net, and other platforms, achieving over 2 million views across the internet. Initiated by the university's media convergence center and guided by News Center faculty, the production involved the Student Journalist Group, University Choir, and official WeChat team. Following production, the work was promoted in three stages—preheating, initial release, and follow-up reporting—across four dimensions: central, local, industry, and campus media, in various forms.

Regarding creative individuals, the university respects intellectual property rights and encourages creators to use the unified “Media Convergence Center Logo” and author watermarks when producing images and videos. Sharing on social platforms such as WeChat Moments, Douyin, and Channels creates a fission effect, merging self-media and official public opinion fields.

2.5 Developing a Training System: Providing Targeted Guidance

Seizing opportunities presented by the pandemic, Civil Aviation University of China has accelerated the construction of online-offline concentric circles by adapting to trends and acting accordingly. The Propaganda Department’s News Center offers online training based on the “editorial process + new media capabilities” model. Training content, determined according to monthly news clue submissions, follows the process of “topic discussion—task decomposition—summary feedback,” integrating new media skills training in writing, photography, Vlog shooting and editing, new media editing, and hand-drawing. Faculty-student correspondents serve as lecture presenters, sharing participation experiences and insights.

In 2020, the university held over 60 online and offline training sessions covering topic discussion and manuscript analysis, improving training effectiveness through targeted guidance. During the pandemic, 34 faculty news volunteers were recruited, providing over 200 reporting materials. The anti-epidemic dance video “Faith,” planned by faculty correspondents and edited by media convergence center students, was recognized as an excellent case of Tianjin’s online cultural achievements.

Practice demonstrates that building a news and public opinion team is also a process of co-education between faculty and students. Through learning and innovation, both groups continuously improve and perfect themselves professionally, constructing a new pattern of “practical education.” In a synchronized-resonance media ecosystem, people are the key to effective university news and public opinion work. The quality of news teams directly affects work outcomes. Faculty and students are the two main subjects for improving campus news and public opinion effectiveness. Throughout the process of “public opinion guidance—sentiment monitoring—new round of public opinion guidance—sentiment monitoring…N rounds of guidance,” they must produce targeted media products that achieve public opinion guidance effects. This process enhances not only news professional capabilities but also news literacy, enabling them to become effective campus news disseminators, recorders, promoters, and watchdogs under the guidance of Marxist journalism.[6]

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

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