Postprint Media Communication Under New Connectivity Models in the 5G Era

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Abstract

The vigorous development of 5G technology has not only brought forth new technologies, but also presented opportunities and challenges for media communication. By demonstrating the new changes that 5G technology brings to information connection speed, information connection patterns, and the role of users in connections, this paper argues that 5G technology has introduced a completely new concept of "connection." Within this novel "connection" concept, 5G technology holds significant implications for traditional media. This paper contends that for traditional media to achieve a "corner overtaking" in information dissemination in the 5G era, it is essential to genuinely emphasize the forms of connection, attach importance to its own role in the regulation of information connections, and properly fulfill its function as a "mainstream media."

Full Text

Preamble

Media Communication under New Connection Modes in the 5G Era
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Abstract: The vigorous development of 5G technology has not only brought forth new technologies but also presented both opportunities and challenges for media communication. By examining the new changes that 5G technology brings to information connection speed, information connection modes, and the role of users in these connections, this paper argues that 5G technology introduces an entirely new concept of "connection." In this novel conceptual framework, 5G technology holds significant meaning for traditional media. To achieve a "curve overtaking" in information dissemination during the 5G era, traditional media must genuinely emphasize the forms of connection, recognize

their role in supervising information connections, and properly fulfill their function as "mainstream media."

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1. 5G Technology and a New Paradigm of "Connection"

In current media research, the application of 5G technology has become a prominent and urgent topic. Responding to the challenges of information dissemination in the 5G era represents a major test for both media researchers and practitioners. To address this challenge, we must first clarify the core characteristics of information dissemination in the 5G era. As some scholars have noted, "The epoch-making significance of 5G lies in bringing us into a new era where everything in the world can become a media carrier and achieve mutual information dissemination." [**?**] We fundamentally agree with this assessment, positing that the transformation of information dissemination and media functions brought about by this new "connection"paradigm constitutes the primary issue for media communication in the 5G era.

1.1 5G Technology and Transformations in Connection "Speed"

5G technology introduces a fundamentally new type of "connection" unlike anything seen in previous eras. This novelty first manifests in the transformation of connection speed. 5G technology signifies a radical "embedding" of information, potentially giving rise to an entirely new social form of ubiquitous connectivity. For media communication, this embedding and interconnectivity herald the arrival of a new media era. This is because the essence of media communication lies precisely in embedding and interconnecting. Embedding means that media help transplant and transfer the "ideas," "information," and "data" possessed by one entity into another—the audience' s acceptance of information is essentially such an "embedding" process. Interconnectivity means that various components in the information field become a "whole" through media, a "complex" capable of sharing information and forming unified concepts and value judgments. Previous media communication often failed to effectively accomplish embedding and connecting due to speed limitations. The emergence of 5G technology fundamentally changes this: embedding and connecting now occur with virtually no delay or interval. Moreover, 5G technology will, in a sense, compel media

practitioners to make revolutionary adjustments in both the forms and content of media communication to adapt to this dramatic increase in connection speed.

1.2 New Connection Modes Enabled by 5G Technology

The new connection modes brought by 5G technology also manifest in changes to the objects of connection. 5G achieves not only person-to-person connections but also person-to-thing and thing-to-thing connections. This shift in connection objects is profoundly significant. On the one hand, person-to-thing and thing-to-thing connections signify the establishment of a new Internet of Things (IoT) paradigm—a truly "interconnected" network in the global sense, an era where "everything is media."Some researchers even argue that "5G brings the real world into everyone' s life, every family, and every organization in the form of a digital world, constructing an intelligently connected world of all things." [**?**] In such connections, the flow of information and data will leverage network effects more prominently than in traditional human-to-human communication, highlighting the fundamental meaning of connection. After all, in human communication, media must expend considerable effort on information translation, considering the recipient' s capacity to accept information and constantly seeking ways to present content that audiences find enjoyable and accessible. In contrast, person-to-thing and thing-to-thing connections will largely be accomplished through "things"and the "network,"where the information modes that "things"can receive are often fixed, and the information dissemination effects that the "network"can produce are precise and error-free, making information transmission extremely fast and accurate when involving "things" and the "network." More excitingly, the use of various sensors in the IoT revolution enabled by 5G technology means that data collection, processing, dissemination, and feedback will become more "automated" and convenient. The data that media seek to transmit and embed will fully transition from "dissemination" to "transmission."

1.3 Changing User Roles in 5G Connections

The new connection modes enabled by 5G technology also signify transformations in the roles people play in information dissemination and in how connections shape the meaning of life. A crucial change in the 5G-era connection paradigm is that User-Generated Content (UGC) not only continues to flourish but has begun to dominate information dissemination. The substantial development of short-video platforms like TikTok demonstrates that the identities of information producers and receivers have become completely blurred in internet communication modes: individuals can play the role of either receiver or producer, representing the emergence of truly interactive connections. As more producers emerge, it becomes evident that in the 5G era, thanks to high-speed information dissemination, everyone can easily transform into a "producer" without worrying whether their content will gain acceptance from receivers. Information connection has fundamentally shifted from a point-to-point model to a network model. This shift brings another transformation: every user becomes

highly enthusiastic about connecting, to the point where connection has become a kind of "existential state."

1.4 The Routinization of Information Connection in the 5G Era

Changes in connection modes mean that the "mobile" characteristic of the internet will become a key feature of media communication in the 5G era. Mobility refers not only to the ability of information publishers and receivers to use "mobile terminals" for distribution and reception but, more importantly, to the fact that "mobility" implies that information interaction exists in a continuous dynamic process. Information production, dissemination, and reception constitute an endless, ceaseless flow: every node on the network can produce, disseminate, and receive information at any time, with each connected object transitioning between the identities of information producer, disseminator, and receiver. Connection now signifies a complete sense of "interaction." Because users can connect rapidly through the high-speed networks provided by 5G technology and because of the "transmission" revolution brought about by the IoT, a significant portion of people' s lives will no longer require an online-to-offline conversion process. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 made "online meetings" an important mode of daily communication, demonstrating that in the 5G era, people can truly "live online" and lead a completely "online" life. Moreover, people will experience this "online" connection as genuine "interaction" rather than virtual interaction that still needs to be converted to "offline."

2. 5G Technology Development and New Opportunities for Traditional Media

2.1 Emphasizing "Technology Empowerment" in Connection Forms

The transformation of connection modes in the 5G era signifies not only the vigorous rise of new internet communication, particularly mobile internet communication, but also a fresh opportunity for traditional media to "overtake on a curve." First, 5G technology means that the impact of connection forms on connection quality has reached a critical level. In past media communication, people were often constrained by single connection forms and focused solely on the information content they provided, treating content quality as the most important criterion for evaluating connection quality. However, in the 5G era, "technology empowerment" has become a universal consensus. Specifically regarding media communication, "comprehensive video-ization, wireless dissemination, and simplified processes will be inevitable trends in information dissemination development." [**?**] For traditional media such as radio, television, and newspapers, it is time to abandon the constraints of outdated communication forms on communication concepts and embrace the new forms brought by 5G technology. To keep pace with the transformation of connection modes in the 5G era, traditional media must fully utilize the ultra-high-speed information dissemination enabled by 5G technology to produce more diverse, high-definition,

and high-quality video content, connecting with as many audiences as possible through various channels (whether television network platforms or new media platforms). Simultaneously, traditional media must begin to correctly position itself as a "node" in the dissemination network (admittedly a huge and widely influential "node") rather than the entire network itself, and must correctly recognize that general audiences have also, through "technology empowerment," gained the capacity to become "nodes" in the dissemination network in the 5G era. Based on this understanding, even in terms of "video-ization" alone, traditional media in the 5G era needs to achieve a more proactive connection with general audiences, "exchanging what one has for what others have."

2.2 Reaffirming the Regulatory Functions of Traditional Media

The new connection modes realized by 5G technology also render the supervision of connections more urgent, and traditional media can actually play a significant positive role in this regard. The supervision of information production and transmission processes is more important in the 5G era for two reasons: First, high-speed information dissemination in the 5G era indeed means that vast amounts of information will be continuously produced by ordinary users, among which there will inevitably be some invalid, redundant, or even information that contradicts mainstream values. Allowing such information to spread randomly without forming an effective supervision model will result not in more effective and closer connections but in the destruction of "connection," and even certain forms of "division"and "alienation."Second, another aspect of information supervision is regulation at the circulation channel level. In the 5G era, where information is produced at any moment and enters circulation channels, and where people-to-people and people-to-thing connections occur at any time, the absence of supervision and intervention—allowing various dissemination channels to circulate information rapidly—can easily lead to a kind of "information out of control," sometimes resulting in "false news proliferation" that congests information channels and causes the consequence of "bad information driving out good." At this point, the influence of traditional media in the sense of information circulation channels is urgently needed—an influence that traditional media has gained through its authority built over a long history. Of course, the supervision process of traditional media is often not about suppression and repression but about maximizing the exertion of its own functions and roles. For example, during the pandemic, although all kinds of information could be rapidly disseminated on the internet, mainstream media was able to form stable, efficient, and truthful information release channels, gaining public recognition through its credibility. It can obtain "authority certification" and dissemination effectiveness different from the past in the 5G era' s rapid information dissemination and connection modes. Relying on this "authority" and dissemination capability, traditional media will form a certain "supervision" norm for general information circulation.

2.3 Consolidating the Mainstream Discourse Power of Traditional Media

The new connection mode in the 5G era requires further highlighting of traditional media' s "mainstream discourse power." Some researchers believe that "in the new media field, everyone has a microphone, and everywhere is filled with voices. The massive amateurization of information production and dissemination subjects has led to the flattening of dissemination discourse power, diluting the role of mainstream media as an information filter." [**?**] Such a view seems reasonable and is supported by many scholars. However, the author believes the situation is not necessarily so. "Mainstream" is not something that can be easily defined, nor is it something that can be achieved simply by being the loudest voice. The high-speed information dissemination and close connections between people and between people and things in the 5G era do create a sense of "clamor of voices," but for information audiences, no matter how abundant the information or how convenient the connections, the core issues people care about and the core values they identify with will not change accordingly. The real problem is precisely that when traditional mainstream media disseminate these core issues and values and connect with the broadest information audiences, they have not actively responded to or proactively adopted the high-speed dissemination and convenient interconnection characteristics brought by 5G technology. In other words, there is a "gap" between mainstream media and mainstream information dissemination methods in the 5G era. In fact, it is not difficult for traditional media to become the mainstream voice in connections during the 5G era. The key is to "utilize their core advantages, and under the guidance of technical logic and in the construction of the new 'online' world, influence the mainstream, influence mainstream populations, and influence the decision-making of mainstream populations" [**?**], thereby integrating their mainstream positioning with the requirements of mainstream technology. This requires traditional media to actively embrace the 5G era, develop a clear consciousness of "technology empowerment," establish a clear positioning of "mainstream discourse power," and build a "mainstream media" image within the new connection mode. The author contends that in the new connection mode brought by the 5G era, the "mainstream media" image is not declining but becoming more important [**?**].

3. Conclusion

The influence of 5G technology has penetrated every corner of social life, with media communication being one of the most directly affected fields. Faced with new challenges brought by this technology, traditional media researchers and practitioners must rise to the occasion with firm conviction, embracing the new transformations and situations created by new technology. By combining new technology with their original dissemination advantages and fully exploiting the new "connection" possibilities opened by 5G technology, they can achieve "curve overtaking" and re-establish their dominant position in the field of information dissemination, giving voice to the "mainstream voice" of the new era.

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