

Digital Mindset Transformation and Post-Print Advancement in Publishing Houses in the Context of Media Convergence Abstract: In the context of media convergence, traditional publishing houses are facing an urgent need for digital transformation. This paper explores the transformation path of digi...

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Abstract

With the widespread adoption and rapid advancement of the Internet, various industries have begun to intersect and merge, rendering digitalization a prevailing trend across all sectors. In the media and communications industry, the impact of digitalization is particularly profound: the channels and modalities through which individuals receive information have become substantially more diversified compared to the past. Consequently, publishing houses must accelerate their digital upgrading by embracing multimedia convergence and fully leveraging Internet thinking and technologies to propel the development of digital publishing. This paper analyzes the current development status of digital publishing, explores the transformation of digital mindset within publishing houses and the advancement of digital publishing under the backdrop of media convergence, and provides reference recommendations for the development of publishing houses in the context of Internet-driven digitalization.

Full Text

Transformation and Advancement of Digital Thinking in Publishing Houses Under the Background of Media Convergence

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Abstract

With the popularization and rapid development of the Internet, various industries have begun to permeate and merge with one another, and digitalization has become the prevailing trend across all sectors. In the media and communications industry, the impact of digitalization is particularly profound. People's channels and methods of receiving information have become more diverse than ever before, compelling publishing houses to accelerate digital upgrading in conjunction with multimedia integration and fully utilize Internet thinking and technology to advance the development of digital publishing. This paper analyzes the current state of digital publishing development and explores the transformation of digital thinking and the advancement of digital publishing in publishing houses under the background of media convergence, providing reference suggestions for the development of publishing houses in the context of Internet-based digital development.

Keywords: media convergence; Internet digitalization; publishing house; digital thinking; mobile terminal

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Against the backdrop of Internet digital development and with the support of science and technology, people's lifestyles have undergone tremendous changes. Particularly with the popularization of mobile terminals today, people's attention is no longer limited to their immediate surroundings. Instead, they rely on Internet technology to satisfy their needs for information, communication, work, entertainment, and other aspects. As an important platform for print media dissemination, publishing houses have begun to embrace digitalization in the face of the Internet development wave, conforming to development trends and actively exploring the digital upgrading of their own businesses to achieve transformation into new media in the new era.

China is a major Internet country and a populous nation. As early as the fourth meeting of the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform in 2014, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that to promote the integrated development of traditional and emerging media, we must follow the laws of news communication and emerging media development, strengthen Internet thinking, adhere to the complementary advantages and integrated development of traditional and emerging media, insist on advanced technology as the support and content construction as the foundation, and promote deep integration of

traditional and emerging media in content, channels, platforms, operation, and management [1]. At the twelfth collective study session of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee on the all-media era and media convergence development, General Secretary Xi Jinping further emphasized that promoting media convergence development and building all-media has become an urgent issue we face. This represents the most comprehensive, complete, and clear guidance on media convergence development.

According to National Bureau of Statistics data, in 2018, China's digital publishing industry's overall revenue reached over 800 billion yuan, representing a 17.8% increase from 2017, with a noticeably accelerating growth curve. With the research and popularization of 5G communication technology, network resources are being further exploited, and digital content is becoming more abundant and colorful [2]. Data from an online reading platform shows that Internet users' online reading time continues to increase, with related service purchases and paid conversion rates rising year after year.

Traditional publishing houses should seize this opportunity of Internet development, transform traditional thinking, closely connect users with content, increase the development and utilization of digital resources, satisfy the reading needs of different users in different formats, and actively explore a development path that suits their own characteristics.

1. Overview of Media Convergence

The development of media convergence is influenced by various factors, mainly including policy guidance, capital operations, market competition, and consumer demand. First, policy guidance. Because media has propaganda functions, China regulates media through relevant policies and regulations to better strengthen public opinion guidance. Through media convergence, traditional media can better complete transformation and upgrading, creating media groups with strong vitality. Second, capital operations. Media has a tremendous impact on the economy, especially since entering the 21st century. In the era of media convergence, capital's value to media has become increasingly prominent, profoundly rewriting the development rules of the media industry and providing innovative impetus for media convergence. Third, market competition. Many traditional media outlets, facing the impact of the Internet, have begun exploring transformation and competing with various emerging media. In this process, all types of media have kept pace with the times and innovated, accelerating the digitalization, networking, and collectivization transformation of the media industry. By joining the Internet, traditional media can better transmit their voice through media convergence and effectively improve the competitiveness of the media industry. Fourth, consumer demand. Consumers are the ultimate service targets of media, and content is the service product. To optimize user experience, media convergence must rely on big data and cloud computing technologies to break through time and space limitations, achieve precise interaction between people and network information, and increase user stickiness.

Before exploring digital publishing development, we must deeply understand the era background of media convergence. In terms of content, media types are diverse, including text, audio, video, or comprehensive media types that combine several of these. In terms of dissemination methods, media channels include both online and offline approaches, with online relying on the Internet as the communication medium and offline relying on various print media. Although media development can have a significant impact on the economy, it is also constrained by economic development levels. Each rapid development of media has been achieved through breakthroughs in new media technologies. Currently, with the rapid development of the digital economy and the continuous expansion of 5G coverage, traditional single media forms have no competitiveness when facing emerging media that integrate multiple content types.

Many scholars and media practitioners believe that technology is the foundation of media development. In the early stages of Internet development, constrained by bandwidth, Internet media communication was mainly text-based. After the emergence of smartphones, the combination of images and text became the mainstream for information exchange. The current vigorous development of short video platforms fully demonstrates technology's impact on media.

Media convergence was first proposed by the renowned media figure Nicholas Negroponte, whose theory elaborated on the development direction of the media field—not just mutual combination, but mutual transformation. He believed that the development of multimedia is dissolving the boundaries between various media, and current media will present a development trend of multi-functional integration. Andrew Nachison, a famous American media researcher, believes that media convergence should be an alliance among print, audio, video, and interactive digital media organizations, demonstrating the importance of digital media to media convergence. Chinese media scholars believe that the boundaries between various media forms are gradually blurring and merging with the continuous development of modern information technology. This merging is not simply a collection of various media, but a deeper and more multi-faceted integration. It involves the mutual transformation of media technology, functional structure, and pattern types. Driven by Internet development, the content and methods presented by converged media online will become more abundant and colorful, with content becoming more personalized and targeted [4].

2. Overview of Digital Publishing

Facing the trend of Internet digitalization, publishing houses must adjust their own business operations, continuously integrate online and offline resources, and achieve transformation from print media publishing platforms to content provision platforms—that is, strengthen the Internet thinking or digital thinking capabilities of publishing houses and clarify that digital publishing is the future development direction [5]. Facing this emerging industry, from the publishing perspective, there are still three elements: editing, reproduction, and distribution. The current domestic model of publishing houses that rely on the Internet

for digital resource exchange is called “digital publishing.”

Regarding the emergence and characteristics of “digital publishing,” domestic scholars mainly hold the following views: (1) From the perspective of storage methods, digitization essentially involves binary processing of content and storage, searching, and browsing through computers. From this perspective, digital publishing has broader coverage, and content formed on mobile hard drives, optical discs, and numerous mobile terminals with information reception capabilities can all become publications and digital publishing objects. (2) From the distribution perspective, traditional publishing houses have standardized publishing processes that require review from various aspects before obtaining book numbers and distributing to the public. Digital publishing opens up Internet development space on the basis of traditional models, transforming content dissemination through Internet technology. (3) From the communication perspective, digital publishing breaks through the barriers between individuals and resources, conducting information interaction through the Internet with fast, diverse, and abundant dissemination. (4) From the management perspective, traditional publishing houses have developed mature publishing systems over the years, and digital publishing achieves the publication and management of digital product content on this basis. The main management objects here refer to the digitization of resources conducted by publishing houses.

First, policy advantages. In the development of the national “Internet Plus” strategy, promoting the digital transformation and upgrading of the publishing industry and achieving integrated development of traditional and emerging business formats have been established as important development plans, clarifying goals and directions, and providing preferential policies and financial support [6]. Second, instant communication. Compared with traditional publishing, digital publishing has the advantages of immediacy and transmissibility. The dissemination of paper publications from publishing houses is relatively lagging, while Internet-based digital platforms can achieve instant and rapid communication. From this perspective, Internet development will not reduce the influence of publishing houses but will expand their influence scope and duration through Internet technology. Third, rich content. The Internet breaks through time and space limitations, and through digital publishing, achieves the storage and sharing of massive amounts of content. People can read online anytime and anywhere, selecting content according to their preferences, satisfying the information and communication needs of people in the Internet information era. Fourth, good economic benefits. The economic benefits brought by digital publishing have increased year after year. According to relevant statistics, China’s e-book market output value has shown explosive growth, with more and more people browsing and reading online. Compared with single print media, the rich video and images on the Internet can deliver more information to people, and solving market demands will yield substantial returns.

2.2 Problems in Digital Publishing Development

Although digital publishing has become the future development direction for publishing houses, from the perspective of China's current development, traditional publishing houses still occupy an important market position, and online reading cannot completely replace paper reading.

2.2.1 Uneven Development of Digital Publishing This unevenness is first manifested in the imbalance of service populations. Currently, China's Internet user base has reached 829 million, with a comprehensive reading rate across various media exceeding 80%. However, these contributions mostly come from adults under 45 years old, with insufficient coverage of student and elderly populations, or service content that cannot yet meet their needs. Second is the imbalance of product categories. Among digital publications, the most popular content types are fantasy and science fiction web novels, while other literature and genres have smaller audiences, leading to structural imbalances in digital publishing. Finally, digital publishing service providers' understanding of digital publishing is still in its initial stages, with relevant market services and regulatory systems not yet perfected, resulting in digital publishing not breaking through the constraints of traditional publishing houses. Their thinking patterns remain at the old stage of traditional concepts, with insufficient understanding of digitalization requiring optimization and structural adjustment as digitalization develops [7].

2.2.2 Imbalanced Industrial Chain in Digital Publishing The industrial chain imbalance here is mainly caused by market disorder leading to unequal industrial chains. Digital publishing has initially formed an industrial chain of creation—submission—review—processing—publication and release. However, in market development, top-tier publishers, through their influence and based on their business advantages, dominate the rapid dissemination of resources with industry-type tendencies. Meanwhile, small and medium-sized enterprises and individuals hold an awkward position in the publishing industrial chain, facing problems such as lagging content supply and services, and lack of dissemination channels for individual high-quality resources. There is an urgent need to establish a healthy and sustainable industrial chain development model.

2.2.3 Other Problems in Digital Publishing Publishing houses also face many other problems in the digitalization process. For example, in building digital platforms, they still adhere to traditional old thinking, believing that digitalization simply involves converting books and other materials into digital formats and uploading them to the Internet, without having a profound understanding of digital publishing content services. Second, copyright issues are prominent, with insufficient clarification of intellectual property ownership, redundant information, and copyright becoming a mere formality, among other obstacles to digital publishing construction.

3. Directions and Measures for Digital Publishing Under Media Convergence

Since digital publishing is the future development direction for publishing houses, how to achieve business transformation and actively connect with the Internet has become a challenge facing all publishing practitioners. Digital publishing is by no means simply digitizing content and uploading it to the Internet for dissemination. In the early digital publishing attempts by many regions and publishing houses, we can see that uploading traditional publishing resources unchanged to the Internet did not result in significant improvement or generate considerable revenue. Digital publishing should be content-driven and service-oriented, achieving precise delivery of information to users through secondary processing of content and utilization of big data analysis and Internet technology. That is, starting from users, analyzing user needs, then using massive publishing house resources for processing, and packaging creativity, products, content, and services together to sell to users. This realizes the concept of “one content, multiple creative ideas; one creative idea, multiple developments; one development, multiple products; one product, multiple forms; one sale, multiple channels; one investment, multiple outputs; one output, multiple value additions.” This is the true connotation of digital publishing.

3.1 Fully Leveraging Content Advantages

In the context of media convergence, for publishing houses to leverage their own advantages and achieve digital upgrading, they must reintegrate the current publishing market, existing users, and available resources and services, determine the user needs for digital publishing, conduct digital processing based on their existing resources, and perform refined and meticulous content processing. They must rely on these high-quality content resources to provide excellent product services and management. Compared with content from other Internet media, publishing houses have significant advantages in their own content. Therefore, as long as they determine online business, clarify what preparations digital publishing should make and what future responses are needed, select appropriate Internet technology for support, and connect with promotional channels for operations, they can quickly establish a comprehensive digital content provision platform and achieve future development layout. For example, in the textbook industry that publishing houses are familiar with, they can contact education departments for online promotion and provide content services to their regions, with publishing houses playing the role of product agents and regional service providers [8].

3.2 Fully Utilizing Policy Support

Currently, “Internet Plus” is a national development strategy, and there are many preferential policies to support development in this area. A major challenge facing digital publishing is that online and offline profit models differ

significantly and cannot be simply applied interchangeably, requiring the development of new profit models. On one hand, it is necessary to reduce input costs; on the other hand, it is essential to actively open new profit channels. The government continues to increase support for the cultural industry, and many projects that demonstrate obvious driving effects on the industry can receive strong government support. This not only reduces input costs but also enables resource integration through the government to accelerate digital publishing platform construction. For developing new revenue projects, the preferential policies brought by government support for digital publishing as an emerging media in its initial development stage can also be utilized. Through digital construction, products that meet user needs can be developed, and according to policies, corresponding loans and tax reductions can be obtained.

3.3 Scientific Operations to Guide Users

Digital publishing is not simply opening an online store or selling online. Instead, it requires continuous use of Internet technology and scientific operation models to achieve precise content delivery, strengthen online and offline product experiences, and increase revenue through multiple channels. It is necessary to establish a marketing system that is user-centric, content-oriented, product-based, and service-driven, forming a main digital publishing business line led by traditional publishing. This creates branded digital products in various forms and through multiple channels for release, achieving profitability through user purchases of services, thereby ensuring a reasonable input-output ratio for traditional publishing and the healthy and sustainable development of digital publishing.

The future development potential of digital publishing is enormous, but the process is extremely difficult, requiring both breakthroughs in Internet technology and the improvement of intermediary channels, as well as the convergence of various media. For publishing houses, whether focusing on content as king or Internet strategy, they must be user-centered and oriented toward satisfying user needs. Through comprehensive online services, they should create a grand pattern for digital publishing, thereby achieving continuous optimization and development of the digital publishing industry and better meeting the spiritual and cultural needs of the broad masses.

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

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