

Practical Dilemmas and Pathways for the Dissemination of Current Affairs News on Mobile Clients in the 5G Era: A Postprint

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Abstract

In the 5G era, communication subjects are shifting from the ‘everyone-is-a-journalist’ paradigm of the 4G era to one of ‘everything-as-media,’ wherein vertical segmentation of mass demand and targeted content dissemination have become mainstream, and media communication power is transitioning from being primarily content-driven to a model where technology and content advance in parallel. Against this backdrop, media authority faces challenges, innovation difficulty for practitioners intensifies, and communication risk factors proliferate. Only by focusing on news with distinctive characteristics and stylized communication, producing accessible news based on audience needs, leveraging technical means for precision news production, and simultaneously building strategic talent reserves can communication subjects truly break through this predicament and achieve development.

Full Text

Preamble

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Research on the Realistic Dilemmas and Pathways of Current Affairs News Communication on Mobile Clients in the 5G Era

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Abstract: In the 5G era, communication subjects are shifting from “everyone is a journalist” in the 4G era to “everything is media,” with vertical segmentation of public demand and targeted content dissemination becoming mainstream, and media communication power transitioning from primarily content-driven to a state where technology and content run parallel. Against this backdrop, media authority faces challenges, practitioner innovation becomes more difficult, and

communication risk factors surge. Only by grounding themselves in news with distinctive characteristics and stylized communication, producing down-to-earth news based on audience needs, utilizing technological means for precision news production, and simultaneously building strategic talent reserves can communication subjects truly break through dilemmas and achieve development.

Keywords: 5G; current affairs news; news client; media subject; stylized communication

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Information technology transforms human society, and each technological revolution profoundly adjusts the way humans interact with the external world, fundamentally changing how people access information. The most significant change that the 5G era brings to human society is speed. In this era, network information transmission speeds accelerate by orders of magnitude, enabling true interconnectivity between people, between people and objects, and between objects themselves in the real world, transforming the ancient ideals of “clairvoyance” and “clairaudience” into reality. As the primary window through which people understand the world, “current affairs news” will also undergo continuous self-revolution under the impact of the 5G wave.

1. New Changes in Current Affairs News Communication on Mobile Clients in the 5G Era

According to mass communication theory, communicators, media, and audiences constitute the three core elements of communication activities [?]. As 5G era news client content becomes vastly enriched, information transmission speeds dramatically increase, and information dissemination forms grow increasingly diverse, the relatively stable relationships among these three traditional elements of mass communication will be broken down. The boundary between communicators and audiences will nearly disappear, and the technological gap in media accessibility between them will be bridged. Against the backdrop of the 5G era and based in the current transition period from 4G to 5G, current affairs news communication on mobile clients has undergone earth-shaking changes.

1.1 Communication Subjects Shifting from “Everyone is a Journalist” to “Everything is Media”

For much of modern human society’ s development, communication subjects have been mass media with strong authority, influence, and discourse power,

possessing distinct industry and professional attributes. However, as the 5G era accelerates, the nature of communication subjects is undergoing radical transformation: single industry attributes are weakening while aggregated conglomeration trends intensify; practitioners' professional attributes are diminishing while comprehensive professional competencies strengthen. Communication subjects are shifting from the 4G era's "everyone is a journalist" to the 5G era's "everything is media" [?]. Specifically, if the 4G era changed how people access and disseminate information—allowing everyone to become a subject of news communication and act as news senders, thereby altering the role positioning of traditional communication subjects—then the 5G era will transform the very nature of news communication subjects, shifting the subject's essential quality from "human" to "object." In this era, "demediation" will become mainstream, where "all objects can become subjects of information production, processing, and dissemination" [?]. Current affairs news communication will no longer be constrained by paper, screens, or terminals, instead transforming into an immersive dissemination model where "news is everywhere and always accessible."

1.2 Vertical Segmentation of Audience Demand and Targeted Content Dissemination Becoming Mainstream

In the 5G era, as audiences' general education level rises, their selective media exposure becomes more concentrated, and group-based social interaction strengthens, news selection exhibits characteristics of vertical segmentation and refined communication. Vertical segmentation manifests in audience classification [?]. On one hand, audiences are automatically categorized based on news topics, with those interested in specific topics naturally grouped together. For example, in U.S. presidential elections, audiences supporting Democrats and Republicans automatically form two distinct groups with inherently different content needs when consuming current affairs news. On the other hand, classification occurs based on audience preferences. Early platforms like Baidu Tieba and BBS, and contemporary platforms like WeChat Official Accounts and Weibo Super Topics, all construct and maintain vertically segmented audience groups based on interests. This division results from active audience choice and leads to significant differences in how these groups engage with current affairs news content. Refined communication manifests in audiences' targeted demands on media practitioners' content. As vertical segmentation intensifies, communicators must prioritize personalized and niche-oriented transformation in current affairs news, making reporting angle selection particularly crucial.

1.3 Media Communication Power Shifting from Primarily Content-Driven to Technology-Content Co-Dominance

For a long time, "content is king" has been the focal point for professional current affairs news, with technology playing a supporting role as a "catalyst" or "booster," primarily serving as a "tool." In the 5G era, technology has become a direct "participant" in current affairs news communication, even acting as a

“commander” or “chief of staff” in many scenarios [?]. The mobile client “Toutiao” exemplifies technology-led approaches, using data mining technology to recommend valuable, personalized information to users, providing emerging services that connect people with information. It can precisely locate and recommend content that audiences need and prefer. Compared with traditional manual information screening, this personalized recommendation engine based on data mining technology leads far ahead in terms of information volume, speed, accuracy, and diversity. It is evident that in the 5G era, technology’s impact on media communication power has become comparable to that of content, and only by relying on technology can content better realize its value.

2. Realistic Dilemmas in Current Mobile Client Current Affairs News Communication

Although 5G technology has begun to penetrate the field of current affairs news communication on mobile clients, it remains largely at the theoretical and experimental stages with narrow application scope. Consequently, the status of professional journalists in communication activities remains irreplaceable. Therefore, this article analyzes current dilemmas from the perspective of communication subjects.

2.1 Media Ecology Generalization Challenges Media Authority

Media ecology generalization primarily manifests at three levels: generalization of media professionalism, expansion of communication channels, and generalization of social responsibility [?]. The generalization of media professionalism refers to the diminishing exclusivity of professional journalists’ skills in planning, interviewing, writing, editing, and commentary. In this era of information explosion, a professional journalism background is no longer a mandatory prerequisite for journalists; individuals with relevant specialized knowledge can excel in professional journalism after receiving certain vocational training. The expansion of communication channels refers to how commercial media operations under the background of media conglomeration enable large media groups to absorb outstanding talents from all walks of life. Many veteran practitioners from traditional media have transformed into commercial media professionals, causing media resources to overflow beyond the news field and emerge across all industries. The generalization of social responsibility refers to how news’ s “fourth power” often finds itself in a passive position when facing surging social opinion tides in current affairs news communication activities. Consequently, the direct result of media ecology generalization is that media authority is affected and current affairs news communication becomes more difficult.

2.2 Intensified Market Competition Increases Practitioner Innovation Difficulty

The intensified competition in the mobile client market manifests in two aspects: strengthened competition between traditional media mobile clients and internet news mobile clients, and squeezed survival space for small and medium-sized media under media conglomeration. Comparatively, internet news clients like Tencent News and Toutiao demonstrate stronger flexibility and innovation consciousness but remain disadvantaged in content accuracy, authority, and depth. Traditional media news clients such as *Southern Weekly* and *Reference News* excel in content depth and news source authority but lag in communication timeliness, perspective selection, and innovative content presentation. That internet news clients can carve out a position without policy advantages demonstrates their competitive edge. How traditional media clients can amplify policy advantages and compensate for innovation disadvantages should be their focus in market competition. Moreover, the development trend of media conglomeration inevitably leads to a “survival of the fittest” scenario where “the strong become stronger and the weak are eliminated,” making it increasingly difficult for small news media to secure a position in market competition.

2.3 Upgraded “Public Opinion Warfare” Surges Communication Risk Factors

Due to their topical sensitivity, interest relevance, and real-world proximity, current affairs news attracts strong group attention. The higher the group attention, the greater the inevitable public opinion field effect, and the subsequent chain reactions—whether positive or negative—will be exponentially amplified. Therefore, in the 5G era’s process of public opinion generation and guidance, the “Tacitus Trap” effect is evident, and risks faced by communication subjects grow exponentially. The development of public opinion related to the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 experienced a process “from chaos to clarity.” At the pandemic’s outset, factors such as torn public opinion, confrontation, rampant misinformation, and insufficient factual support caused short-term social disorder and public panic. Fortunately, after the pandemic prevention and control efforts entered a critical phase, regular press conferences and online briefings by various departments timely addressed public concerns, essentially ensuring stable operation of public opinion society.

3. Key Pathways for Current Affairs News to Break Through on Mobile Clients in the 5G Era

Facing the current dilemmas in mobile client current affairs news communication, establishing an unassailable position under the adverse influences of fierce market competition and internal/external risk factors requires seeking solutions simultaneously from three dimensions—communication subjects, audiences, and media technology—while nurturing talent teams for the new era.

3.1 Approaching Stylized Current Affairs News from Communication Subject Professionalism

Caught between “everything is media” and challenged media professional authority, current affairs news communication subjects must amplify their professional expertise through stylized approaches to survive. On one hand, they should emphasize stylized visual presentation—namely, editorial stylization. They should fully utilize layout elements such as lines, colors, images, and graphics to form unique visual identifiers that align with their news client’s positioning and communication objectives for current affairs sections. They should also timely update platform layout styles in response to social hotspots, seeking balance between social trends and distinctive features. On the other hand, they should emphasize stylized reporting angles. Taking *Southern Weekly* as an example, its pursuit of “understanding China here” and its fundamental philosophy of “justice, conscience, love, and rationality” have enabled it to form a uniquely stylized current affairs news reporting system while maintaining its serious newspaper positioning, giving it tremendous market leadership.

3.2 Approaching Down-to-Earth Current Affairs News from Personalized Audience Needs

Against the backdrop of vertical segmentation of audience demand and targeted content dissemination, identifying “what content audiences truly need” is key to winning market position. The 5G era has bridged the technological gap, leaving audiences unsatisfied with passive information acquisition; they crave participation in witnessing and even influencing current affairs trends. Consequently, down-to-earth current affairs news better satisfies audience needs. In a landscape of structural surplus of low-end current affairs news products and substantive shortage of excellent products, news media should emphasize leveraging strengths while avoiding weaknesses, focusing on audiences’ deep needs in consumption, psychology, and behavior to more precisely target audience groups and form stable readerships [?]. They should prioritize audience experience, treating audiences as direct participants in current affairs news, making news presentation readily accessible, in-depth experience and interaction effortless, and integrating news content, social scenarios, and service media to achieve intended communication effects subtly and imperceptibly. Simultaneously, they should fully utilize agenda-setting and opinion leader guidance to solidify and expand audience needs, thereby further enlarging audience groups.

3.3 Approaching Precision Current Affairs News from Technological Scalability

Precision current affairs news encompasses two dimensions: superstructure and economic foundation. Superstructure refers to fully utilizing technological means for public opinion guidance. Traditional media’s public opinion guidance has primarily depended on current news hotspots, propaganda management department directives, or editorial experience. In the 5G era, both news

hotspots and the commanding heights of propaganda formulation can be preempted through technical means such as keyword comparison. For communicators dealing with sensitive current affairs news, strengthening technological investment in this area is particularly crucial for using technology to seize discourse power, guide public opinion, and avoid “public opinion warfare.” Economic foundation refers to achieving large-scale substitution of mental work through a “professional production + social production + robot generation” model. On one hand, adopting Toutiao’s precision news distribution model can improve work efficiency. On the other hand, current news robots can produce both briefs and in-depth reports with varied writing styles and diverse approaches. Practitioners should employ robots for news production ahead of competitors, thereby freeing themselves from daily routines to provide audiences with exclusive news, in-depth reporting, and innovative journalism that technological means cannot satisfy, meeting audiences’ more precise and diversified needs.

3.4 Shaping “Future-Ready” Talent Teams from Media Environmental Adaptability

In the 5G era, although technology’s value is infinitely amplified, technology ultimately results from human creativity. Technology is crucial for mobile client news communication, but the decisive factor remains people themselves. Therefore, cultivating “future-ready” talent teams is essential for sustainable media development. This requires establishing comprehensive training systems that integrate technological literacy, journalistic professionalism, and adaptive capabilities. Media organizations should develop strategic talent reserves capable of navigating the evolving technological landscape while maintaining core journalistic values. These future-ready professionals must possess not only traditional reporting skills but also data analytics capabilities, algorithmic understanding, and the agility to innovate within rapidly changing media ecosystems. By investing in such human capital, media organizations can ensure they remain competitive and authoritative despite technological disruption.

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

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