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Strategies for Enhancing Editorial Capabilities in Academic Presses (Postprint)

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Abstract

Amidst rapid economic development and deepening cultural system reforms, the cultural industry finds itself at a crucial juncture of transformation. In this context, the publishing industry is confronted with profound changes and challenges, with its developmental trends characterized by industrialization and diversification. Academic publishers represent a vital force in advancing knowledge and culture in contemporary China, and outstanding publishers constitute the core competitive strength of the publishing sector. The quality of books and periodicals serves as the embodiment of a publishing house's vitality, and the key to enhancing this quality lies in cultivating excellent publishers. The author analyzes the editing, knowledge, content, form, methodology, communication, and audience groups of modern academic publishers, and proposes several recommendations for optimizing the overall structure and improving the capabilities of academic publishers.

Full Text

Strategies for Enhancing Editorial Capacity in Academic Publishing

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Abstract

With rapid economic development and deepening cultural system reform, the cultural industry is undergoing a critical transformation. In this context, the publishing industry faces profound changes and challenges characterized by industrialization and diversification. Academic publishers serve as vital forces

in advancing modern Chinese knowledge and culture, with excellent publishers representing the core competitiveness of the publishing sector. The quality of books and journals reflects the vitality of a publishing house, and cultivating outstanding publishers is key to improving publication quality. This paper analyzes the editing practices, knowledge base, content, form, methods, communication strategies, and audiences of modern academic publishers, offering recommendations to optimize organizational structure and enhance editorial capacity.

Keywords: Academic Publishing; Capacity Enhancement; Strategy Research

Introduction: The Evolving Landscape of Academic Publishing

The integration of China's publishing industry with new media, driven by scientific and technological advances, is fundamentally transforming the traditional publishing model for academic journals. The emergence of "new media" presents both opportunities and challenges for the development of modern academic journals. Enabled by digital compression and wireless network technologies, new media offers large capacity, real-time interaction, and geographic transcendence, ultimately achieving global reach. Consequently, both the publishing methods and editorial workflows of academic journals are gradually merging with new media platforms. In this new environment, academic journal editors must innovate their thinking, shift away from traditional work patterns, adopt omnimedia workflow concepts, and master new media technologies to elevate the development level of academic journals in this era of media convergence.

Based on readership and publication functions, books in the market can be categorized into three types: popular books, educational books, and academic books. Academic books, which inherit outstanding cultural values and demonstrate national soft power and scientific development levels, consistently prioritize social benefits while earning industry acclaim and establishing strong reputations. Despite inherent limitations—such as small readerships, high prices, long sales cycles, and low payment rates—academic books' originality makes them ideal for specialized practice, featuring non-replicable content and stable readerships that satisfy digital profitability requirements in editorial fields.

Academic journal editors constitute crucial team members, serving as vital human resources for producing quality publications and as important forces in cultural transmission and civilization inheritance. Their job responsibilities demand high-level competencies, requiring appropriate training and guidance to help young editors quickly become qualified cultural supervisors. Dedicated to facilitating scholarly development and the special work of civilization transmission, academic journal editors are responsible for promoting the Party's theories, guidelines, and policies while disseminating advanced socialist cultural achievements. From this perspective, academic theory editors are key ideological supporters of the Party, disseminators of socialist values, and promoters of advanced socialist culture in China.

Academic journal publishers share many common tasks with book publishers, such as topic planning and manuscript review. However, due to quantitative, detailed, precise, and challenging work requirements, academic journal editors possess distinctive characteristics. The task of planning themes is substantial and often unpredictable. Most academic journal editorial departments comprise only five to six editors, each independently planning dozens of key articles annually. Although some issues are planned at the beginning of the year, many topics must be scheduled promptly as situations develop and academic theories evolve. Academic literature fundamentally reflects authors' personal academic insights and research outcomes. Without comprehensive discussion and intellectual exchange, results may be avant-garde, controversial, or even one-sided, creating additional difficulties for academic theory editors.

Core Competencies for Academic Editors

Expert-Type Editors. Academic journal publishers must possess extensive publishing experience, excel at manuscript processing, and serve as guides and executors of publishing operations. They must be meticulous in publishing business and capable of finalizing manuscripts. When assessing submissions, editors must evaluate authors' writing proficiency from multiple dimensions: editorial standards, thematic significance, academic quality, article structure, sentence expression, and punctuation usage. This requires considerable discernment. For manuscripts that are fundamentally usable but do not meet writing standards, publishers must edit and process them to satisfy publication requirements. For papers not yet at publishable level but containing novel ideas requiring revision, editors must provide accurate guidance to authors on necessary modifications. Analytical and discussion abilities represent higher-level requirements beyond basic editing skills.

Academic-Type Editors. Academic editors must achieve recognition in their disciplines, possess certain reputations, and become leaders and promoters of academic research. They must have broad and deep academic backgrounds and experience, enabling dialogue and discussion with academic experts while maintaining academic reputation and influence within the scholarly community. Beyond solid theoretical foundations, academic publishers must possess certain academic research capabilities. The research process—involving material collection, research and analysis, problem identification, and conceptual clarification—directly enhances editorial capacity. Academic investigation helps publishers grasp theoretical research progress and dynamics, while problem-finding and critical thinking assist in identifying issues and root causes during editing and verification processes. Academic editors must not only have research directions and experience in relevant academic fields but also profound understanding and knowledge of publishing operations. Strong academic research capacity can improve editors' academic quality, enhance their academic standing, and elevate editorial prestige.

Information Extension and Inquiry Abilities. Academic editors should

not merely read manuscripts but should exhibit characteristics of academic freedom and demonstrate diverse talents. They must possess excellent communication and expression skills for constant interaction with authors regarding drafts and revisions, participation in academic exchanges, dialogue facilitation, and sometimes inviting contributions or introducing theoretical research points and discussing writing requirements. These demands necessitate strong expressive capabilities from academic editors.

Planning and Drafting Academic Topics. The ability to plan drafts represents a fundamental quality for academic publishers. From a workflow perspective, this includes both planning and writing capabilities. Planning ability refers to editors' capacity to draft topics according to journal research directions. Topic planning is a creative thinking activity. Selecting topics for academic papers involves not only informing authors of subjects but also introducing writing purposes, main structures, and innovative elements, requiring editors to understand current research status. Academic editors should consciously collect relevant materials and inform authors about topics in advance to enable timely publication of related research papers. Having a good topic is insufficient; editors must also possess strong writing skills to organize manuscripts according to authors' research directions and experiences, ensuring submissions align with draft intentions and are completed on schedule.

Editing and Analytical Discussion Capabilities. Editing ability constitutes a fundamental skill, while discussion ability represents the highest requirement for publishers' political and academic quality. Editing demands that editors evaluate manuscripts from perspectives of editorial business, thematic significance, academic quality, structure, sentence expression, and punctuation usage. This requires considerable discernment. When manuscripts are basically usable but fail to meet writing standards, publishers must edit and process them to fulfill publication requirements. For papers not yet at publishable level but containing new ideas requiring revision, editors must accurately guide authors on modifications. Analytical discussion ability represents a higher-level requirement built upon editing capacity.

Academic Research Capacity. Beyond solid theoretical foundations, academic publishers must possess academic research capabilities. The research process—material collection, analysis, problem identification, and conceptual clarification—directly enhances editorial capacity. Academic investigation helps publishers grasp theoretical research progress and dynamics, while problem-finding and critical thinking assist in identifying issues and root causes during editing and verification. Academic editors with strong research capacity can improve their academic quality, enhance academic standing, and elevate editorial prestige. This is not about editing or participating in specific scientific research papers but about optimizing and developing professional literacy to potentially become professional and academic experts, gradually evolving into academic-type editors. This represents both the development direction for modern academic editors and the foundation for all publishers' development.

Capacity-Building Strategies

Internal Construction of Publishing Houses. Publishing houses should focus more on specialized fields by granting editorial centers and government funding, strengthening editorial team construction, and attracting leading scholars to create influential publishing brands. Training center editors through their words and actions can help new employees gradually fulfill their duties. Publishing houses must provide performance evaluations, business training, and skill exchanges for expert editors while establishing internal incentive mechanisms to encourage major publishers with strong business capabilities to quickly become expert editors.

Creating a Professional Editorial Team. Publishers should encourage editors to enhance self-cultivation awareness and become expert editors. By establishing talent systems and guarantee systems for academic center platforms, publishers should increase human, material, and financial resources to cultivate reasonable and adequate expert teams. With content publishing as the core business, talent is key to ensuring book publication quality, and professional publishing talent represents the core competitiveness and valuable resources of publishing companies. In recent years, national editorial administrative departments have formulated support policies for books with good social and cultural value. Many academic publishers have balanced social and economic interests, securing national key projects based on their editorial characteristics and advantages. To ensure high-quality completion of these projects, publishers must first establish expert editorial teams with high professional quality and strong capabilities who can play leading roles.

Innovative Editorial Functions. In contemporary publishing processes, text editing work appears process-oriented and seemingly without clear foundation. In reality, academic editors exercise fundamental control over publication content. Although the market determines content selection direction, high-quality content remains the ultimate requirement. This demands that academic editors improve their professional literacy in practical work. While participating in market competition, they should actively cultivate a “craftsman spirit” to become academic publishing talents. “Academic-type editors” represent one category of editors but cannot represent all academic research. Therefore, academic editors must first possess professionalism and basic editing skills—this is beyond question. Additionally, with rapid scientific and technological development, new knowledge emerges constantly in the information age. For academic editors, high professional proficiency alone is insufficient. This requires editors to continue learning, establish lifelong learning concepts, and update their capabilities and knowledge structures to achieve professional academic research levels and possess advanced degrees in their specialties.

Innovative Content for Academic Media. Editing is creative work. Against the backdrop of new economic and social development trends, text editors must adapt to the times and achieve intelligent transformation of their

innovative roles to become innovative editorial talents in the new era. For traditional academic editors, innovation requires conceptual change. For all publishing professionals, innovation presents both opportunities and challenges. While previous approaches lacking new ideas could not effectively meet growing market demands, they were relatively safe. Innovation through new paths often hides significant risks—once failures occur, they bring losses to daily operations. This makes innovation superficial and informal. For example, in developing academic knowledge content markets, most publishers tend to follow trends, selling whatever is popular rather than considering how to select and optimize resource allocation, merely digitizing textbook updates. To address this dilemma, publishing houses can cooperate with modern academic research institutions to provide online knowledge services and offer readers more professional and in-depth content resources and product forms through personalized content product services. Innovative consciousness represents an effective way for academic editors to enhance competitiveness in the new era. Against the “Internet Plus” backdrop, scientific and technological achievements are widely applied in daily life, with digitalization continuously improving. This requires academic editors to fully utilize digital media technology and master modern editing methods, strengthening exploration of new developments, ideas, and expressive forms for traditional content resources. Strengthening editorial innovation capacity building is an era issue facing the publishing industry. Innovative editorial talent represents not only a new requirement for contemporary editors but also the connotation and main characteristic of excellent editorial talent. Truly outstanding academic editors should not passively change with time but must adapt to trends and actively plan changes. Innovative spirit and creative thinking preparation are undoubtedly crucial components.

The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China points out that socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, signifying new development and new requirements. Therefore, to promote cultural innovation and development, publishers must further improve their own qualities and capabilities, creating masterpieces that meet national, social, and people’ s actual needs. In the new era, the publishing industry faces comprehensive innovation: text editors must actively seek role transformation, expand cultural horizons, enhance cultural confidence, and actively adjust knowledge structures to adapt to new social development demands. As creators, designers, and cultural leaders, they should establish market-oriented independent innovation consciousness, further strengthen the core functions of text editors in the publishing field, and strive to play greater roles.

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