

An Exploration of the Relationship Between Editorial and Distribution in Publishing Houses in the New Media Context: Postprint

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Abstract

With the development of Internet technology, the publishing industry has undergone tremendous transformation. Consequently, the specific content of editorial and distribution work must be adjusted to align with the evolving times. As integral components of a publishing house, editing and distribution each possess distinct characteristics while maintaining inextricable interconnections. The ability to properly manage the relationship between editing and distribution becomes crucial for enhancing the operational efficiency and work quality of publishing houses. Clarifying this relationship between editing and distribution thus emerges as a focal point for subsequent endeavors. Accordingly, this paper provides a brief exposition on topics including acquisition planning, distribution feedback on market information for acquisition planning, aiming to offer reference and guidance for publishing house operations.

Full Text

Preamble

Title: Exploring the Relationship Between Editorial and Distribution Departments in Publishing Houses Under the New Media Background

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Abstract: With the development of internet technology, the publishing industry has undergone tremendous transformation. Consequently, the specific responsibilities of editorial and distribution work must be adjusted to align with the evolving times. As vital components of publishing houses, editorial and distribution departments each possess distinct characteristics while maintaining intricate interconnections. Effectively managing the relationship between these two departments has become crucial for improving work efficiency and quality

in publishing houses, making it imperative to clarify their relationship for future operations. This paper briefly elaborates on topic planning, distribution feedback for market-informed planning, and related matters to provide references for publishing work.

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In actual publishing operations, editorial work often generates certain contradictions and conflicts with distribution work, yet these conflicts are not irreconcilable. To truly resolve them, we must start from concrete work tasks, clearly define job responsibilities and conflicting areas, and conduct focused analysis on the causes of conflicts to identify entry points for solutions. Simultaneously, problem analysis and resolution must consider both the current state of publishing industry development and the impact of the internet on publishing. This dual perspective allows optimization of the editorial-distribution relationship from both internal organizational and external industry dimensions.

1. Overview of Editorial and Distribution Work in the Publishing Industry

During book publishing, we frequently encounter situations where topics selected by the editorial department fail to gain approval from the distribution department, which typically deems these topics to lack promising market prospects. Conversely, topics proposed by the distribution department based on market trend analysis often struggle to receive editorial approval, with editors generally considering such topics difficult to implement. This problem stems largely from the independent operation of various publishing house departments without effective communication, representing a common issue across departmental functions [1]. In other words, the conflict between editorial and distribution originates from inadequate integration between book topic planning and distribution considerations. Additionally, the current publishing system affects the execution and optimization of both editorial and distribution work, representing a problem arising from the development of the book publishing market itself.

To address these issues, it is necessary to promote coordinated pacing between distribution work and topic planning, thereby achieving alignment across different tracks and enabling editorial and distribution work to progress in a synergistic state. This approach facilitates the unification of editorial and distribution

thinking, prevents internal factors from adversely affecting publishing operations, and ultimately enhances publishing efficiency [3]. Consequently, building a sound relationship between editorial and distribution requires starting with topic planning and distribution integration, which holds significant importance for publishing house development. Moreover, to better identify problems in book editing and publishing, it is essential to actively improve relevant communication and coordination efforts, thereby enhancing publishing house competitiveness through improved work efficiency [4].

2.1 Parallel Consideration of Topic Planning and Distribution Work

Book topic planning and selection constitute both the origin and core of publishing work. The rationality of topic direction and its actual content directly correlates with market acceptance of books, while the feasibility of topic implementation cycles also impacts subsequent distribution work. Furthermore, analysis of the publishing process reveals that all other work links are influenced by topic planning, making them extensions of the planning process [5]. Excellent topic planning can capture a book's value connotation, which can then be realized through distribution activities. These two aspects share a close connection in practice. From the perspective of overall publishing house operations, book publishing is achieved through topic planning, while book value realization requires distribution means. However, both editorial and distribution work aim to achieve economic and social benefits for books. This demonstrates that editorial and distribution departments share consistent objectives, with editorial work representing the upstream link in publishing. Therefore, promoting mutual cooperation and coordination between editorial and distribution work in book publishing has become a primary task for publishing houses [6].

As the source of book publishing, editors must first determine distribution thinking and integrate it into topic planning, enabling readers with needs to obtain suitable books and thereby manifesting the book's social and economic value. This indicates that understanding and incorporating distribution requirements during topic planning can better create prerequisites for distribution work and help books gain widespread social recognition [7].

2.2 Using Distribution Feedback to Inform Topic Planning

The distribution department stands closest to the market in the book publishing process. Fully utilizing market feedback obtained by distribution departments provides crucial guidance for planning editors in developing topic plans. Due to their job nature, planning editors' market research and attention often tend to be subjective and intuition-based. In contrast, distribution departments can collect relevant sales information from major bookstores nationwide and different regions during distribution work. Detailed statistical data combined with firsthand market experience gives distribution departments high market sensi-

tivity—they have the most authority in determining which books are easier to distribute and which topics are more likely to gain market popularity [8]. This rational market understanding obviously benefits topic planning. If planning editors can fully communicate with distribution departments and obtain as much market information as possible, combined with their own independent thinking and analysis, the resulting topics will be more targeted and viable [9].

Consequently, distribution departments should properly collect market data, conduct statistical analysis, and when necessary, establish big data collection and analysis platforms to provide references for publishing work. This platform data must be promptly shared with the editorial department for detailed analysis. To truly accomplish distribution feedback work, relevant personnel need to build information sharing platforms and establish corresponding information analysis systems. These platforms should collect not only the publishing house's own distribution data but also data from other publishers and books, enabling identification of problems in editorial and publishing work through comparative analysis between publishers. This creates favorable conditions for optimizing work models and systems while providing ample references for topic planning [10].

2.3 Leveraging Different Distribution Channels for Topic Planning

With the continuous development of marketization in China, book distribution channels now include not only Xinhua Bookstore but also numerous private book distribution channels, giving publishers increasingly more options and making distribution work more flexible and dynamic. In this environment, the difficulty of book distribution has been effectively alleviated. Simultaneously, we recognize that different distribution methods have distinct characteristics. Therefore, as distribution staff, it is necessary to deeply understand the features of various distribution channels, think divergently about their value, and extract better topics from them to provide references for distribution work and enhance topic benefits [11].

Moreover, as internet technology continues to develop, more readers prefer downloading e-books online, causing reader demographics to shift and book acquisition channels to transition from physical stores to the internet. Publishers must therefore thoroughly explore the distribution characteristics of internet channels and conduct topic planning based on these readers' preferences. This organically integrates distribution work with topic planning and ensures work models and thinking keep pace with the times.

2.4 Following the Cyclical Nature of Book Distribution

Analysis of book distribution patterns reveals that peak sales months occur annually, and the distribution process also experiences cyclical fluctuations between strong and weak years. Consequently, the book market exhibits certain

regular patterns. Generally speaking, barring major social events, book distribution work follows these patterns. In practice, distribution and editorial staff should respect these distribution cycles to better identify specific needs and key points for book topics [12].

Due to the pronounced cyclical nature of book distribution, planning editors must clarify distribution work requirements during topic planning. Typically, editors need to determine book launch timing before proceeding with topic selection and manuscript organization. Second, marketing strategies should be developed based on book content and distribution patterns, as effective marketing strategies can promote sales growth. Generally, book launches should be scheduled during sales peak periods. However, if marketing activities are concentrated during peak periods, promotional content can easily be overshadowed by other books' publicity, making it difficult to achieve good marketing results. Therefore, consider setting the promotional period during sales downturns to create a surprising impact, effectively serving as market preheating. Pre-marketing activities can thus be conducted during peak sales periods.

Before launching distribution marketing, distribution staff can communicate with editors to further clarify marketing priorities and refine marketing content. Simultaneously, distribution staff should select appropriate marketing methods based on different channel characteristics, with specific copy provided by editors. This truly promotes the formation of an integrated editorial-distribution work model [13].

2.5 The Coordinating Role of Decision-Makers in Editorial and Distribution Work

Due to the strong independence of various departments within publishing houses and differences in their work content and focus, building sound coordination between editorial and distribution departments requires the coordinating role of publishing house decision-makers.

First, publishing house managers should understand the overall work situation and conduct specific coordination from a holistic perspective. This enables clearer understanding of the positions of editorial and distribution departments in book publishing work, thereby providing references for promoting their work integration and coordination. Books are special spiritual products, so many editors plan books with high aesthetic standards that often target small audiences and generate limited economic benefits. Although such books represent quality topics from content and editorial perspectives, they rarely facilitate distribution work, causing distribution departments to seldom select them. As decision-makers, this requires communication and coordination to help editors and distributors understand each other's actual needs. Additionally, relevant policies can be formulated to provide appropriate rewards for editors, encouraging them to proactively plan topics that meet distribution needs. This allows editors to work more confidently while enabling distribution to smoothly com-

plete market placement [14].

2.6 Overall Coordination of Topic Planning and Distribution Work

In the current publishing house system, numerous conflicts exist between editorial and distribution work, and these conflicts will persist as long as the system continues. How to resolve or mitigate these contradictions under the existing system has become a key concern for publishing industry practitioners. For managers, it is necessary to transform internal conflicts into development drivers, enabling both editorial and distribution departments to better serve the publishing house while avoiding the problem of separating their work.

Specifically, editors cannot simply complete book editing, nor can distributors merely sell books, as this would further worsen the mutual isolation between editorial and distribution work. Therefore, both editorial and distribution work require mutual integration and reference, enabling each to understand existing contradictions and achieve practical overall coordination.

In concrete terms, editors must communicate effectively with distribution personnel during topic selection to clarify problems faced in distribution work, thereby avoiding corresponding issues during distribution through careful topic selection. Consequently, editors should understand and learn about channel selection and marketing strategy formulation. For distribution personnel, they need to understand topic direction determination and author selection to cooperate with editors' thinking in distribution work. Distributors should also proactively provide editors with relevant distribution information for market validation of different topics during planning. For distribution purposes, editors' cultural resources and author networks can become powerful tools for improving distribution effectiveness. Therefore, editors should cooperate with distribution departments by providing corresponding resources, thereby enhancing the integration level of editorial and distribution work and increasing book publishing value.

3.1 Strengthening Staff Training Programs

First, as the publishing industry continuously evolves, ensuring that editorial, distribution, and other staff members possess comprehensive qualities that meet contemporary development needs represents a fundamental requirement for improving publishing work quality. Therefore, staff training should be implemented to enhance professional capabilities and expertise. Simultaneously, staff can gain deeper understanding of publishing industry development trends and other departments' work needs, creating favorable conditions for work execution and communication. Training content should include not only departmental work matters but also excellent book publishing cases and evolving social thought dynamics.

3.2 Actively Introducing Advanced Work Models

All work models are formulated by staff and inevitably contain various problems. Therefore, continuous improvement of work models is necessary to solve existing work issues. Publishing house managers should also actively introduce advanced work models to achieve significant improvements in publishing work quality. However, during the introduction process, relevant staff should analyze internal actual conditions, optimize and adjust work models to transform them into versions that suit the publishing house' s actual needs, avoiding conflicts with real circumstances.

3.3 Emphasizing Regular Reflection and Analysis

Regular reflection and analysis enable staff and managers to more clearly grasp publishing house development status and publishing industry trends. When problems are identified, attention should focus on causes and solutions rather than excessive concern with responsibility allocation, thereby genuinely promoting enthusiasm for problem discovery and resolution and fostering a positive work atmosphere.

3.4 Establishing Sound Reward and Punishment Systems

Establishing sound reward and punishment systems can effectively stimulate publishing house staff work enthusiasm. For example, incorporating book sales factors into performance metrics encourages editorial and distribution staff to proactively consider market demand changes and integrate them into practical work, launching quality books while increasing publishing house economic benefits. Personnel who provide constructive suggestions for publishing house operations should also receive appropriate rewards, thereby fostering good internal communication.

Currently, optimizing the relationship between editorial and distribution departments plays a prominent role in improving book quality and enhancing publishing house social and economic benefits. Specific measures include parallel consideration of topic planning and distribution work, using distribution feedback to inform topic planning, leveraging different distribution channels for topic planning, following the cyclical nature of book distribution, ensuring decision-makers' coordinating role, and achieving overall coordination between topic planning and distribution work. Additionally, improving publishing house work quality through staff training programs, introducing advanced work models, regular reflection and analysis, and establishing sound reward systems can indirectly optimize editorial-distribution relationships.

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