

Transformation Dilemmas and Strategic Analysis of Television News Journalists in the Context of Media Convergence: Postprint

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Abstract

The ongoing advancement of information technology has profoundly transformed various domains of society, while also fundamentally altering the ways in which people access information. In the realm of news media, propelled by information technology, the emergence of new media as an information channel more readily embraced by audiences poses a substantial challenge to traditional television news media and imposes exceedingly high demands on television news journalists. Traditional news media, represented by television news, must continuously converge with new media in the information technology era to meet the requirements of television news work in this age. This paper analyzes the dilemmas and strategies concerning the transformation of television news journalists within the convergence context, hoping to contribute to the development of television news journalists in the context of media convergence.

Full Text

Analysis of Dilemmas and Strategies for TV News Journalist Transformation in the Context of Media Convergence

Abstract

The continuous development of information technology has fundamentally transformed various sectors of society, significantly altering how people access information. In the field of news media, this technological push has given rise to new media channels that are more readily embraced by audiences, posing substantial challenges to traditional television news media and placing higher demands on television news journalists. To meet the requirements of the information technology era, traditional news media represented by television news must continuously integrate with new media. This paper analyzes the dilemmas and strategies surrounding the transformation of television news journalists within

this convergence context, aiming to provide insights for their professional development.

Keywords: media convergence; television news journalists; transformation; dilemmas; strategies

The Drivers of Media Convergence

Media convergence in practice involves the integration of content, channels, platforms, technology, and operations across media organizations, reflecting a “mobile-first” approach. The “convergence” aspect encompasses the effective integration of talent, capital, and resources, while “development” signifies the need for media to achieve better survival and public service. The most critical element is resolutely breaking through the constraints of traditional systems and mindsets to effectively integrate management structures, organizational frameworks, and talent pools.

The motivation for media convergence can be analyzed from two primary dimensions. First, technological advancement: as computer network technologies continue to evolve and information technology applications expand across communication and broadcasting fields, the quantity and presentation forms of new media are constantly changing, making integration with new media imperative. Second, social development: ongoing societal progress has promoted advances in economic and cultural domains, leading to increasingly fragmented social strata and the end of the mass communication era. Today’s news audiences prefer to select information based on personal interests and professional characteristics, and they favor sharing and commenting on news content after browsing. Consequently, traditional media must integrate with new media, leveraging new media channels and technologies to disseminate news while enriching information presentation forms, thereby strengthening news vitality in the convergence era.

Media convergence has been a particularly hot topic in recent years, generating numerous excellent research findings in both journalism and academic circles, though a unified definition remains elusive. Mainstream interpretations include the following: The first builds upon the concept of communication form convergence proposed by Professor Ithiel de Sola Pool of MIT in the 1980s, suggesting that media convergence represents the integration of new media and traditional media communication forms. In 2003, American scholar Rich Gordon provided a more comprehensive explanation in his work *Digital Journalism: Emerging Media and Changing News Horizons*, proposing that media convergence should be understood through seven dimensions: technology, organization, ownership, media tactics, structure, reporting skills, and narrative and presentation forms.

Four key factors drive media convergence. Technologically, the continuous development of internet technologies has diversified information access channels

and increased audience demands, compelling traditional media to integrate with new media to satisfy these requirements. Politically, China's successful reform and opening-up policies have created a more relaxed domestic political environment, providing favorable conditions for media integration. Economically, the development of the market economy has intensified competitive pressures on traditional news media. The emergence of new communication platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, and short videos has broken the monopoly of traditional media like television and newspapers, reducing their operational revenue and threatening their survival. Culturally, the rapid development of internet technology has facilitated easier access to Western cultures and concepts, influencing our own perspectives. For news media to effectively promote traditional Chinese culture, more effective dissemination methods are necessary, and integration with new media proves highly effective.

Characteristics of Media Convergence

Media convergence exhibits three defining characteristics. First, technology and functionality: technology serves as the foundation for integrating new and traditional media, with continuous developments in information and digital technologies providing powerful momentum and distinct technical features. Media convergence enables full integration between traditional and new media, incorporating the functions of both.

Second, intensification and universality: media convergence has fundamentally transformed news communication patterns. Different communication modes are no longer independent but are moving toward joint application, adopting a model of "centralized planning, one-time collection, multiple generation, and screen-appropriate release." This approach effectively reduces information production and distribution costs while facilitating converged journalism. Unlike traditional news dissemination, converged journalism integrates channels and methods from both traditional and new media, moving information production toward intensification. This occurs not only through organizational integration but also by leveraging information technology to enable functions like news commenting and sharing, incorporating audience feedback to achieve collaborative news production, thereby demonstrating the universal nature of media convergence. Additionally, media convergence has broken the monopoly of traditional media like radio, television, and newspapers over news production and dissemination. In this new context, journalists are no longer the sole collectors and disseminators of news information; opinions and resources provided by the general audience can also serve as news content.

Third, content and channels: while traditional media content primarily appears in forms such as images, pictures, and sound, converged media encompasses all these forms while allowing for flexible combinations and repeated presentation using new media technologies. Traditional media channels include radio, television, and newspapers, whereas converged media adds more technologically advanced channels such as the internet and smartphones, rapidly expanding

audience reach.

Current Development Status of TV News Under Media Convergence

Two major developments characterize the current landscape. First, information platform construction: under the influence of media convergence, television news has established corresponding information platforms. Most localities are formally attempting to build distribution platforms based on “television, radio, newspapers, Weibo, WeChat, apps, and websites,” integrating multiple communication channels on the foundation of radio and television media to jointly release news information. This enhances news interactivity while enabling journalists to obtain feedback and adjustment references through audience comments. During news presentation, editors should reflect platform characteristics based on different media attributes—for instance, leveraging video and narrative strengths for television news while utilizing images and text for new media platforms.

Second, audience segmentation: media convergence has directly expanded the audience base for television news, but it cannot unify audience needs and preferences. To enhance audience satisfaction, news quality must be strengthened while segmenting audiences according to different characteristics, thereby providing more targeted news content and grasping specific audience demands to guide and improve news gathering and editing.

Dilemmas in TV News Journalist Transformation

Three primary dilemmas hinder journalist transformation. First, increased difficulty in information sharing: news reporting must be based on writing information and converting it into news content for media release, making information acquisition effectiveness crucial. Traditionally, journalists select news information from their channels, process and review it, then deliver it to audiences. However, in the convergence context, this approach constrains information sharing. Internet technology has enriched information access channels, and only by releasing news information immediately can journalists capture public attention. Yet environmental, personnel, and technical factors often prevent journalists from obtaining news promptly, undermining timeliness.

Second, constraints of traditional management: the integration process reveals numerous problems, particularly the failure to incorporate new media elements into traditional production methods, significantly altering content review and management processes. This results in a lack of targeted content and reduced effectiveness.

Third, insufficient professional competence: compared to new media, television news has traditionally relied heavily on visuals, with audiences obtaining the most vivid and direct experience through images. Consequently, television news has long centered on scripts and visuals in journalist management. However, in the convergence context, visuals are no longer the core of news content, and audience attention has shifted from images to content itself, placing higher demands

on journalists. For instance, when a news event occurs, people can simply use smartphones to take photos and upload them online for immediate publication and expanded dissemination through sharing. Television journalists, however, must undergo a series of processes including collection, production, and review before publishing, severely reducing news timeliness.

Transformation Strategies for TV News Journalists

Prioritizing News Content Content as the core represents the primary development direction for television news in the convergence era, requiring quality improvement based on authenticity to attract audiences. Television news journalists can leverage appropriate technologies for in-depth information mining to enhance their news acquisition capabilities. First, they should adopt an audience-centered approach to news 切入点, shifting from traditional one-way broadcasting models to interactive reporting that engages audiences. Second, they must highlight key news elements through deep information mining to provide audiences with truthful information and enhance television news authority. Third, journalists should actively participate in audience communities, transforming traditional collection methods, strengthening communication with news subjects, and delivering more emotionally rich content.

Understanding Audience Needs Analyzing television news production directions based on audience needs improves effectiveness and reduces costs. Scholars studying public opinion have noted that traditional media, self-media, and interpersonal communication constitute the main public opinion fields in society, with traditional media like television serving as both the primary arena and main venue for news content dissemination. In the convergence context, television news journalists should approach information gathering and content production from the audience perspective, viewing themselves as channels through which audiences participate in news reporting and expressing audience needs through news content. They must ensure content authenticity and truly serve audiences to gain their favor, using television news to positively guide public opinion and consolidate audience opinions into collective consensus. In practice, journalists should fully utilize various advanced internet technologies to obtain news promptly, compare how news information changes across time and regions, identify the most valuable content, satisfy audience needs, and make news more grounded.

Mastering New Media Skills In the convergence context, television news journalists must first master more new media business skills, continuously improving comprehensive competencies by refining their intellectual, observational, fieldwork, and writing abilities throughout the planning, gathering, editing, and broadcasting processes. Beyond handling images, videos, and text, they must adopt developmental and forward-looking perspectives on new information, producing it in more audience-friendly forms to expand their audience

base. The most fundamental skill is cross-media writing—using accessible language to describe videos and images so audiences can immediately grasp key points while summarizing keywords to present fragmented television news more systematically on new media platforms, enabling audiences to receive and digest information quickly. Furthermore, journalists in the convergence context must strengthen content discovery, exploration, and planning, explore segmented and differentiated communication, and strive to improve their ability to guide hot topics across all media platforms.

Conclusion

The arrival of the converged media era has placed higher demands on television news journalists. In this new environment, they must identify transformation priorities, update their mindsets, change how they gather information and produce content, and provide more audience-friendly news information by combining audience needs with new media formats. Only through such efforts can they expand the television news audience and achieve successful professional development within the media convergence landscape.

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

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