

Exploring the Convergence of Traditional and New Media: Postprint

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Abstract

The 21st century is an era of rapid development, during which information technology and digital media have broadened our horizons and brought entirely new media experiences. In response to this new landscape, traditional media, serving as a crucial window for the public to access the world and obtain information, must make corresponding adjustments, while emerging media must absorb the advantages of traditional media to promote the convergence of various media forms. Addressing the challenges in the convergence process of traditional and emerging media and proposing effective pathways constitutes an intrinsic requirement. This paper begins with the essence of integrated media, discusses the challenges encountered in the convergence process of traditional and emerging media, and proposes corresponding solutions.

Full Text

Research on the Integration and Development of Traditional and Emerging Media

Abstract

The 21st century is an era of rapid development, where information technology and digital media have broadened our horizons and brought entirely new media experiences. Faced with this new situation, traditional media—an important window for the public to access the world and understand information—must make corresponding adjustments, while emerging media must absorb the advantages of traditional media to promote the convergence of all media types. Addressing the difficulties in this integration process and proposing effective solutions is an inherent requirement. This article begins with the connotation of converged media, explores the challenges encountered in the integration of traditional and emerging media, and proposes corresponding countermeasures.

Keywords: converged media; development status; countermeasure research

Introduction

Both traditional and emerging media serve as important platforms for disseminating ideas and conveying new trends, playing significant roles in eliminating outdated ideologies and maintaining national stability and unity. Therefore, effectively leveraging the value of these media to truly serve the people and society is a task that demands our serious attention. In recent years, with continuous advancements in network infrastructure, the number of internet users in China has risen steadily, and 5G technology has elevated network speeds to an entirely new level, making new media a primary platform for people to obtain news and information. To meet societal needs and adapt to the times under this new social formation, we must clearly recognize the difficulties facing the integration and development of traditional and emerging media and adopt targeted approaches to address them.

1. Brief Introduction to “Converged Media”

We live in an information age, inhabiting a “global village” woven together by information. This village seems large yet is actually small, with events of all sizes unfolding constantly, and media platforms serve as windows through which we understand world affairs. Great social development has diversified information tools and media platforms. Traditional media is accelerating its transformation, emerging media is flourishing, and together they have created the current landscape of “converged media.” This situation greatly benefits the public by enabling them to obtain information with greater speed and through more diverse means, while simultaneously exerting significant influence on the professionalism and authenticity of news.

Literally understood, “converged media” refers to the integration of various different information platforms, with its starting point being “convergence” and its foothold being “media.” Strictly speaking, “converged media” means the fusion of various media that each have their own characteristics while also being interconnected. Converged media is not a new form of media, but rather a new media morphology that combines the features of both new and traditional media. It represents both the trend and the inevitable direction of media platform development. On one hand, mobile phones have become essential daily tools, and new media enables reading through mobile clients, allowing people to use their spare time for news reading and to participate in discussions about news events. On the other hand, many audiences still retain the habit of obtaining news from traditional media platforms, and the advantages and functions of traditional media cannot be ignored.

2.1 Advantages of Traditional Media

2.1.1 High News Authenticity

Traditional media exercises strict control over published information. Generally, specialized news reporters and editors conduct on-site investigations and interviews, followed by editing and review, before the news finally reaches audiences. Although this process is cumbersome, it largely ensures the authenticity and reliability of news.

2.1.2 Clear Sense of Social Responsibility

Most traditional media is government-led and newspaper-sponsored, with strict government control over their ideology and reporting. Under such stringent conditions, newspapers must operate according to regulations. Moreover, when the state introduces new policies or major events concerning national welfare and people's livelihood occur, traditional media must report on them. This environment gives traditional media personnel a strong sense of social responsibility.

2.1.3 Large User Base Support

Traditional media has developed in China for several decades, and over this long period, it has become the primary platform for people to obtain information. Furthermore, due to traditional media's strict quality control over news, it has also attracted a stable readership.

2.2 Disadvantages of Traditional Media

2.2.1 Slow Technology Updates

The advantage of traditional media lies in its "tradition." While the fixed operational system ensures the authenticity and reliability of news, it also creates the disadvantage of slow news dissemination, making it unable to withstand the strong impact of emerging media's advanced technology.

2.2.2 Monotonous Communication Forms

Information dissemination in traditional media is mostly text-based with few images. In contrast, emerging media not only has abundant video materials but also vivid audio content, which not only satisfies audience needs for obtaining news but also makes news reading an enjoyable experience.

2.3 Advantages of Emerging Media

2.3.1 Grassroots Characteristics

Information dissemination in traditional media is top-down. First, professional news reporters must conduct on-site interviews, then specialized editorial de-

partments edit the news events into text that conforms to audience characteristics and language habits, and finally, it must be submitted to the review department for approval. These numerous steps make news reporting slow, and ordinary people are merely passive recipients of news events. New media completely overturns this model. In the internet era, new media enables everyone to participate in news reporting, everyone can become a news subject, and everyone can express their views on a news event. These expressions need not be exquisite, as long as they are clear.

2.3.2 Convenience

The 21st century is a fast-paced era, and people have limited spare time. New media precisely fits this characteristic—audiences can access the latest news and information anytime and anywhere by opening their mobile phones or computers. Netizens can also forward and discuss these news events, highlighting real-time convenience.

2.4 Shortcomings of Emerging Media

Everything has its disadvantages and advantages, and emerging media is no exception. We should be fully aware of its shortcomings while utilizing its strengths. First, under the emerging media platform, many people can participate, but due to differences in everyone's background and cognitive level, attitudes toward each event also vary. These different viewpoints colliding may damage social ethos and harm the construction of a harmonious society. Second, news reports in emerging media are relatively short, and many media platforms often use sensationalist “clickbait” titles to grab attention. This fragmented reading creates understanding deviations, causing many people to form one-sided understandings and consequently make inappropriate or false statements. Finally, some users exploit the advantages of rapid internet dissemination for self-hype, posting false statements and inappropriate content online, which impacts the online environment and may affect public trust in online information.

3. Challenges in the Integration of Traditional and Emerging Media

Only by correctly diagnosing problems can we prescribe the right remedies. To smoothly promote the integration of different media, we must confront the difficulties in the work. Based on practical experience, this article summarizes the challenges encountered in the integration process as follows:

3.1 Insufficient Professionalism in the Talent Pool

Talent is the backbone of development in any field, and the talent pool is inevitably greatly affected when the industry environment undergoes significant changes. Achieving the integration of traditional and emerging media cannot

be separated from the support of staff. However, while the media industry is rapidly developing, the work capabilities and professional ethics of media personnel have not kept pace. Some workers have insufficient theoretical knowledge, lack practical experience, have poor sense of responsibility, and do not understand work processes well, let alone communicate and collaborate with various media platforms. Moreover, at present, there is a shortage of professionals familiar with various media platforms. Many are non-professionals who only understand the development and promotion of their own platforms and are unwilling or unable to learn the operational skills and necessary knowledge required by other media platforms. Some staff begin work after only simple training, lacking understanding of relevant operational processes, which is very detrimental to promoting converged media work.

3.2 Media Platforms Working Independently, Difficult to Coordinate and Develop Holistically

The key to promoting the integration of traditional and emerging media lies in “convergence,” and the foothold also lies in “convergence.” However, achieving this “convergence” is by no means easy. The integration of multiple media requires staff to transform traditional work concepts and innovate traditional work methods. To build genuine “converged media” and effectively perform its function, it is necessary to strengthen communication and collaboration among various media platforms. Looking at the current status of traditional and emerging media integration and development, we can see that there is a lack of overall planning across media platforms, with each acting independently, generally presenting a situation where each platform operates separately. Reporting content is monotonous and tedious, merely remaining at the level of simple news reporting and information transmission.

3.3 Lack of Relevant Systems and Inadequate Converged Media Management

As the saying goes, “nothing can be accomplished without norms and standards.” Support from relevant departments and the introduction of relevant systems play a safeguarding and accelerating role in promoting converged media work. However, all of this is constrained by market economic development. China’s regional economic development shows significant differences, and the promotion of new concepts is relatively slow in economically backward areas. Under economic constraints, people’s acceptance of new things is also lower, which naturally leads to difficulties in efficiently promoting the integration of traditional and emerging media. In China’s eastern and coastal regions, people have higher degrees of open-mindedness, converged media work is more advanced, and government support systems and management mechanisms are also more advanced. However, “the road ahead is long and arduous,” and there are still many areas needing improvement and effort. The development space for converged media is still more or less limited, hindering the pace of integrated development of

traditional and emerging media.

3.4 Confused Positioning and Blind Reform

Against the backdrop of rapid new media development, some enterprises have also accelerated the pace of traditional and emerging media integration. However, achieving integrated development is not accomplished in a single day. Seeing the great momentum of new media development, some media enterprises blindly push forward reforms. As the saying goes, “haste makes waste.” When these enterprises integrate traditional and emerging media, they begin blind reforms without clear development plans and market positioning strategies, directly leading to failure and hasty conclusions in media convergence development. There are also certain problems in internal management. Traditional media managers place great emphasis on employee discipline, and information transmission is top-down, requiring employees to first collect information and then report to superiors. Only after a series of processes can reporting occur. Such cumbersome procedures obviously cannot keep pace with the speed of information changes. This environment urges news editors and managers to change management methods. Therefore, managers must delegate certain powers to journalists to report news at the fastest speed.

4. Paths to Promote the Integration and Development of Traditional and Emerging Media

The integration of traditional and emerging media must be approached with rigorous work attitudes and promoted with exquisite skills. This article suggests that integration can be achieved through the following paths:

4.1 Enrich Knowledge Reserves and Keep Pace with the Times

First, as a solid force in promoting converged media work, in-service personnel must strengthen their training and be guided to adopt the concept of “lifelong learning.” In a rapidly changing social environment, it is impossible for any media worker to keep pace with the times by attempting to unchangedly borrow or adopt past work methods. In future society, lifelong learning has become the norm. To this end, media staff can be regularly organized to study in other places, and work groups can be created to strengthen internal communication and collaboration. Second, talent acquisition and employment are significant for talent reserves and structure. Talent quality and skill levels often determine the congenital fate of this work. It is necessary to actively introduce talents well-versed in history and journalism. The first quality required of hired talents should be good ideological conditions and consciousness—a person with poor ideological quality will inevitably not convey correct values to others. The second hiring criterion reflects work capability, which is the basic threshold and necessary condition. A person with good qualities but lacking necessary work skills also cannot shoulder the responsibility of promoting converged media work.

4.2 Break Institutional Barriers and Unify Converged Media Work Processes

Breaking institutional barriers first requires media workers to innovate work thinking, courageously break the ideological constraints that restrict innovative thinking, and keep pace with the times. Specifically, this means breaking fixed thinking patterns, promoting self-transformation, absorbing the advantages of various media platforms, and strengthening one's own capabilities. Second, to successfully integrate traditional and emerging media, transforming managers' ideological concepts, adapting to the needs of the times, and improving managers' own qualities is a necessary path. Third, it is necessary to change the propaganda management model. China's traditional media communication work mainly involves journalists first collecting information, then compiling valuable and worthy news events into text form, and submitting them to relevant departments for pre-broadcast review to examine whether program content conforms to mainstream social values. Only after passing review can they be broadcast. The cumbersome procedures make information transmission slow and untimely. The emergence of new media makes news reporting increasingly rapid and public participation increasingly high, requiring news reporting supervision to shift from pre-broadcast to during and after broadcast, breaking institutional barriers, promoting communication and collaboration among departments, and comprehensively implementing total quality management concepts to better improve work levels.

4.3 Strengthen Top-Level Design and Support Converged Media Work

Although the 21st century is an era of information explosion, the concept of "converged media" was born not long ago. Coupled with weak economic construction levels, promoting converged media work faces enormous challenges. Changing this situation cannot be separated from government support. The government should strengthen top-level design while also feeling its way across the river—boldly moving forward while summarizing experiences, firmly and steadily promoting converged media work step by step. The implementation of the "West-New Project" and "Village-Village Connection Project" shows that the government has placed converged media work on its agenda, but the task is long and arduous, and there is still much for the government to do with multiple entry points. The government can guide through policies and legal support to bring more positive and healthy television programs into people's lives. Additionally, the government can establish relevant systems to broadcast more positively guiding content during good time slots and on good channels, thereby motivating television program creators to produce more positive programs. Under the premise of complying with laws and regulations, the government can formulate incentive policies to bring more value-oriented television content into residents' lives.

4.4 People-Oriented Approach to Steadily Promote Traditional and Emerging Media Integration

First, solving the bottleneck in converged media promotion lies in talent. Managers must base themselves on the overall development situation, think far ahead, and formulate corporate development strategies. Second, they must do a good job in personnel training to equip them with certain media literacy. In the environment of traditional and emerging media integration, news media personnel must think carefully about “what to say.” We live in a global village where numerous events occur daily. How to select valuable and newsworthy events from them is something news media personnel must consider. Second, “how to say it” is also a topic journalists must 重视. A sage once said, “Whoever can tell stories owns the world.” Applying this to journalists, whoever can tell stories can spread news further. Being able to tell stories means following news laws, promoting mutual understanding, and examining the same news from unique perspectives. Finally, they also need certain marketing capabilities because, in the new media environment, relevant practitioners need to participate in the entire process of news production and dissemination, integrating all media to make news reports attractive to audiences in all aspects of “pictures and sound.”

In summary, traditional and emerging media platforms are complementary. Promoting the integrated development of traditional and emerging media brings immeasurable benefits to information and news dissemination. Currently, converged media development is still in its initial stage, with few existing experiences or successful models to draw upon. Even where advanced experiences exist, they are built on the foundation of meeting local actual conditions and user needs. Therefore, in promoting converged media work, we must not blindly imitate but must go deep into reality. At the same time, we should also recognize the shortcomings of emerging media and the advantages of traditional media worth carrying forward, comprehensively integrating the strengths and weaknesses of both media forms to output correct values for society and truly serve society. It is hoped that the viewpoints proposed in this article can be applied in practice and provide some ideological guidance for the integration of traditional and emerging media.

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

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