

On the Video-Driven Transformation and Development of Converged Media Centers in the Post-Print Era

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Abstract

The videoization of media convergence centers constitutes a compelled transformation and fundamental rebirth, shifting from text-based and traditional television reporting to video-centric content production. Videoization enables media convergence centers to integrate content and channels, achieve multi-platform dissemination on the mobile internet, forge new mainstream media entities, and expand both influence and monetization capabilities. The videoization process engages in mutual adaptation, cross-motivation, and synchronized resonance with talent selection, process reengineering, and institutional mechanism innovation, thereby more effectively “guiding the masses and serving the masses.”

Full Text

Preamble

Title: Video-Driven Transformation and Development of Media Convergence Centers

Abstract: The videoization of media convergence centers represents a forced transformation—a rebirth through fundamental change—shifting from text-based and traditional television reporting to video content production as the primary focus. Videoization integrates content and channels, enabling diversified dissemination across mobile internet platforms to build new mainstream media and expand both influence and monetization capacity. This process involves mutual adaptation, cross-incentivization, and resonance with talent selection, workflow reengineering, and institutional innovation, thereby better “guiding the masses and serving the masses.”

Keywords: Media Convergence Center; Media Convergence; Videoization

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1. Proactive Action: Responding to Media Landscape Transformation

Faced with the transformative upheaval brought by mobile internet, how should county-level media convergence centers (hereinafter referred to as convergence centers) respond? Pursuing videoization represents the optimal strategy for fundamental transformation and adaptation. The videoization of print and television media can achieve the strategic objectives of integrated reform and transformational development, creating new mainstream media.

The videoization of convergence centers is an innovative process of abandoning outdated practices and leveraging momentum for growth. It integrates content and form, representing an adaptive evolution that discards the old for the new relative to text, image, television, and radio reporting. This process creates new platforms, acquires new advantages, enriches reporting formats, expands dissemination scope, reshapes monetization models, and creates a better future. Throughout this videoization journey, convergence centers must maintain existing strengths, dare to compete, and excel at competing. By driving comprehensive development of visual products through video news, achieving diversified online dissemination, attracting larger audiences, and expanding influence, they can facilitate transformation in production, dissemination, operation, and talent selection models to meet new era demands. This fosters deep integration and sustainable development between traditional and emerging media, enabling growth and strengthening.

Three dimensions require convergence center videoization: First, following the general trend. Media must extend their reach wherever audiences are located. Mobile internet has fundamentally altered audience reading habits, with the majority of content consumption on mobile terminals now focused on video-based material, while news through newspapers, television, and radio accounts for a smaller share. Producing videoized content to meet audience needs represents an adaptive response to this trend. Second, filling market gaps. Under the traditional model, county-level television stations, constrained by institutional mechanisms and outdated concepts, produced content that was disconnected from grassroots realities, lacked appeal, and suffered from low output and minimal impact, failing to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of local viewers. Audiences require local institutions and video products to fill this void, and convergence centers can effectively fulfill their function of “guiding the masses, serving the masses” by addressing this gap. Third, enhancing status. The videoization of convergence center content essentially serves to “attract traffic,” “build fan communities,” and “amplify positive energy,” endowing them with new production, dissemination, and operational capabilities that expand

reach and influence. Videoization drives conceptual transformation, wins greater audience favor, and restores, consolidates, and elevates their position within the ecosystem where traditional and emerging media coexist.

2. Visualizing News: Comprehensive Development of Video Content

Among all visual expression products, convergence centers must prioritize the production of video news or news videoization, then systematically and comprehensively express, disseminate, and monetize print and broadcast content and products—including advertising and services—through high-quality video.

News constitutes the prerequisite and foundation for convergence center survival, development, and transformation. Media convergence emphasizes cross-boundary absorption of external energy and advantages to promote self-development. Video news aligns with the “mobile first, video first” strategy, facilitating occupation of mobile internet communication positions and strengthening convergence centers’ dissemination capacity and influence. All news content or works previously expressed through text and images in newspapers—including advertisements—should now be expressed through video, or backed up with video news to capture internet communication markets. Across all news genres, even commentary should incorporate visual elements to subvert purely textual forms and create impact. For instance, adding cartoons to commentary or transforming it into serial comic commentary gives it the characteristics of cartoon news, optimizing dissemination effects when shared on mobile phones.

2.1 Excelling in Major Theme Coverage, Routine Reporting, and Breaking News

Videoization of major theme reporting. Major news themes at the county level typically include party congresses, annual “two sessions,” economic work conferences, rural work conferences, culture-education-health conferences, political-legal work conferences, and other central work meetings. These events involve decisions, deployments, calls to action, conclusions, and experience summaries that are inherently significant. However, traditional newspaper and television coverage typically features lengthy, dense blocks of text that create audience resistance and yield poor dissemination effects. Convergence centers must break free from conventional reporting models, plan carefully, and collect video and audio materials outside meeting venues in advance. They should prepare multi-image slideshows, graphic illustrations, animated graphics, and H5 products (or immersive content like VR/AR when possible), integrating intra-meeting and extra-meeting content. This transforms pure text, image, and footage reporting into multimedia combinations, producing video news for multi-channel distribution to attract more audiences, particularly younger demographics. Convergence centers must produce major theme video news with high starting points, pre-

mium quality, and rapid turnaround, meeting standards no less than those of county broadcasters' original products. They should make video content fashionable, appealing, and profound, innovating through new technologies and techniques. Beyond traditional software effects, they should appropriately employ animated split-screens, animated freeze-frames, vertical screen displays, mixed editing, and 3D rendering of old photographs.

Videoization of routine reporting should offer refreshing perspectives.

Convergence centers should strengthen video news production in areas and topics previously neglected by county and municipal broadcasters, such as wildlife tracking reports and elderly entrepreneurship, striving for uniqueness where others have nothing. In areas where county and municipal broadcasters have not innovated reporting methods—such as county industrial development history, housing evolution, clothing changes, home cooking methods, and rural organic farming techniques—convergence centers must conduct deep excavation and intensive cultivation to produce distinctive video news that avoids head-on competition and achieves novelty where others have something.

Videoization of breaking news must prioritize rapid release. For video coverage of sudden incidents like natural disasters and accidents, convergence centers must have journalists or correspondents arrive at the scene before commercial media and self-media, interview causes and consequences, obtain video footage, and restore event truth. They should disseminate positive coverage to guide public opinion, respond to social concerns at the earliest opportunity, dispel rumors spread by commercial media, counter negative impacts from self-media distortions, and bolster audience confidence.

2.2 Expanding Horizons: Developing a Video Product Portfolio

After establishing strong video news production, convergence centers must capitalize on momentum to produce more diverse, higher-quality video content that generates greater traffic and returns.

First, developing live streaming business to monetize influence and increase revenue. Online video live streaming enjoys robust growth in both volume and quality, with supply falling short of demand. Audiences are willing to pay up-front to watch, representing an ideal state for media revenue generation. Convergence centers developing live streaming can amplify the positive energy of party media while cultivating new media talent and enhancing convergence capabilities. Ten years ago, this author worked at a county newspaper website that launched online television live streaming. By focusing cameras on grassroots communities and ordinary people—even live streaming a township year-end commendation meeting—the website garnered substantial praise and amplified influence. Measured per capita, the website's sponsorship revenue far exceeded average returns from print advertising and broadcast advertising slots, demonstrating high cost-effectiveness while simultaneously developing staff potential and capabilities. Any scene or process with aesthetic value, storytelling, 趣味

性, positive energy, and grassroots appeal—similar to *A Bite of China*—suits live streaming. From bird nesting to simple cooking demonstrations, countless stories and live broadcast scenes exist within a county's hundreds of thousands of residents' daily lives, education, healthcare, elderly care, environment, and reform initiatives across China's more than 2,800 counties. Video live streaming awaits only excavation.

Second, convergence centers should develop knowledge payment and gaming video products and markets. These two categories remain scarce content in the market and can generate high returns, serving as strategic options for convergence innovation and transformational development.

Gaming as a side business can outperform main operations. China's domestic online gaming market alone reached 218.9 billion yuan in 2017, exceeding total newspaper advertising revenue and continuing to grow annually. Currently, only a few major corporations dominate online gaming, leaving many untapped areas (particularly positive-energy programs) for development. Convergence centers can position themselves to achieve breakthroughs in convergence and operations. Even capturing 0.1-1% of the existing market would generate 200 million to 20 billion yuan in incremental revenue—far surpassing advertising operations (averaging less than 20 million yuan). Convergence centers can develop gaming products as a side business to compensate for stagnant advertising and distribution revenue.

Knowledge payment should be cultivated as a new blue ocean. Knowledge payment is rising and gaining popularity online, offering convergence centers an opportunity to leverage their strengths. This can address gaps in knowledge popularization and dissemination (particularly science popularization) for farmers and small-town residents by the county-level emerging media. Examples include guiding villagers on how to become exemplary urban citizens, outstanding craftsmen, oil painting creators, or handicraft producers to increase income amid urbanization waves. With nearly 1.4 billion people—more than half in rural areas and small towns—the market is vast and full of potential. Convergence centers should adopt differentiated competition strategies against commercial new media and self-media, delivering knowledge that is professional, storytelling-driven, practical, video-based, social, and positive-energy focused. This approach cultivates capabilities and interests, attracts sustained payment and tipping from audiences, enhances national cultural quality, and strengthens cultural confidence.

2.3 Seizing the Momentum: Producing Documentaries and Animations

Producing documentaries and animations represents the centerpiece and high threshold of convergence center videoization. Crossing this threshold signifies that a convergence center has “graduated,” gaining clarity, independence, and distinctive capabilities to become stronger in online market competition. Documen-

taries and animations involve high difficulty, large investment, and substantial returns, with demanding requirements for technical sophistication, storytelling, intellectual property protection, and market orientation. They require competing with top-tier players and involve more variables than newspaper reporting or video news production, forcing convergence centers to advance through pressure and develop deep-level gains and outstanding talent. Convergence centers must begin producing documentaries and animations now.

Documentaries and animations use graphics or footage to tell stories, expressing subjects including heaven, earth, humans, animals, plants, microorganisms, and their combinations. As long as content pursues novelty and change, offering audiences truth, goodness, and beauty, endless chapters and plotlines remain to be expressed. When starting production, convergence centers should leverage their local advantages to fully express intra-regional subjects. After gaining experience or mastering relevant production models, they can extend outward to capture extra-regional markets and expand online influence and monetization results. Convergence centers can also set up online tipping and virtual gift links, collecting fees through mobile payment tools to achieve immediate monetization. A single work can generate tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of yuan in mobile tipping revenue, adding new income channels to compensate for declining traditional business revenue while providing timely market feedback and data on specific articles or categories to evaluate, adjust, improve, and enhance reporting quality and new product development.

3. Attempting Reform: Striving for Sustainable Development

While launching innovations in video expression poses little difficulty for convergence centers, sustaining innovation and creating new institutions and mechanisms to maintain vitality represents a significant challenge. Whether videoization arises from proactive choice or forced necessity, convergence centers must attempt paradigm transformations—daring to trial-and-error, adept at correction, and resolute in optimization. They must change thinking patterns, adopt problem-oriented approaches, overcome obstacles, and explore advanced, applicable production, dissemination, monetization, and employee motivation models that accumulate high potential energy and transform it into new kinetic energy for videoization.

3.1 Leveraging Video Production Capacity

Convergence centers must ensure mobile content interacts mutually with traditional media, avoiding vicious competition while empowering print, television, broadcast, and subsidiary new media to grow in online markets. For instance, video news should primarily take the form of short videos with a crisp, fast-paced style featuring abundant live sound, minimal host presence, and large subtitles with keywords for direct, no-nonsense delivery. Products should typically range

from 10 to 60 seconds to facilitate mobile reading and sharing. A 10-second video accommodates approximately 40-word briefs, while 60 seconds can cover 300-400-word commentaries or news items, meeting mobile users' needs for rapid, shallow reading. For live streaming equipment, convergence centers should select integrated, simple devices costing around 100,000 yuan per unit rather than single television broadcast vehicles costing millions, thereby reducing operational costs and enhancing competitiveness. Strategically, video product development should achieve abundance and high quality across all categories over the long term, while tactically concentrating resources on one or two product categories—like mechanized, large-scale cultivation of staple crops such as wheat, rice, or apples—to secure competitive advantages before expanding into new categories and establishing a virtuous cycle.

3.2 Implementing “News +” Initiatives

“News +” initiatives represent the reconstruction of value and breakthrough rebirth for convergence centers, constituting required coursework for deep integration and transformational development. Practice over the past three years demonstrates that convergence center videoization and “News +” initiatives must accompany each other as cause and effect, mutually promoting and strengthening one another. “News +” refers to news + services + social interaction + capital operations, creating new value and elevating operations to a higher level. It transforms newspapers, television, broadcast, and websites from small-scale operations into modern “large farms,” expanding connotation and extension for fundamental transformation into new mainstream media. Simply put, convergence centers implementing “News +” initiatives can thrive even without traditional advertising and print distribution revenue. Videoization integrates these visions and concerns into reality. The key focus of “News +” initiatives that aligns with videoization is editorial process reengineering, which drives innovation in traditional media institutions and mechanisms to reduce resistance and increase synergistic momentum. Videoization generates high returns in operational transformation, feeding back into print and television development. It corresponds with “News +” initiatives, bringing competitive advantages and model innovation in copyright protection and monetization. When conditions mature, convergence centers can spin off video operations to establish joint-stock companies for IPO and capital support.

3.3 Attracting Exceptional Talent to Accomplish Extraordinary Goals

“Hard power, soft power, ultimately talent power.” Implementing videoization at convergence centers requires attracting outstanding talent in video design, production, and management.

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

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