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Communication Differences and Interrelationships Between New Media and Traditional Media: Postprint

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Abstract

With the robust development of the network economy in recent years, internet users have grown substantially. In 2016, the number of netizens increased to over 3 billion, with 800 million internet users in China alone, approximately equivalent to the combined total of internet users in France, Germany, India, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Currently, research on new media primarily focuses on its subversion of traditional information dissemination methods, transmission relationships, communication concepts, and communication patterns; its alteration of people's established behavioral patterns and living conditions; and its creation of new industrial forms and economic growth models. In fact, traditional media still retain their advantages in the short term and are unlikely to be easily relegated to history. How to manage the coexistence relationship between online media and traditional media is a critically important issue at present.

Full Text

Differences and Interrelationships Between New Media and Traditional Media Communication

Abstract: With the robust development of the network economy in recent years, internet users have grown substantially, reaching over 3 billion globally in 2016. China alone accounts for 800 million internet users—approximately the combined total of internet users in France, Germany, India, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Current research on new media primarily focuses on its disruption of traditional information dissemination methods, teacher-student relationships, communication concepts, and communication patterns; its transformation of established behavioral modes and living conditions; and its creation

of new industrial forms and economic growth models. In reality, traditional media retains its advantages in the short term and will not easily exit the historical stage. How to manage the coexistence of network media and traditional media represents a critically important contemporary issue.

Keywords: new media; traditional media; internet; characteristics of new media

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With the rapid development of science and technology, informatization has exerted an increasingly significant influence on our daily production and lives, particularly impacting traditional media. According to American survey data examining network impact on media consumption patterns among 2,000 respondents, television viewership declined by 23%, magazine readership by 20%, radio listenership by 9%, and newspaper readership by 11%—with television experiencing the most substantial decrease. However, every medium possesses inherent value, making the claim that “network media will replace traditional media” untenable.

1. Advantages of Traditional Media

Traditional media refers to conventional communication methods such as television, radio, and newspapers, while new media denotes recent information dissemination forms primarily based on information technology, electronic technology, and the internet, transmitted through various terminal devices including mobile phones, computers, and mobile clients.

The four major traditional media exhibit distinct characteristics:

Newspapers function as static media that promote active reading, presenting multiple pieces of information simultaneously and enhancing readers’ cognitive agency through free selection. Readers can also record necessary content when needed. Newspapers maintain high credibility, as accurate and reliable reporting constitutes a crucial condition for earning public trust.

Magazines, like newspapers, belong to print media and share certain advantages, yet differ significantly. Magazines demonstrate strong audience targeting, with most publications designed for specific reader demographics. Their rich content requires multiple reading sessions, and many readers preserve issues for future reference, thereby increasing opportunities for exposure to magazine advertisements. Consequently, magazines represent the most resilient media format.

Radio possesses trans-spatiotemporal communication capabilities, securing its

position among various advertising media. Its convenience operates on two levels: first, receivers are portable, enabling listening anytime and anywhere; second, radio allows simultaneous engagement in other activities. Radio advertisements leverage linguistic artistry and sound effects to create appropriate emotional atmospheres, enhancing appeal while providing entertainment value—an advantage print media cannot match. Radio also delivers rapid dissemination, as broadcasting requires no complex video recording or editing processes, enabling audiences to receive advertising information quickly.

Television, like radio, employs radio waves to transmit signals and shares radio's broad reach. Television represents the most effective advertising medium in the industry, a conclusion reached by numerous advertisers. In China, massive audiences watch television daily, achieving not only substantial demographic penetration but also rapid, widespread dissemination without requiring printing.

2. Characteristics of New Media

First, prominent personalization. Technological constraints make mass appeal the most salient feature of traditional media. In contrast, new media enables more refined audience segmentation and can target individuals specifically. Users can subscribe to desired information through new media, with different audiences receiving either completely different or identical information. This represents a significant departure from traditional media's fixed content.

Second, increased audience selectivity. From a technical perspective, new media allows users not only to access desired information but also to publish information themselves, thoroughly breaking traditional media limitations. Unlike traditional media's "media-led" model, new media adopts an "audience-driven" approach, offering audiences far broader selection ranges.

Third, diverse manifestation forms. New media presentation processes are not only rich but also highly varied, combining visuals, audio, and text to achieve limitless content expansion, making information more intuitive and vivid. Theoretically, new media can access, store, and retrieve information resources worldwide as long as computer network environments are available. Beyond large capacity, new media features "easy retrievability"—the ability to store content and conveniently retrieve information anytime, anywhere.

Fourth, real-time information publishing. Compared with traditional television and radio broadcasting, new media breaks temporal and spatial constraints, enabling 24-hour publication. Moreover, new media possesses powerful interactive capabilities that equalize the relationship between audiences and information disseminators. Audiences are no longer subject to media manipulation, allowing real-time interaction between both parties.

3. Differences Between Traditional and New Media

Market Differences: Due to national conditions, traditional media in China operates under state management with certain monopolistic characteristics and relatively high profits. New media faces no such restrictions, resulting in intense competition.

Audience Differences: New media follows an “audience-driven” model, whereas traditional media operates as “media-led,” granting new media audiences greater choice.

Management Differences: After years of rapid development, traditional media management structures and mechanisms have become increasingly sophisticated, with strong market orientation. New media, having developed over a shorter period, still exhibits significant management loopholes and insufficient emphasis on technical aspects.

Internal Structural Differences: Traditional media employs hierarchical management models. Compared with new media editors’ authority, the latter wield greater editorial power, while traditional media’ s reporter-editor-editor-in-chief model does not apply to new media. Consequently, the daily volume of online news is enormous—relying solely on a single editor-in-chief is unfeasible, making website editors relatively more powerful and demanding stricter gatekeeping awareness.

Timeliness Differences: Traditional media requires scheduled, quantitative information release with strong temporal effectiveness. New media can update continuously 24 hours a day, requiring constant attention to grasp important news events promptly.

Layout Differences: Newspapers enforce strict layout design requirements with clear hierarchies and priorities, necessitating careful arrangement of sections and headlines. Network media eliminates these constraints. New media allocates information primarily based on temporal flow rather than planar layout, lacking proprietary layout language unlike traditional media.

Writing Style Differences: New media emphasizes conciseness and speed, with few articles reaching several thousand words online, as most audiences lose interest when encountering lengthy pieces. Network headlines employ concise, dynamic, and enticing formulations that highlight key points directly, eliminating the need for traditional media’ s structured, parallel, and tonal patterns.

Interviewing Differences: New media features relatively little original content and rarely conducts interviews, mostly engaging in direct editing. Traditional media primarily relies on interviews, investing substantial effort in well-documented, reliable reporting.

4. The Relationship Between Traditional and New Media

First, new media, also termed network media, possesses enormous future development potential, representing the inevitable trend of the network era. With rapid dissemination updates, low costs, large information volumes, rich content, and global reach at minimal expense, these figures are projected to continue expanding.

Second, the coexistence of new and traditional media. Each medium maintains its own advantages and irreplaceability. Traditional media's most prominent strength lies in its professional practitioners, who generally possess high levels of knowledge, analytical ability, and learning capacity, representing a talent convergence hub.

Third, audiences should have multiple choices when selecting media, with both new and traditional media jointly promoting development through integration. For instance, currently popular online short videos exemplify this networked phenomenon.

In summary, the preceding analysis reveals that traditional and new media have gradually integrated alongside social progress, forming cooperative relationships that achieve complementary advantages. With continuous improvement in information technology and rapid internet system development, the current integration level between traditional and new media has significantly improved. This stems primarily from gradually increasing network penetration that enhances the resource allocation structure for both dissemination methods and builds a favorable platform for their communication and development. On this foundation, numerous national news media organizations have established network media channels to solicit public opinion and understand audience demand for current political information. Thus, network development has comprehensively propelled traditional-new media integration.

As traditional media, the imperative is to deepen reform of conventional profit models through continuous innovation, fully leveraging resource advantages to promote sustainable development via credibility and content strengths, thereby enhancing core functionality. Additionally, traditional media must fully integrate advanced science and technology, keeping pace with contemporary network era development trends to improve operational platforms. Through the internet, big data platforms, and integration of newspapers, magazines, radio, and television resources, entirely new news production models should be established. Furthermore, continuous optimization of internal elements is necessary to maximize capital appreciation and pursue optimal returns.

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