

## **An Analysis of WeChat Official Account Operations for Traditional Industry Journals: A Case Study of “China Safety Production” (Postprint)**

**With the proliferation of mobile Internet and the development of social media, traditional media faces unprecedented challenges. For traditional industry jour…**

**Authors:** Pan Wenzheng

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### **Abstract**

In recent years, with the rapid development of science and technology, new media has emerged and exhibited rapid development momentum, challenging the status of traditional media. To enhance their competitiveness, attract audience users, and interact with audiences, traditional industry journals have successfully opened WeChat Official Accounts, utilizing the WeChat public platform to conduct proactive and beneficial explorations in media convergence. However, influenced by traditional experience and entrenched thinking patterns, industry journals still face certain issues in content organization and operation of their WeChat Official Accounts, inevitably falling into pitfalls during their development process.

### **Full Text**

## **Media Industry Formats · Media Case Studies: An Analysis of WeChat Official Account Operations in Traditional Industry Journals—A Case Study of “China Safety Production”**

**Abstract:** In recent years, with the rapid development of technology, new media has risen and shown a momentum of swift growth, challenging the position of traditional media. To enhance their competitiveness, attract audience users, and interact with them, traditional industry journals have opened WeChat official

accounts one after another, using the WeChat public platform to actively and beneficially explore media convergence. However, influenced by traditional experience and fixed thinking patterns, industry journals still have certain problems in content organization and operation of WeChat official accounts, inevitably falling into misunderstandings during their development.

**Keywords:** Industry journals; WeChat official accounts; new media; China Safety Production; operation management

**Author:** Pan Wenzheng

In recent years, with the rapid development of technology, new media has risen and shown a momentum of swift growth, challenging the position of traditional media. With the further impact of new media on traditional media, especially since Tencent launched the WeChat official account platform, audience reading habits have changed with the development of mobile terminals, breaking the secluded status of industry journals. To enhance their competitiveness, attract audience users, and interact with them, traditional industry journals have opened WeChat official accounts one after another, using the WeChat public platform to actively and beneficially explore media convergence. However, influenced by traditional experience and fixed thinking patterns, industry journals still have certain problems in content organization and operation of WeChat official accounts, inevitably falling into misunderstandings during their development. To this end, this paper attempts to analyze the case of the “China Safety Production” WeChat official account of *China Safety Production* magazine.

## 1. Analysis of “China Safety Production” WeChat Official Account Operations

*China Safety Production* magazine opened its WeChat official account in June 2014 and passed verification in January 2016. Over nearly five years, its average daily number of pushed messages has gradually increased, and content has become increasingly rich and substantial, making the WeChat official account an important platform for information release and brand building.

### 1.1 Main Content Pushed by the Journal’s WeChat Official Account

Through classification and statistics of 718 messages pushed by the “China Safety Production” WeChat official account from April 16, 2016 to April 30, 2019, it is evident that *China Safety Production* magazine is a major media outlet in the emergency management and safety production industry, supervised by the Ministry of Emergency Management. It serves as an important medium for publicizing the Party and government’s policies, decisions, and deployments on emergency management and safety production. Consequently, its WeChat official account pushes relatively professional content.

**1.1.1 Major News and Important Information Release** Timely reporting of valuable emergency management and safety industry news has always been a consistent strength of *China Safety Production* magazine, and this advantage has been extended to its WeChat official account. Whenever major news events occur, the “China Safety Production” WeChat official account features the news as the top graphic message and cooperates with related information in other graphic messages for combined push, comprehensively reporting the entire dynamic development of the event and compensating for the timeliness deficiency of traditional industry journals.

Additionally, as an authoritative media outlet in emergency management and safety production, the “China Safety Production” WeChat official account is responsible for publicizing administrative regulations of the Ministry of Emergency Management, disclosing government information, and promoting major activities. It timely pushes authoritative expert interpretations and viewpoints to enhance understanding and communication.

**1.1.2 Experience Exchange and Theoretical Discussion** Discussing emergency management and safety production theory and practice, exchanging domestic and international experiences, and reflecting problems and voices in the emergency management and safety production field—particularly at the grassroots level—constitute another main content category of the “China Safety Production” WeChat official account. Since such messages have guiding and reference significance for the work of industry users, they are highly recognized and welcomed by followers. For example, the original message “What Are the Core Capabilities of Emergency Management in the New Era?” pushed on March 15, 2019, received 1,354 reads.

**1.1.3 Emergency and Safety Culture Knowledge** Disseminating emergency and safety culture is one of the purposes of *China Safety Production* magazine, making the dissemination of emergency and safety culture knowledge an important component of the “China Safety Production” WeChat official account and a key method for increasing user stickiness. Safety management knowledge, emergency rescue knowledge, and illustrated emergency and safety content—these seemingly simple texts all meet the needs of industry users who follow this official account and stay close to their work. Through pushing such messages, “China Safety Production” provides practical information for its followers. For instance, the original message “Key Points: A Guide to Help You Understand What Constitutes Good Safety Production Status in Production and Operation Units” pushed on April 18, 2019, had 3,680 reads and was reposted/shared by more than 20 other official accounts.

## 1.2 Development Approaches of Industry Journals Through WeChat Official Accounts

As a traditional industry media outlet facing the impact of new media, *China Safety Production* magazine continuously explores through the WeChat official account platform and continuously integrates with new media, mainly adopting the following approaches.

**1.2.1 Release Previews** The “China Safety Production” WeChat official account uses push messages to release content from the print *China Safety Production* magazine, highlighting core article content through graphic layout, then using “Read Original” links to direct to the magazine subscription page, thereby attracting large numbers of followers while also increasing its circulation.

**1.2.2 Increase Followers** The market positioning of *China Safety Production* magazine is a comprehensive publication in the domestic emergency management and safety production field, providing timely and accurate authoritative, forward-looking, guiding, and practical emergency management and safety production information to governments, production and operation units, research institutes, and all sectors of society. As of May 4, 2019, its backend showed total users had reached 25,823, mainly including governments and emergency management departments at all levels, enterprise safety production responsible persons, safety production related practitioners, and individuals concerned about safety production.

**1.2.3 Build New Media Matrix** The “China Safety Production” WeChat official account also uses the menu function of the WeChat platform to set up a “Media Hub” menu containing five sub-menus including “Magazine Official Website” and “Sina Weibo Official Account,” linking all new media platforms of *China Safety Production* magazine to achieve matrix-style new media development.

### 1.3.1 Position Audience and Push In-depth Information

Due to their professionalism, industry journals have gradually formed a fixed readership through long-term development. Reflected in the WeChat official account, its followers also have certain industry and professional attributes. Targeting the positioning and characteristics of the audience, “China Safety Production” follows the traditional media approach of professional information integration. In hot news pushes, besides pushing news information, it also integrates professional content such as related background introductions, expert interpretations, and related policy and regulation introductions. In this way, the official account’s push messages are effectively organized, and the content appears more in-depth. This both clearly positions to meet audience needs and establishes a brand image.

### 1.3.2 Reasonably Utilize Audience Fragmented Time

Due to Tencent's restriction of one push message per day for WeChat official accounts, the "China Safety Production" WeChat official account sets the information release time between 15:00-17:00 or 22:00-24:00 every day, thus more effectively utilizing audience fragmented time during commutes to push content.

### 1.3.3 Timely Dynamic Adjustment

In the early stage of opening the WeChat official account, "China Safety Production," like other traditional journal official accounts, released large amounts of past journal content. However, it later gradually discovered that pushing such outdated content was not conducive to attracting audiences. Starting from January 22, 2019, its official account content began to enrich, starting to push abridged versions of some content before journal printing, and adopting more flexible and interactive methods for information push.

## 2. Problems in WeChat Official Account Operations

### 2.1 Single Content

In the early days of traditional journal WeChat official accounts, the staff responsible for operations didn't know how to write messages, and the push content was often content from previous journals. For example, the message "【New Issue Recommendation】Promoting the Theoretical Construction of 'Adhering to the Red Line, Developing Safely'" pushed by the "China Safety Production" WeChat official account on June 18, 2014, included the cover, table of contents, and abstracts of key articles from the June 2014 issue of *China Safety Production* magazine. However, this simple push not only caused reading inconvenience for the audience but also caused content duplication and resource waste, and was not welcomed by readers.

### 2.2 Lack of Interaction

Currently, most traditional industry journal WeChat official accounts are only simple extensions of the journals' own content, merely one-way communication, not making good use of the interactivity of WeChat official accounts, and not obtaining effective feedback. Many traditional journal WeChat official accounts only push information, don't pay attention to followers' comments, and have very little interaction with followers.

### 2.3 Distance from Followers

Traditional industry journals are accustomed to a habit of high-level thinking and looking down on readers. Traditional industry journal WeChat official accounts often don't think from the followers' perspective, not publishing the types of information that followers hope to see. If traditional industry journal

WeChat official accounts don't communicate with followers from an equal perspective and maintain distance from followers, they won't better integrate into the WeChat official account platform nor achieve better development through this platform.

### 3. Recommendations for Improvement

#### 3.1 Balance Between WeChat Official Account and “Parent Media” Content

Compared with WeChat official accounts, traditional industry journals as “parent media” have more originality in content. However, due to long publication cycles, limited number of articles, and some articles being too long and unsuitable for online push, the original content of “parent media” cannot meet the information push requirements of WeChat official accounts. Should we use the original content as the center and utilize the WeChat official account as the main tool to expand the influence of the original media, or should we treat WeChat official account content as a new platform to create a new content release subject with its unique content combination? The author believes that organically combining the two, ensuring both professional and industry depth and combining with social hot topics, is conducive to deeper communication between traditional journals and audiences.

#### 3.2 Strengthen Follower Operation Management

Since industry journals have specific readerships, industry journal WeChat official accounts also have specific followers. How to analyze and manage followers is of great significance for the development of industry journal WeChat official accounts.

**3.2.1 Analyze Data** Through user analysis in the WeChat backend, obtain information such as user gender and region. Through analysis of this information, determine the tendency of push content to lay the foundation for achieving precise push.

**3.2.2 Maintain Interaction** Interaction with followers is key to the development of industry journal WeChat official accounts. Strengthening comment replies, selecting quality comments as “featured” comments, etc., can achieve the communication function between the WeChat official account and followers, not only increasing user stickiness but also attracting more followers, laying the foundation for achieving profitability.

In conclusion, WeChat official accounts provide a new platform for the extended development of traditional industry journals. Only by combining their own advantages and providing unique information with professionalism and depth can traditional industry journals achieve long-term development on the WeChat official account platform.

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(Author' s affiliation: Emergency Management Department Information Research Institute)

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

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