

An Analysis of Improvement Strategies for News Gathering and Editing in the New Media Era: Postprint

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Abstract

The continuous development of the new media era has compelled numerous traditional media industries, including journalism, to confront the significant impacts ushered in by this new epoch. New media exhibits more diverse communication modalities compared to traditional media, with the direction of communication shifting from unidirectional to bidirectional. News gathering and editing practices have transformed from a previous emphasis on news value to a focus on public opinion guidance and news dissemination, and methodologically from singular professionalism to pluralistic gathering and editing approaches. This paper conducts an in-depth examination of the characteristics of news gathering and editing work in the new media era, addresses existing issues such as insufficient depth in news reporting and a lack of social responsibility among journalists, and proposes professional improvement pathways for news gathering and editing in the new media era from a specialized perspective.

Full Text

Abstract

The continuous development of the new media era has compelled many traditional media industries, including journalism, to confront significant impacts brought about by this new age. Compared with traditional media, new media features more diverse dissemination methods, shifts communication from one-way to two-way, and transforms news gathering and editing from a focus on news value to an emphasis on public opinion guidance and news propagation, while shifting methods from singular professionalism to diversified approaches. This paper thoroughly examines the characteristics of news gathering and editing work in the new media era, identifies existing problems such as insufficient depth in news reporting and lack of social responsibility among journalists, and

proposes improvement paths for news gathering and editing from a professional perspective.

Keywords: new media era; news gathering and editing; massive information; news timeliness; reporting depth

In the new media era, news gathering and dissemination methods have become more diversified. With the rapid development of social economy and improving living standards, people now have more time to care about national affairs and follow various social news. As a communication medium dependent on modern electronic technology, television news represents a crucial information source in daily life. However, with the emergence of platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, Toutiao, and NetEase News, China has fully entered the new media era, intensifying competition within the journalism industry. The new media era, characterized by explosive information growth and changing news consumption habits, has imposed new demands on news gathering and editing work. These new requirements drive further improvements in news gathering and editing practices, which will be analyzed in detail below.

1. Current State of News Gathering and Editing in the New Media Era

Compared with traditional media, new media offers faster propagation and more convenient information transmission, enabling people to receive diverse information promptly. Most importantly, new media allows public participation and features varied interactive methods, satisfying most people's needs and breaking free from traditional media constraints. Consequently, news gathering and editing in the new media era has demonstrated new characteristics.

1.1 Emergence of Massive Information

In the new media era, news information has surged, exhibiting massive-scale characteristics. Mobile applications and social platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, and QQ continue to develop, while news platforms and mobile apps like NetEase News and Toutiao have greatly enriched people's information sources, allowing new information to quickly enter public view. However, new media development has also become a breeding ground for misinformation and false news, creating a mixed information environment where some editors use sensational headlines to attract readers and disseminate harmful false information. Therefore, news editors in the new media era must both maintain authentic and vivid content amidst this complex environment and utilize various means to improve news editing work.

1.2 Diversification of News Gathering and Editing Methods

In the new media era, news interactivity has significantly increased. During the traditional media era, expressing opinions or understanding about news required writing letters or making phone calls. In contrast, the new media era enables direct commenting below news articles, transforming news dissemination from one-way to two-way communication and effectively improving news accuracy. This helps news gathering and editing staff better grasp the truth of news and enhances the quality of news gathering and editing. Additionally, people can become disseminators of news events and spread occurrences through the internet, providing news gathering staff with more news materials and making news gathering and dissemination methods more diversified. However, to ensure quality and professionalism, news gathering personnel must still screen online news events to achieve effective public opinion guidance within society.

1.3 More Targeted News Push

In the new media era, news consumption has become more convenient, with various platforms categorizing news into sections such as current affairs, entertainment, and international news, making content more diversified to meet the reading needs of different demographic groups. With the widespread application of big data technology, new media platforms collect user preferences, conduct big data analysis in the background, and ultimately push news content that aligns with user interests. This targeted approach significantly enhances user reading experience and satisfaction.

1.4 Timeliness of News Dissemination

Unlike traditional media era news gathering and editing, which required extensive professional knowledge and equipment, new media era news dissemination often only needs a mobile phone with camera function and internet access. In this era, everyone can become a news discoverer, reporter, and disseminator, recording news events through videos or photos and uploading them online for public discussion. This approach greatly ensures news timeliness, as traditional media required time for gathering and dissemination, making immediate reporting impossible. In the new media era, people can also track news events, further highlighting the timeliness of news dissemination.

2. Challenges Facing News Gathering and Editing in the New Media Era

The transformation of news gathering and editing work in the new media era involves facing numerous challenges, which are described in detail below.

2.1 Difficulty in News Content Selection

In the new media era, both the volume and speed of information have increased, making it exceptionally important to filter out newsworthy and audience-relevant content from massive information. News serves as a crucial window for people to understand the world, national development, and local events. Therefore, effective information delivery through news gathering and editing is particularly important. For instance, some news gathering staff neglect content selection and fail to incorporate correct public opinion guidance during the gathering and editing process, resulting in ignored news reports, diminished media credibility, poor user experience, and hindered development of news work in the new media era.

2.2 Monotonous News Formats

Unlike traditional media such as newspapers that only require text editing with a single image, the new media era faces an audience gradually shifting to post-80s and post-90s generations. These groups typically prefer novel things, lack sufficient patience, and lean toward brief, visual news. This poses significant challenges and demands for news gathering and editing work, as current monotonous formats cannot meet the needs and preferences of the new generation of news audiences.

2.3 Lack of Innovation in News Content

Due to explosive growth in news information in the new media era, attracting attention and maximizing readership and clicks has become a concern for some news gathering workers. In current news gathering and editing processes, some staff lack holistic awareness and consideration of news information, failing to conduct innovative planning and resulting in a lack of content innovation.

2.4 Insufficient Depth in News Reporting

With enhanced interactivity in the new media era, public participation in news has increased daily. In this context, audiences demand greater depth in news reporting. However, due to news gathering staff's lack of insight into news events and insufficient patience, they often neglect follow-up excavation or tracking reports during the gathering and editing process, leading to insufficient reporting depth. For example, regarding reports on wild elephants entering villages in Yunnan, some coverage merely reported basic facts without tracking the causes or preventive measures, leaving audiences dissatisfied with the depth of reporting.

2.5 Weak Social Responsibility Among News Gathering Staff

Unlike the strict news review process in traditional media periods, the new media era has led to many news gathering staff with weak social responsibility.

Today's news platforms have gradually relaxed requirements for news gathering staff, focusing more on "traffic attraction." News gathering staff are no longer society's "mouthpiece" providing positive public opinion guidance but have become disseminators of trivial gossip, fabricating baseless news events to attract attention and discussion—a serious manifestation of weak social responsibility.

2.6 Insufficient News Sensitivity Among News Gathering Staff

Accurately grasping news sensitivity points is key to ensuring news gathering quality. However, limited by their own abilities and professional levels, some news gathering staff demonstrate insufficient news sensitivity in the new media era. This problem not only significantly reduces work efficiency but also seriously affects news quality, resulting in the emergence of some useless news information.

2.7 Inadequate Team Collaboration Ability

News gathering and editing involves collection, interviewing, compilation, and editing—a systematic task requiring multi-person cooperation. However, in the new media era, changes in gathering methods have gradually reduced team cohesion, leading to inadequate collaboration abilities. Poor teamwork severely affects the efficiency and quality of news gathering and editing, impacts upload speed in the new media era, and may even cause delays in news reporting.

3. Recommendations for Improving News Gathering and Editing Work

News gathering and editing plays a key role in social opinion guidance. In response to existing problems and new characteristics in the new media era, improvements can be approached from the following aspects.

3.1 Identify Positive News Content that Aligns with Public Aesthetics

Journalism faces the public, and excellent news should be discovered and accepted by the public, guide social opinion, provoke thought, and reflect social reality to some extent. Therefore, the new media era requires news gathering staff to identify news that the public truly wants to understand based on their reading needs, screen online news information accordingly, and incorporate positive public opinion guidance during the gathering and editing process to fulfill news's social function. For instance, if platform users are particularly concerned about China's foreign relations, news gathering staff should use this as a starting point to reasonably gather and edit online information, helping the public understand real international affairs through news reading and enhancing public recognition and trust of news.

3.2 Promote Diversification of News Gathering and Editing Formats

To better cater to the preferences of post-80s and post-90s news users, news gathering and editing formats should develop toward diversification. Greater emphasis should be placed on the role of images in news reporting, using charts, comics, and other forms to concisely report news content. This approach can greatly save people's news reading time and maximize attention attraction. When reporting national-related data, *People's Daily* adopts this method and has received widespread praise. Additionally, influenced by accelerating life rhythms, young people spend less time on news and prefer short-form content, requiring news gathering staff to improve news extraction capabilities to meet reader needs.

3.3 Strengthen Innovation in News Content

To effectively fulfill the social opinion guidance function of news reporting and attract public attention, news content must be innovated. For instance, reporting on an event can adopt multiple perspectives for multi-dimensional coverage, shifting from third-person perspective reporting to trigger societal discussion. Strengthening news content innovation can effectively improve the quality of news gathering and editing work.

3.4 Enhance Depth in News Reporting

News gathering and editing processes require staff to enhance reporting depth by identifying points of public concern and conducting follow-up reports to meet reading demands. Tracking reports can effectively restore event truth and avoid reversed news incidents, thereby improving social satisfaction with news.

3.5 Respect Facts and Strengthen Social Responsibility Among News Gathering Staff

Authenticity is key for news media to gain audience trust. News disseminates social information, and authenticity must come first. In today's society where information is difficult to distinguish between true and false, journalists can hardly obtain exclusive news without in-depth understanding. Only by respecting facts and strengthening social responsibility can news gathering staff avoid making false reports purely to attract attention and provide positive public opinion guidance in news reporting. Therefore, to become qualified journalists, news reporting must be authentic, accurate, and comprehensive. News workers must always remember their duties and missions, uphold a highly responsible spirit toward the people, and disseminate authentic, real-time news to the public.

3.6 Cultivate Professional News Gathering Talent and Build Talent Reserves

Professional talent is the core of news gathering and editing. To perform well in the new era, the most important task is to improve professional capabilities and professional ethics. Insufficient professional competence is key to news gathering staff's inability to accurately grasp news sensitivity points. Therefore, in new media era news gathering and editing work, professional talent must be cultivated and talent reserves built. On one hand, universities can strengthen news gathering and editing ability training for journalism students, recruiting more graduates from professional institutions in future hiring to ensure staff professionalism. On the other hand, comprehensive training mechanisms for news gathering staff can be established through lectures and other methods to continuously improve their capabilities and help them establish correct values, enabling them to provide correct public opinion guidance in news reporting.

3.7 Cultivate Team Collaboration Spirit

The creation of excellent news information relies not on individuals alone but requires entire team collaboration. Therefore, team collaboration spirit must be cultivated, requiring everyone to perform their respective roles and efficiently complete each news gathering and editing task. Scientific and reasonable team management plans should be developed in news gathering and editing work to strengthen communication and collaboration among team members, thereby better completing news gathering and editing tasks. For example, interviewing the Wenchuan earthquake required not only frontline news collection and interview staff but also later-stage compilation editors and timely news release personnel. News gathering and editing is a systematic and holistic task; only by strengthening team collaboration and cultivating team spirit can timeliness be ensured and public news demands be met.

The continuous development of the new media market has created a dual impact on news gathering and editing work. While people can obtain the latest information through multiple channels, false content mixed within can easily mislead public opinion and stereotype public impressions of journalists. Meanwhile, changes in dissemination methods and audiences in the new media era pose new challenges and demand higher professional competence and sensitivity from news gathering staff. Therefore, news gathering workers must adhere to professional ethics, always remember their responsibility to the people, innovatively improve news gathering and editing work from multiple aspects, propose creative and effective recommendations, strengthen team collaboration, enhance news reporting quality, and create a new era for the news gathering and editing industry.

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

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