

---

AI translation · View original & related papers at  
[chinaxiv.org/items/chinaxiv-202310.01599](http://chinaxiv.org/items/chinaxiv-202310.01599)

---

## An Analysis of the Development Models of Converged Media: Postprint

**Authors:** WANG Liying

**Date:** 2023-10-08T00:00:00+00:00

### Abstract

With the rapid development of information technology and mobile Internet technology, traditional media has been profoundly impacted by new media and is facing severe challenges. Integrated media has become the inevitable path for the transformation and development of traditional media. This paper conducts an in-depth analysis of the development models of integrated media both domestically and internationally in recent years, and proposes relevant countermeasures.

### Full Text

## An Analysis of the Development Models of Converged Media

**Journal:** Media Convergence: Theoretical Research (ChinaXiv Cooperative Journal)

**Abstract:** With the rapid development of information technology and mobile internet technology, traditional media has faced tremendous impact from new media and severe challenges. Converged media has become the inevitable path for the transformation and development of traditional media. This paper provides an in-depth analysis of converged media development models both domestically and internationally in recent years, and proposes relevant countermeasures.

**Keywords:** converged media; media convergence; converged media model; central kitchen

**Classification:** G206

**Document Code:** A

**Article ID:** 1671-0134(2019)04-051-03

**DOI:** 10.19483/j.cnki.11-4653/n.2019.04.013

**Author:** Wang Liying

---

## Main Experiences from Foreign Media Convergence Models

Foreign traditional media have adopted different transformation and convergence models, each with distinct characteristics. This paper selects several representative media organizations as examples.

### 2.1 The Digital Transformation Model of *The New York Times*

**2.1.1 Digital-First Philosophy** By December 2018, China's internet penetration rate had reached 59.6%, with mobile internet access accounting for 98.6% of this figure. With the rapid development of 4G mobile technology and artificial intelligence, the ways in which people access information and read have undergone significant changes. The way forward for traditional media lies in media convergence, and the era of converged media has arrived. Converged media refers to a new media form that makes full use of media carriers, effectively integrates resources from traditional media in terms of content, format, and human resources, leverages the advantages of various media, employs a completely new media mindset, and optimizes resource allocation under the premise of resource sharing and integrated promotion. Therefore, continuously promoting the transformation and upgrading of traditional media and advancing media convergence plays a positive role in driving the development of the media industry.

In 2014, *The New York Times* further established its “digital-first” transformation philosophy, which included restructuring its editorial department, cultivating digital talent, and continuously exploring new technologies and expanding digital service capabilities. First, the editorial department integrated institutions and personnel such as data teams, graphic design, technical departments, and marketing, opening recruitment to talent in computer science, design, language, and new media fields. Second, the newspaper actively trained its staff in visualization techniques such as charts in reporting, conversational writing styles, and the ability to communicate with readers through social media. Third, *The New York Times* placed great emphasis on developing and applying new technologies and expanding digital service capabilities. In 2016, it established the Story[X] lab to help the editorial department become more technologically savvy. For example, the newspaper uses Perspective API tools to accurately identify people in photos, employs the content aggregation system Watching to aggregate breaking news and latest developments on the internet within 24 hours, and utilizes the content management system Scoop to help journalists find topics and materials, which can also integrate reporting templates for reference. Additionally, *The New York Times* uses robots to improve efficiency. For instance, it employs the Blossom algorithm robot to analyze and calculate articles with promotional value on the platform; robots can also automatically create headlines and matching images, and even write articles for editorial reference, thereby greatly improving the work efficiency of journalists and editors.

**2.1.2 Pursuing Content Excellence** According to Pew Research Center's "2016 State of the Media Report," although five companies including Facebook, Google, and Twitter captured 65% of digital profits, they are all technology companies, not one of them is a news organization. *The New York Times'* core competitiveness lies in its excellent journalistic content. The newspaper boasts a world-class team of journalists whose in-depth reporting has won awards at the Pulitzer Prizes almost every year.

**2.1.3 Strengthening *The New York Times* Brand** Since the 1970s, *The New York Times* has undertaken numerous acquisitions, purchasing companies such as Cowles Communications, as well as regional newspapers, television stations, and magazines. Due to the strong impact of new media on traditional media, the newspaper began selling its affiliated television stations, related websites, and digital management businesses in 2007, and later divested some regional media companies as well. *The New York Times* integrated its corporate resources, stripped away some severely loss-making businesses, and concentrated all its advantageous resources on operating *The New York Times* and its related digital industries, aiming to penetrate every aspect of readers' lives to create brand advantages and influence.

**2.1.4 Establishing a Paywall System** In March 2011, *The New York Times* reinstated its paywall system, a tiered payment model that is flexible and diverse, offering both a certain amount of free content for readers and paid content to meet the needs of more demanding readers. Two years after implementing the "paywall" model, in 2013, *The New York Times'* digital subscription revenue exceeded advertising revenue for the first time. Today, subscription revenue still accounts for approximately 60% of total revenue. This "paywall" model has changed the previous revenue structure of the newspaper industry that overly relied on advertising, establishing a new development model for the newspaper industry.

**2.2 The Media Convergence Model of CNN** CNN realized from the crisis facing traditional media that only through media convergence reform could it find a way forward. In 2013, CNN vigorously promoted a new media transformation strategy of "mobile first, digital first." This strategy requires news production to consider issues from a new media perspective first, and journalists to transform into all-media journalists capable of skillfully using new media technologies to produce news. CNN created a news "central kitchen" model, gathering its television, website, and new media departments in the media headquarters, the CNN Center, to establish a central command post that directs different forms of media under its jurisdiction to release information around the clock.

CNN uses advanced editorial and data analysis systems to process news materials sent back to headquarters from bureaus worldwide. The "central kitchen" produces "special dishes" suitable for distribution across different media channels

and places them in a shared resource library for use by various media channels. While ensuring its leading position in television broadcasting, CNN is committed to building a three-dimensional communication system for media convergence, such as establishing the CNN official website on PC, creating exclusive accounts on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook, and building a dedicated CNN app on mobile. CNN attaches great importance to cooperation with emerging social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and podcasts to expand sources and channels of communication. Based on the characteristics of each social platform, it actively strengthens real-time communication with audiences and specially produces story-driven videos suitable for social media dissemination to attract and broaden its audience and enhance user stickiness. For information obtained from other sources, CNN quickly verifies it through its central editorial department and global branches to filter out false information and ensure the authenticity of information to the greatest extent possible.

**2.3 *The Guardian*'s Digital Business Model Reform** In 2009, *The Guardian* pioneered the “Data Store” section model, making extensive use of data journalism. In 2011, it implemented a “digital-first” strategy, moving toward digitalization. In *The Guardian*'s digital business model, data is the core of the entire industry chain. Its data team helps the media collect data and structurally process the collected data. The focus of digital transformation is concentrated on the design of digital products, as well as attracting and maintaining audience groups and optimizing organizational structures. Additionally, the media can provide digital services or open-source data externally, achieving profitability on the one hand and using user feedback data to expand the database on the other. *The Guardian* has also further increased investment in mobile clients to form an online-offline product linkage mechanism, providing users with better interface interaction experiences.

In terms of profit models, *The Guardian* adopts the approach of increasing advertising revenue by improving click-through rates. Additionally, it has adopted an innovative payment model, providing different services for members with different payment levels, and even advocating that readers donate to it, thereby establishing a new profit model. *The Guardian*'s reforms have received unanimous praise from the industry, being hailed by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers as “establishing a new industry benchmark for news websites,” and was nominated as “Media of the Year” at the European Digital Media Awards ceremony in January 2018. Currently, *The Guardian* still ranks first among UK newspapers, all thanks to the success of its digital business model transformation.

---

### Analysis of Domestic Media Convergence Models

China's media convergence models can be broadly divided into three types:

**3.1 Industry-Based Media Convergence Model** This model integrates advantageous resources based on industries or specific fields to build converged media. Various industries and ministries in China basically have corresponding newspapers, such as *China Transportation News* under the Ministry of Transport, *China Audit News* under the National Audit Office, *People's Posts and Telecommunications News* under the Ministry of Information Industry, and *Farmers' Daily* under the Ministry of Agriculture. These specialized newspapers, to meet the needs of the times, also need to integrate industry resources and use professional data and resources to build industry-specific converged media platforms.

Taking *Farmers' Daily* as an example, in 2004, it created the online platform China Agricultural News Network, and subsequently launched a Weibo account. In 2014, *Farmers' Daily* established an official WeChat public platform, integrating its print media, website, and Weibo into a unified entity, and partnered with other influential agricultural media platforms such as “China Agricultural News,” “Modern Seed Industry,” and “Reemphasizing Agriculture Review” to create a converged media matrix for *Farmers' Daily*. This converged media matrix promotes more systematic and comprehensive information exchange and interaction between agricultural producers and managers, and the diverse information dissemination forms of the converged media platform are more conducive to learning and mastery by farmer users.

**3.2 Regional Media Convergence Model** The regional media convergence model integrates advantageous resources within a specific region to create converged media. Against the backdrop of media convergence, China's provincial press and publishing systems have merged and integrated to establish new converged media groups. The most famous among them is Henan Elephant Media Group, renowned for its bold reforms and significant results, becoming a model for regional media convergence development.

Elephant Media Group has integrated over a hundred media resources across the province, consolidating businesses such as news portals, radio and television, official Weibo and WeChat accounts, and client applications under the Henan Provincial Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television Bureau. This has formed a comprehensive all-media layout rich in content and form, encompassing newspapers, television, radio, magazines, books, news portals, audio-video websites, official Weibo and WeChat accounts, and client applications. On the “news island,” newspapers, television, radio, magazines, websites, and new media have achieved an integrated production model of “unified planning, one-time collection; diversified generation, multi-terminal distribution; all-day release, global coverage.” In fact, this model is the “central kitchen” model discussed below. Elephant Media's next plan is to cooperate with domestic advanced IoT platforms, industrial cooperation funds, and intelligent hardware operation companies to create an “Intelligent Media Lab” to explore new forms of integration between the media industry and intelligent hardware industry.

**3.3 Brand-Based Media Convergence Model** This model refers to converged media created by newspaper groups with brand advantages through integrating their internal institutions and resources. The most representative example is *People's Daily*.

*People's Daily* has drawn on the experience of media convergence from multiple foreign media organizations such as CNN, based on a global perspective, and integrated media resources from over 40 newspapers, journals, and digital companies across its newspaper system to create a demonstrative converged media form. In 2015, *People's Daily* unveiled its “central kitchen” model at the National Two Sessions, achieving good results and success. However, after a year of operation, the “central kitchen” model also revealed some problems. For example, while it solved issues of disorganized scheduling and resource waste to a certain extent, it also led to repetitive media content and a lack of personalized media expression. Therefore, in 2016, *People's Daily* implemented further reforms by launching the “converged media workshop” program to meet different audience needs. *People's Daily* established 17 specialized, vertically categorized workshops, each with a clear positioning and distinct personality. The central kitchen provides support for promotion, operation, technology, and funding for the converged media workshops, which can also utilize the complete technical system of the central kitchen to assist their content production.

---

## Reflections on Media Convergence Development Models

Through comparative analysis of domestic and international media convergence models, the author believes that the following issues should be noted in China's media convergence process:

**4.1 Media Convergence Models Should Not Follow a One-Size-Fits-All Approach** Domestic media convergence models should not be uniform but should select the most suitable converged media model based on the characteristics and advantages of each media organization. They should not blindly imitate others, let alone adopt a unified model. For example, when *People's Daily* initially established the “central kitchen” model, various media organizations copied it and established their own “central kitchens,” resulting in huge costs and long development cycles. After development, many found it unsuitable and ended up shelving or abandoning it. Later, when *People's Daily* launched the “converged media workshop,” local media followed suit, but few successful cases emerged.

**4.2 Addressing Media Overcapacity** Currently, there are nearly 2,000 daily newspapers in China, the magazine industry is even larger with tens of thousands of journals, and the four-tier television system has over 2,000 channels, with more than 2,000 radio channels as well, indicating serious media overcapacity. Media overcapacity leads to, first, more intense competition in

the media industry, and second, wasted resources and serious homogenization. Therefore, we can consider merging resources and teams, closing what should be closed and merging what should be merged. When a city is left with only two or three newspapers and only one or two television channels, our resources can be more effectively utilized, and we believe our media will be better than it is now.

**4.3 Avoid Blindly Pursuing Large, Comprehensive Layouts** Currently, most domestic converged media models are based on large-scale investment in all-media collection and editing systems. Such seemingly high-end all-media systems not only have high platform operation costs but are also complex to use, creating greater work pressure for users. Additionally, due to unified production, each media's characteristics are not prominent, and communication effects are poor. From the perspective of media convergence thinking, we should achieve efficient resource utilization and enhance information dissemination power. Therefore, media convergence should use new technologies to strengthen its own advantages rather than blindly pursuing large, comprehensive layouts. We can consider the convergence of traditional media with mature new media, leveraging the advantages of traditional media in news collection and editing combined with the dissemination and market advantages of new media, which may be far more effective than the current large, comprehensive all-media systems. For example, print media can converge with mature audio media, creating more high-quality programs on audio apps based on its professional advantages, enriching program types, and gaining recognition from more audiences.

---

#### References:

- [1] Ma Kai. Enlightenment from the Digital Business Model Transformation of *The Guardian* [J]. *International Media*, 2018(11): 91-92.
- [2] Shang Ce. Analysis of the Construction Principles and Models of Converged Media [J]. *Publishing Wide Angle*, 2015(14): 26-29.
- [3] Ma Cong' ao, Wang Yiben. Transformation Experience of *The New York Times'* Digital-First Strategy [J]. *International Media*, 2017(12): 92-93.

(Author's Affiliation: Shenzhen Special Zone Daily, Guangdong Province)

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

*Source: ChinaXiv – Machine translation. Verify with original.*