

Postprint: An Analysis of Television Station Transformation Paths in the Context of New Media Communication

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Abstract

Since humanity entered the 21st century, the rapid development of information transmission technology and Internet technology has given rise to new media such as WeChat, Weibo, mobile TV, live streaming applications, and Internet TV, profoundly impacting the development of television stations and intensifying competition among regional television stations. In the context of new media communication, television stations across various regions have begun to gradually integrate into the Internet environment, actively interfacing with new media, exploring novel development mechanisms, and achieving certain results. This paper provides an in-depth exposition of new media, analyzes the necessity of television station transformation in the context of new media communication, and proposes the principles and pathways for such transformation. It is hoped that this research can genuinely facilitate the transformation of television stations and enable them to fulfill their role as mainstream media.

Full Text

Analysis of TV Station Transformation Path Under New Media Communication Background

Abstract

Since the beginning of the 21st century, rapid advancements in information transmission technology and internet technology have given rise to new media platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, mobile TV, live streaming apps, and internet TV. These developments have profoundly impacted television stations and intensified competition among regional broadcasters. In this new media communication environment, television stations across various regions have gradually integrated into the internet ecosystem, actively engaging with new media platforms to explore innovative development mechanisms, yielding certain positive

results. This paper provides an in-depth examination of new media phenomena while analyzing the necessity of television station transformation under new media communication contexts. It proposes principles and pathways for such transformation, aiming to genuinely facilitate the transition of television stations and enable them to fulfill their role as mainstream media outlets.

Keywords: new media; internet; television station; communication

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3.1 Insufficient New Media Platform Construction

Inadequate construction of new media platforms inevitably leads to poor user experience and wastage of television station resources. Currently, this inadequacy manifests primarily in three areas: First, new media products are not sufficiently optimized, resulting in non-smooth user interaction. Some television stations neglect technical optimization during platform development, causing users to experience buffering and content jumping while viewing programs, which negatively impacts user experience. Second, there is a heavy commercialization mindset that disregards user sentiment. To increase profits, some stations place excessive advertisements on their new media platforms, with ads even popping up mid-program, severely affecting user experience. Third, there is a lack of brand awareness, with program branding effects remaining underdeveloped on new media platforms. Although some stations have developed distinctive programs through years of operation, they are reluctant to broadcast these products on new media platforms due to various considerations, making it difficult to establish program brand effects. For instance, copyright restrictions may confine certain TV programs to fixed broadcast times, preventing their availability on new media platforms. While this approach may create short-term “hunger marketing” effects, it ultimately hinders station development as competition intensifies in the television broadcasting sector and similar programs become available online.

3.2 Lack of Talent Support

Human resources constitute the foundation for television station transformation and sustainable development. As competition intensifies in domestic and international radio and television markets, the cost of acquiring talent—especially interdisciplinary talent—has increased for television stations. New media’s technological characteristics demand high capabilities from station personnel. Without adequate talent support, stations struggle to adapt to editorial thinking and workflows in new media communication environments, thereby impeding transformation and development. Currently, some stations’ talent training systems have deficiencies in both content and methodology. Regarding content, training programs are not reasonably designed and fail to address the

new media communication environment. For example, some stations neglect new media-related training, leaving staff with insufficient understanding of new media and inability to use it proficiently. Regarding methodology, some stations rely on outdated training approaches and fail to utilize platforms such as universities and internet-based training systems, preventing timely updates to staff knowledge structures and professional skills.

3.3 Low-Level Application of New Media Technology

Currently, some television stations primarily utilize internet TV platforms such as Youku, iQiyi, and Tencent Video to broadcast film and television programs, without deeply exploring and leveraging microblogging, WeChat, live streaming platforms, and other new media channels. Different new media platforms possess distinct characteristics that determine their varying roles in television media. Relying solely on one type of new media platform prevents stations from enhancing their comprehensive strength and easily leads to developmental bottlenecks. While internet TV can provide convenient viewing services, it has limitations—for example, it cannot effectively support interactive engagement, which restricts its utility in the television media domain.

4. Practical Analysis of Television Station Transformation Under New Media Communication Background: A Case Study of Guangdong Radio and Television Station

4.1 Channel Expansion: Innovative Integration of Television and Internet

In recent years, to enhance its competitiveness, Guangdong Radio and Television Station has focused on expanding program transmission channels. The station's "TV-Internet Integration" initiative demonstrates strong innovation. First, to meet the fast-paced lifestyle needs of Guangdong residents, the station established Litchi Net online, integrating resources from the former Guangdong TV Network, Southern Broadcasting and Film Media Network, Southern TV Network, and Guangdong Radio Online. This new media platform provides users with live streaming, replay services, program schedule queries, and other services, significantly enhancing user experience. Second, to adapt to evolving times and satisfy more diverse public demands, the station initially developed two mobile apps—"Touch News" and "Litchi Live"—to provide mobile, instant, and networked services. In mid-2017, to further integrate resources, the station consolidated the live streaming function from "Litchi Live" into "Touch News," further improving operational efficiency. Finally, to increase the station's visibility and enhance the efficiency and quality of program promotion, Guangdong Radio and Television Station created two types of official Weibo accounts—frequency-based and channel-based—using the Weibo platform. The station regularly conducts lottery activities on Weibo and publishes extensive program information and news updates daily, thereby strengthening its core competitiveness.

4.2 Content Innovation: Adhering to “Content is King” Regardless of the era, program content remains the primary determinant of a television station’s competitiveness and the foundation of its existence. First, the station has focused on strengthening news production when utilizing new media platforms, thereby enhancing its public opinion influence. The station possesses high-quality news programs such as *DV Scene*, *Social Commentary*, *Today’s Focus*, and *Guangdong News*. Through new media platforms, these quality news programs can be rapidly disseminated to the public. Second, in terms of content production, the station insists on both content and method innovation, broadcasting social hot topics through new media platforms. During the 2017 Two Sessions and Spring Festival travel season, the station enhanced content vitality and increased live broadcast ratings through on-site live streaming. Finally, beyond news content innovation, the station also adheres to the “content is king” principle in variety shows, TV dramas, and documentary production. For example, guided by the core socialist values, the station produced outstanding documentaries such as *The Taste of Guangdong*, *The Great Anti-Japanese War*, and *Our Youth*, earning recognition from both the public and the National Radio and Television Administration.

5.1 Utilizing Weibo Technology for Promotion and Brand Building

Weibo is currently one of the most popular information platforms, where various information resources can quickly attract followers and public attention after dissemination. During transformation, television stations can use Weibo technology to promote film, television, news, and other programs to build their brand. First, stations should establish different official Weibo accounts according to program types and implement efficient unified management. To accumulate followers and expand information dissemination, stations can appropriately hold lottery activities in the initial stage. Second, station staff should regularly post program broadcast information, station dynamics, and other updates to inform the public about current programming. Finally, for distinctive television programs, stations can create relevant Weibo topics to promote programs, enhance their influence, and stimulate public viewing interest.

5.2 Exploring Development of Television Station Apps to Achieve Integration of Traditional and New Media

To enhance competitiveness in the radio and television media sector, stations must expand transmission channels to deliver quality film and television programs to the public and improve content resource utilization efficiency. To this end, stations can explore developing their own apps to enhance the stability of online program broadcasting and achieve integration of traditional and new media. First, stations should recruit app development technicians to complete preliminary development work. Second, stations should develop distinctive features on their apps based on their unique characteristics to provide specialized

services. For example, stations can categorize program types to create branded columns on the app, or develop push and subscription services to provide more personalized viewing experiences. Third, stations must control advertising duration on apps to enhance user experience and prevent excessive commercialization. Finally, stations can explore establishing a coin mall on the app where users can earn virtual coins by watching programs or completing tasks. These coins can be exchanged for memberships or prizes, undoubtedly increasing user enthusiasm for both app usage and program viewing.

5.3 Leveraging WeChat Official Account Platforms to Innovate Service Methods and Feedback Mechanisms

On one hand, WeChat official account platforms provide new opportunities for television stations to innovate news program services. Given today's accelerated pace of life, the public has limited time for news viewing. To address this, stations can provide more convenient news broadcast services through WeChat official accounts by converting key content from each news program into text format and pushing it daily to subscribers, thereby meeting public news needs. On the other hand, stations can use WeChat official accounts to enhance public interaction, solicit opinions and suggestions, and innovate feedback mechanisms. Television stations need to listen to public opinions during program production, innovation, and transformation processes to avoid pitfalls and reduce operational costs. Therefore, stations can establish dedicated feedback channels on their official accounts, carefully consider public suggestions regarding programs and operations, and improve their work accordingly to enhance public identification with the station.

5.4 Utilizing Micro-Film Technology to Produce Television Programs and Innovate Content

Micro-film production involves relatively low costs and simple technology, making it popular among the public in today's fast-paced society. Therefore, television stations can explore using micro-film technology to produce television programs and provide audiences with fresh visual experiences. First, stations can organize personnel to produce series of micro-films based on current mainstream social values to enhance their public opinion guidance and influence. For example, stations can produce micro-films based on "The Chinese Dream," "Core Socialist Values," or "Local Customs and Folklore" and broadcast them on relevant new media platforms. Second, stations can also produce micro-films focusing on current social hot topics, creating down-to-earth film and television products that deepen the station's communication impact.

5.5 Exploring Integration of Live Streaming Platforms and Film/Television Communication Channels

Currently, live streaming platforms are highly popular among the public and represent a significant market opportunity. Therefore, television stations can

build their own official live streaming platforms. Stations can develop different channel studios on these platforms to broadcast various programs. For example, stations can place on-site interview programs and entertainment variety shows on the live streaming platform. Taking entertainment variety shows as an example, these programs feature many celebrities or internet influencers. Live broadcasting variety shows can bridge the distance between audiences and these personalities, bringing stars and influencers into the online world, enhancing audience interaction with them, and thereby improving variety show ratings.

For a considerable time in the future, new media will continue to influence the mass media industry and broadcasting sector, prompting corresponding changes in internal organizational structures and workflows. To expand market size and share, television stations must deeply explore new media to create distinctive products, thereby increasing economic benefits and expanding influence. This paper argues that transformation pathways for television stations are not singular; each station should comprehensively utilize multiple approaches based on its scale, capabilities, and current program offerings to truly achieve transformation. Additionally, based on analysis of the current market environment, television stations must accelerate brand building and enhance brand value to reduce operational costs and embark on a sustainable development path. With joint efforts from academia and industry, China's radio and television industry will ultimately achieve industrialization, scaling, and technological advancement.

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

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