

Discussion on Innovation in Development Models of Traditional Newspapers in the Media Convergence Era: Post-print Version

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Abstract

In the new era of continuous socio-economic development, traditional newspapers have become inadequate for meeting societal demands. With the advent of media convergence, traditional newspapers must leverage new media, continuously innovate, and transform their conventional development models to foster their own healthy development. This article explores the development models of traditional newspapers in the era of media convergence and proposes several rational measures, hoping to facilitate the transformation of traditional newspapers and enable them to better serve the public.

Full Text

Preamble

Exploring Innovative Development Models for Traditional Newspapers in the Era of Media Convergence

Abstract: In the new era of continuous socio-economic development, traditional newspapers can no longer meet societal needs. With the advent of convergent media, traditional newspapers must leverage new media, continuously innovate, and transform their conventional development models to ensure healthy growth. This article examines the development models of traditional newspapers in the era of media convergence and proposes reasonable measures to facilitate their transformation and better serve the public.

Keywords: media convergence; current situation of traditional newspapers; development model innovation

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As society continues to progress, we have entered the era of new media. This new media era presents both opportunities and challenges for newspapers. Newspapers have experienced both glorious peaks and difficult downturns, providing us with vast amounts of information. Before the era of media convergence, newspapers served as the primary channel through which the public obtained information.

1.3 The Situation Faced by Traditional Newspapers

Today, people can access diverse information through the internet and computers, and the adverse effects of the media convergence era on newspapers are becoming increasingly pronounced. Traditional newspapers are losing their influence and market share, and the industry can no longer satisfy public demands. Faced with external pressures, the survival of traditional newspapers is under threat. If they do not transform, their development prospects will be bleak.

2 Innovation in Development Models for Traditional Newspapers in the New Media Era

As the era continues to advance, new media represents both an opportunity and a challenge for traditional newspapers. To some extent, new media has captured traditional newspapers' market share, yet it also presents new possibilities. As internet technology develops and people's lives become increasingly dependent on networked computers, traditional newspapers have experienced declining sales and audience attrition. In this new environment, traditional newspapers are losing market share, with many market-oriented publications seeing reduced circulation and some even ceasing publication. Revenue is declining, and some newspapers, hindered by misguided perceptions of new media, slow response times, and reluctance to innovate, have missed the optimal window for transformation, leaving them in a passive position.

1.1 Inability to Integrate Effectively with New Media

While many media outlets have proactively integrated with the internet by establishing regionally distinctive web portals, and some newspapers are actively exploring future development paths through online integration, the overall situation remains challenging. As internet technology continues to permeate daily life, traditional newspapers have experienced declining sales and audience attrition. In this new environment, traditional newspapers are losing market share, with many market-oriented publications seeing reduced circulation; some have even ceased publication. Revenue is declining, and some newspapers, hindered by misguided perceptions of new media, slow response times, and reluctance to innovate and reform, have missed the optimal window for transformation, leaving them in a passive position.

1.2 Lagging Behind in the Integration Process

To a certain extent, competition between traditional newspapers and new media involves not only technology but also business models. Some newspapers, constrained by traditional operational models, have failed to actively innovate or explore new development paths, remaining conservative and unable to effectively integrate with new media. Additionally, some traditional newspapers operate under a public institution system, which restricts their ability to truly engage with market mechanisms. The professional competence of relevant staff needs improvement, with a shortage of versatile, interdisciplinary talent. Newspaper operations tend to be extensive rather than intensive. Severe homogenized competition has resulted in a singular profit model that cannot meet audience demands.

2.1 Expanding Communication Space

Traditional newspapers typically reach one reader per copy, or at most a few readers sharing a single copy. This limited audience reach and relatively small influence result in cost inefficiency. After integrating with new media, newspapers become “fresh” media, fundamentally different from before. In addition to traditional postal delivery, they can now distribute content through online networks, achieving modern publication and distribution.

2.2 Transforming News Communication Concepts

In the traditional newspaper industry, journalists would gather news with pen and camera, requiring them to conduct interviews and write articles before readers could receive information. This approach had inherent limitations. For instance, journalists could not always arrive at breaking news scenes immediately. In today’s internet era, however, everyone can be a journalist and a protagonist in news stories. Anyone at the scene of an event can capture news in real-time and disseminate it instantly through mobile networks. Additionally, traditional newspapers are constrained by press deadlines—news that misses the deadline cannot be published until the next issue, sometimes resulting in delays of several days and poor timeliness. Now, with increased channels for information dissemination, the integration of traditional newspapers and new media has significantly improved news timeliness. In the new convergent media environment, there are no press deadlines, and news can be published anytime and anywhere.

2.3 Multi-Level and Multi-Faceted News Development

In the internet era, every ordinary person has access to firsthand news. Through interactive platforms like Weibo and WeChat, newspaper offices can edit, filter, and integrate relevant information for audiences, making content increasingly specific and practical. This approach enables multi-level, comprehensive news reporting.

2.4 Continuously Integrating Media Resources to Promote Newspaper Development

There is no denying that traditional newspapers enjoy high authority and recognition among readers. While we can obtain various types of news online, internet news quality is uneven, with significant fragmentation and occasional dissemination of false information for attention-grabbing purposes. Newspapers can integrate with the internet by identifying entry points, selecting suitable news topics for print, continuously mining news value, leveraging their media advantages for comprehensive coverage, and using their influence to optimize trending online topics. This expands the space for newspaper media and creates win-win scenarios with the internet.

Effective integration requires a scientific and rational mechanism to ensure successful convergence from a strategic perspective. The *West China Metropolis Daily* provides an excellent example. In traditional newspaper reporting, information passes through multiple layers of review—from journalists to department heads to editors. The *West China Metropolis Daily* has adapted to contemporary needs by utilizing “cloud newspaper” reporting, which also incorporates layered oversight. The cloud newspaper system includes complete mechanisms for video shooting, production, and release, along with a dedicated video studio staffed by technical professionals responsible for producing relevant videos and images. After processing daily news materials, studio staff hold regular meetings to determine next-day content, establishing a robust review mechanism. Achieving organic integration between traditional newspapers and new media requires a comprehensive release mechanism, which is crucial for smooth operations. Only with a well-established mechanism can the work proceed effectively.

2.5 Developing Distinctive Newspaper Operations

In this new media competitive landscape, traditional newspapers must transform their development mindset to advance. Rather than focusing solely on original content, they should pursue multi-angle development to achieve integration with new media. Through continuous exploration, they must establish distinctive, personalized publications to attract more readers. Newspapers need to address not only space limitations but also transform their content, moving beyond restricted coverage of sports, economics, and daily life to emphasize diversification, continuous innovation, and unique characteristics. Only by consistently meeting reader demands can traditional newspapers ensure their healthy development.

2.6 Multi-Platform Development and Multi-Terminal Presentation

To achieve breakthroughs in the media convergence era, traditional newspapers must understand their own characteristics and identify development shortcomings, adopting multi-platform strategies to facilitate transformation and upgrading. *People's Daily* serves as an excellent example. Starting from its actual

circumstances, it has established a comprehensive operational system and used new media thinking to drive its own reform. While leveraging its advantages as a Party newspaper for dissemination, *People's Daily* has also become highly accessible to the public by developing WeChat and Weibo accounts. Its WeChat public account regularly pushes political content, practical life tips, and inspirational stories, presenting a refreshed image of *People's Daily* to audiences that continues to grow.

For news editors, continuously improving professional competence is essential. In the new environment, they must learn to use digital technologies to discover, edit, and publicize news. Traditional newspapers can only advance by fully utilizing network advantages. With its rapid dissemination and strong timeliness, the integration of traditional newspapers and new media cannot rely solely on conventional news distribution channels but must fully exploit internet information platforms to significantly enhance news reporting.

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

Source: ChinaXiv – Machine translation. Verify with original.