

Enhancing the Professional Competence of Television News Editors in the Context of Media Convergence: Postprint

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Abstract

The development and transformation of dissemination channels and methods have provided a broad platform for television news development. However, analysis of television news characteristics in the new media context reveals that the work methods and concepts of television news editors must be continuously innovated to adapt to the era's development. This paper takes the development status of television news in the new media context as its entry point to analyze its work concepts and innovative skills.

Full Text

Enhancing the Quality of Television News Editors from the Perspective of Converged Media

Abstract: The evolution of communication channels and methods has provided a broad development platform for television news. However, analyzing the characteristics of television news in the context of new media reveals that the working methods and philosophies of television news editors must continuously innovate to adapt to the times. This paper takes the development status of television news under the new media background as its starting point to analyze its working philosophies and innovative skills.

Keywords: new media; television news; editorial philosophy; innovation

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In an era where traditional and emerging media are intertwined and converging, news dissemination channels have become increasingly diverse, placing higher

demands on television news editing. Television news editors must adapt to internet thinking, strengthen their internal capabilities, focus on innovation in content, technology, and operations, strive to learn and master new media technologies, continuously evolve into “multi-skilled” editors, persist in producing quality news content, and constantly explore new paths for television news reporting in the all-media environment. Through high-quality and efficient work, they can continuously enhance the dissemination power, influence, and competitiveness of television news media.

1. Ideological and Conceptual Enhancement in the Converged Media Perspective

To ensure the healthy development of television news in the converged media perspective, it is essential to continuously improve the comprehensive capabilities and qualities of television news editors and to refine and innovate working methods according to the characteristics of media convergence, thereby promoting the continuous development of television journalism through innovative working philosophies and approaches.

1.1 Re-establishing the Role of News Editors

In the new media environment, the role of television news editors is paramount, with many television stations adopting an “editor-centered system.” In practice, an editor’s philosophy becomes the guiding philosophy of the program, directly determining its target audience and scope. The editor’s direction, type, and habits in topic selection directly shape a program’s content, style, and characteristics. Furthermore, the ratings of television news programs reflect the competence and capability of news editors. As television news editors, they must first strengthen their ability to select and process information, focusing on grasping and excavating news information to achieve transformative effects. Second, they must enhance their capacity to integrate and plan news information. Through comprehensive development and utilization of scattered news resources, they can create a whole greater than the sum of its parts. For instance, by organically combining and configuring previously dispersed and independent elements such as news photos and videos, they can produce comprehensive news products that are well-ordered, highlight key points, and conform to cognitive patterns for presentation to audiences. Third, they must value innovation and creativity. Only through innovation and creativity can they keep pace with media convergence and adapt to the times.

1.2 Establishing Innovative Thinking

Today, television news editors should draw lessons from the distribution methods of emerging media, transforming the arrangement, writing, audience attraction, and revenue generation of news programs. They must innovate traditional forms of scriptwriting, filming, and post-production, applying practices such as

original content, pseudo-original content, aerial photography, and influencer live-streaming models. Simultaneously, content operation strategies for media apps and WeChat official accounts urgently require transformation. Only through innovation and change, rapidly improving skills in writing, editing, and commentary, can television news editors adapt to the new changes of the era, activate the internal dynamics of traditional media, and enhance the dissemination power and influence of television news.

1.3 Establishing a User-Centric Philosophy

The widespread application of new technologies such as digital technology, the internet, and mobile communication is disrupting traditional industrial structures and business models. In the media industry, information sources are no longer exclusively controlled by authoritative and professional institutions as in the past; contemporary individuals are more enthusiastic about actively excavating, processing, and disseminating information. Smartphones and other devices have become as essential as handbags, with news and information serving as a constant awareness of the external world, much like weather forecasts. Accurately grasping and utilizing this data has become one of the key factors in competition among media institutions, making “user-centricity” the primary philosophy that news production must embrace today.[1]

1.4 Establishing an Audience-Needs-Oriented Philosophy

Today, most people use mobile devices to access news information, with mobile reading becoming the mainstream. The primary scenario for mobile reading is at home, with the highest proportion of users consuming news in bed. To accommodate fragmented reading patterns, news content should be “lightweight,” conveying information to users simply and efficiently within short timeframes. Distribution timing must align with when users are on their phones. For example, key content should be placed at the forefront, viewpoints should be prominent, article length should be controlled, and easily understandable formats such as images and audio should be extensively employed.[4]

1.5 Adhering to a Content-Is-King Philosophy

In the new media environment, with extensive news dissemination channels and diverse access methods, distinguishing truth from falsehood to obtain valuable news presents a challenge to the competence and capability of television news editors. While ensuring news authenticity, editors must adhere to a content-is-king philosophy supported by technology, remain true to their mission and original aspirations, and deeply explore the profound social value of news. In news gathering, they should employ various forms and expressive techniques to restore the truth of events and facts, not only helping audiences understand what happened but also prompting deep reflection, pursuing underlying causes and introspection, evoking audience attention and emotional resonance, thereby maximizing news’ s social value and exerting its influence.

2. Comprehensive Capability Enhancement for Television News Editors

In the new media era, television news editors must possess not only the cultural qualities and thinking of other news editors but also master certain fundamental skills.

2.1 Establishing a Continuous Learning Philosophy

The world-renowned British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) required its journalists several years ago to master various technical tasks such as graphic design, text editing, sound editing, and image editing. Today, BBC journalists must bring not only cameras, recorders, and computers to interviews but also digital cameras to provide images for online news. As gatekeepers of news, editors—particularly television news editors—must possess professional skills surpassing those of journalists. To meet this standard, only through continuous learning and mastery of new skills can they adapt to the era' s development.

2.2 Possessing Strong Comprehensive Qualities

In today' s rapidly evolving information technology landscape, new phenomena continuously emerge, social information volume has exploded, and novel concepts abound. To keep pace with development, television news editors must possess not only professional journalism knowledge but also broad knowledge bases, strong information sensitivity, deep insight, and fresh perspectives. These qualities lay the foundation for producing television news with depth and substance.

2.3 Ability to Accurately Grasp Program Pacing

Television is a comprehensive art form. Television news editors must not only focus on the arrangement and combination of multiple news items[3] but also respect the creative intentions of production staff including reporters, camerapersons, announcers, lighting technicians, graphic artists, and sound engineers. By applying knowledge of psychology and propaganda arts, they must accurately grasp program pacing, utilize familiar television language rules, and demonstrate adept organizational skills. On the basis of technical understanding, they should artistically reprocess visual and audio language to present news reports in a televised manner, creating quality television programs that audiences enjoy. This reflects the political sensitivity, social responsibility, personal aesthetic sense of television media, and consideration for audience psychological orientation, thereby forming certain public opinion and social guidance.[4]

2.4 Ability to Refine “Headline” News and Effective Information

Selecting appropriate headline news is paramount for television news programs, as the sequential transmission characteristic of television news determines its

central position. For news editorial departments, headline news directly manifests their intentions; for audiences, whether they approve of the headline directly affects their viewing interest. Simultaneously, editors must focus on enhancing the information content of news, which is also a crucial factor in improving the influence and dissemination power of news organizations and, to a certain extent, determines the survival and quality of television media.

2.5 Ability to Craft Effective Headlines

Headlines serve as snapshots of news, capable of summarizing main ideas, provoking audience skepticism, raising questions, sparking curiosity, and entertaining the public. Among numerous news items, the function of headlines in attracting audience “clicks” has become increasingly prominent, making quality headlines more important than ever. Adjusting headline writing according to user characteristics includes using more inspirational, motivational headlines for users in third- and fourth-tier cities; employing suspenseful headlines when appropriate for the content; and utilizing rational, concise headlines when targeting urban white-collar and highly educated audiences. These approaches offer valuable lessons for television news editors.

3. Enhancement of Professional Skills

3.1 Capability in News Topic Selection and Planning

News topic selection is the most critical first step for media to produce quality content, and this applies equally to television news media. As an editor, one must constantly maintain news sensitivity. Whether on duty or off, active engagement can yield excellent topics; “lingering” in areas where news frequently occurs can make good topics a source of inspiration; at news scenes, not overlooking any detail can also lead to valuable topics; learning to analyze phenomena inversely and trace them to their sources can uncover major topics. Additionally, making more friends provides an inexhaustible source of information.

3.2 Enhancing Editing Capabilities for Visual and Audio Language

Television’s most prominent characteristic is the visual nature of its imagery. The ratio of visual impact from images to auditory impact from commentary is 8:2, representing the unique charm of television news. In addition to skillfully using written language, television news editors must become experts in visual editing, integrating concrete symbols such as color, imagery, motion, and space with abstract language to present vivid visual information. Simultaneously, they must become sound editing experts, coordinating audio with visual editing to fuse the two into a unified whole. Furthermore, they must properly align character traits with audio-visual commentary, presenting more objective and impartial television news reports to the audience.

3.3 Emphasizing VR/AR Technology

In recent years, Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) have been increasingly adopted by domestic and international media, causing noticeable shifts in news communication. First is a content shift from shallow narrative to in-depth content. VR technology can significantly enhance the breadth and depth of news reporting, while AR can “overlay” unlimited digital information onto limited shallow narratives, increasing users’ real-world experiences and extending their sensory functions and cognitive space. Second is an industry shift from “fighting alone” to “cross-boundary integration.” The powerful combination of authoritative content and high technology easily captures audiences. Third is a stylistic shift from “original reproduction” to “immersion + participation.”

3.4 Emphasizing New Writing Styles

Nearly 60% of users on new media platforms prefer humorous writing styles, requiring television news editors to observe trending topics closely, keep pace with internet hotspots, and regularly collect and use popular online terms to enrich television content and attract audience attention.

In conclusion, the new media era has brought richer news dissemination channels and more diversified communication methods. If television news wishes to strengthen its viability and competitiveness, television editors should conduct editorial work based on audience needs, innovating and transforming aspects such as editorial philosophy, arrangement methods, and cultural absorption to inject new vitality into television news and promote the overall development of the television news industry.

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

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