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## How to Construct New Mainstream Media Platforms in the Age of Intelligent Connectivity —— Post-print of the Beijing Symposium on the “People’s Account 1000+” Plan

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### Abstract

According to the 42nd Statistical Report on Internet Development in China released by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), as of June 2018, China’s internet user base reached 802 million, with mobile internet users accounting for 788 million, or 98.3% of the total.

### Full Text

#### Preamble

According to the 42nd *Statistical Report on Internet Development in China* released by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), as of June 2018, China’s internet user base reached 802 million, with mobile internet users accounting for 788 million, or 98.3% of the total.

### Introduction: The Imperative for New Mainstream Media Platforms

At the National Conference on Propaganda and Ideological Work in August this year, President Xi Jinping emphasized that we must scientifically understand the laws of online communication, improve our ability to manage and govern the internet, and transform this greatest variable into the greatest increment for our cause.

Lu Xinning, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *People’s Daily*, stated at the 2018 China Internet Media Forum that platform mediatization and media platformization will become key trends in the era of intelligent connectivity. To turn the internet

into a “greatest increment,” we must construct a new media content ecosystem guided by mainstream values, converging online and offline forces.

## The “People’s Account 1000+” Initiative

In recent years, *People’s Daily* has focused on building an autonomous and controllable platform. On June 11, the *People’s Daily* client officially launched the national mobile new media aggregation platform “People’s Account,” which has since attracted over 5,000 mainstream media outlets, Party and government institutions, and high-quality self-media accounts. On September 12, the platform introduced the “People’s Account 1000+” plan. Through a scientific selection mechanism, accounts approved for entry enter a growth track after completing a probationary period. The system elevates accounts based on comprehensive algorithmic evaluations of content quality, update frequency, innovation, and engagement. To encourage original and short video content production, the ranking algorithm weights these categories more heavily. Accounts that reach a certain level become “People’s Account 1000+” members, enjoying exclusive benefits.

## Strategic Challenges and Framework

With rising internet penetration and a growing netizen population, how can traditional mainstream media construct a new pattern of public opinion guidance that adapts to increasingly segmented and differentiated communication trends? Faced with diversified public opinion and multiple platforms, how can we transform the internet from the greatest variable into the greatest increment for our cause while effectively transmitting mainstream voices? These challenges demand a systematic response grounded in three core principles.

### Zhang Yong: Three Principles for Platform Development

Zhang Yong, Deputy Director of the Bureau of Network News and Information Dissemination at the Cyberspace Administration of China, observes that while cyberspace is becoming cleaner and online opinion trends are improving, the landscape remains complex and challenging due to diverse actors and platforms. He proposes three fundamental principles for media convergence.

First, uphold the correct political direction, public opinion orientation, and value orientation. Building an autonomous and controllable platform involves two key concepts: autonomy and controllability. For some time, online noise and discordant voices have persisted while mainstream voices failed to occupy mainstream positions, largely due to the lack of proprietary platforms. The launch of “People’s Account” will strengthen mainstream voices and squeeze the space for negative noise. Controllability ensures that all carriers, aspects, and links in news and public opinion work maintain correct orientation without compromise, guaranteeing content security.

Second, continuously enhance communication capacity, guidance, influence, and credibility to expand positive energy online. Our propaganda work must reach people where they are. As mobile internet development enters its second half, the era of competing for traffic and speed is giving way to an era of refined user management. In this context, “People’s Account” must build platforms that provide content services.

Third, prioritize innovation, technology, operations, and management to address traditional media’s shortcomings. While traditional media excels at content creation, they often lag in technology, operations, and management. Therefore, content innovation must be accompanied by parallel innovations in technology and operations.

### **Wang Wei: Operational Insights from People’s Daily New Media Center**

Wang Wei, Operations Director of the *People’s Daily* New Media Center, identifies “People’s Account” as an optimal platform for government information release, a shared traffic platform for all mainstream media, and an authoritative news release platform for experts and public figures. For self-media, the platform must remain open, tilting toward high-quality self-media and short video content. Since mainstream media have shortcomings in technology and operations, the platform must strengthen these areas to provide better user experience and communication power.

Looking ahead, trending content from mainstream self-media is becoming increasingly specialized, particularly in rumor refutation and science popularization. As mainstream media accounts gain more users, they can debunk rumors and disseminate correct information more quickly and convincingly.

Recent observations reveal four key trends: First, when government media adopt personification and IP strategies, their ability to correctly and deeply guide users strengthens during hot topic reporting. Second, building new communities makes information dissemination more precise. For instance, on WeChat, communities hold more construction value than official accounts, offering not just commercial value but greater worth in information transmission and community building. Third, synergistic communication with traditional media makes self-media an important supplementary force in hot topic dissemination. Fourth, mainstream media’s unique advantage lies in three-dimensional communication and in-depth reporting, while self-media tends to convey emotions. However, emotions require factual foundations, so self-media expects mainstream media to provide this basis for integration.

### **Xu Danian: Defining Mainstream Value in the New Media Landscape**

Xu Danian, Founder and CEO of NewRank, asks how new media should shoulder social responsibility in hot topic dissemination. He defines mainstream value and positive energy as anything that helps people aspire to and achieve

a better life. In recent years, NewRank's rankings show increasing mainstream accounts—such as *People's Daily*, Xinhua News Agency, and government media—among the top 100 members.

### **Yang Yuancheng: Community Co-creation as a New Model**

Yang Yuancheng, Co-founder of Newsevent, advocates for a spiritual life with material foundations that meets people's growing needs for a better life. Newsevent positions itself as a commercial enterprise and as “co-actors with ten million people.” The “Escape from Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou” campaign revealed that the relationship between content brands and users has evolved from the one-way reading relationship of traditional media to a partnership of co-action. When users become “co-actors” with content brands, they form a community that co-creates content and empowers each other.

### **Xiao Jian: Vertical Content and Short Video Integration**

Xiao Jian, Vice President of Shidian Dushu and General Manager of Shidian Video, notes that combining vertical content with short video formats requires substantial professional talent. For instance, food content demands experts who understand ingredients and cooking, so content construction typically starts from areas of expertise. Vertical content can be divided into two categories: industry vertical and positioning vertical. Shidian Dushu belongs to the positioning vertical category, focusing on arts and culture short videos. In this vertical space, while Yitiao emphasizes e-commerce and Ergeng focuses on small-character stories and documentaries, Shidian Dushu cultivates a literary and artistic temperament, allowing it to cover books, home life, food, and more without setting industry boundaries.

### **Li Sixian: Platform Operations and Content Governance**

Li Sixian, Head of Government Media Operations at Douyin, explains that successful short video operation begins with building a quality platform that attracts users. To cultivate user stickiness, Douyin provides extensive services and support for government media accounts, which possess excellent content in fields like aerospace, public security, and science but often lack promotional and operational teams. Douyin matches them with creative MCNs on the platform and provides training to help them better understand and produce short videos. Additionally, Douyin collaborates with government accounts to create positive energy campaigns that engage platform users, boosting both professional account activity and overall user engagement while disseminating positive content.

Regarding content governance as short videos become primary distribution channels, Douyin advocates two principles: blocking harmful content and promoting positive content. All uploaded videos undergo dual machine and human review, with multiple rounds of review for high-playback content to ensure quality.

Douyin also provides reporting functions, inviting frequent reporters to become co-maintainers of community standards, mobilizing all users to identify and report problematic content for timely handling. Simultaneously, the platform guides positive content through prominently displayed community self-discipline conventions that encourage high-quality content creation and documenting a beautiful life, with recommendations favoring positive energy content.

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

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