

Developing Professional News Mobile Live Streaming: Urban Broadcast Media Have Great Potential (Postprint)

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Abstract

Amidst the growing impact of new media on traditional media, actively integrating with new media and leveraging its own advantages in talent and content constitutes an inevitable choice for traditional media. Venturing into the mobile live streaming sector and creating professional news mobile live streaming serves as an important vehicle and means for urban radio and television media to maintain competitiveness and expand influence in the new media era. This paper proposes specific measures and recommendations for leveraging advantages to create professional mobile live streaming programs: strengthening cooperation with social platforms to reach audiences on a larger scale, and utilizing content production advantages to develop professional news mobile live streaming. The article elaborates on these points through the actual case of Wuhu Radio and Television.

Full Text

Abstract

In an era where new media increasingly poses strong challenges to traditional media, active integration with new media while leveraging inherent advantages in talent and content has become an inevitable choice for traditional outlets. Entering the mobile live streaming domain and developing professional news mobile live broadcasts represents a crucial vehicle and method for urban radio and television media to maintain competitiveness and expand influence in the new media age. This paper proposes specific measures and recommendations for leveraging advantages to create professional mobile live programs, including strengthening cooperation with social platforms to reach broader audiences and utilizing content production strengths to build specialized news mobile live

streaming. The article elaborates on these points through case studies from Wuhu Radio and Television.

Keywords: news mobile live streaming; urban radio and television media; information

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1. The Imperative and Impact of Mobile Live Streaming for Urban Broadcast Media

1.1 The Competitive Necessity of Integrating New Media

For traditional media, “live broadcasting” has always been a highly competitive concept. Since the late 1980s, television and radio media quickly gained dominance over traditional print media through their inherent timeliness, vividness, and intuitiveness, establishing dominant discourse power and generating tremendous audience appeal. The “live broadcasting” capability of radio and television media formed a core competitive advantage, bringing major news events and activities, including entertainment and sports performances, into “zero distance” contact with audiences and allowing them to experience the vivid processes and intrinsic charm in real-time—something traditional print media could never achieve.

Objectively speaking, the strong rise of new media represents a “double-edged sword” for traditional media, particularly urban radio and television stations that lack advantages in funding, technology, and talent. While experiencing powerful impacts and declining market share, these traditional outlets have gradually recognized their own conceptual, technological, product, and operational model lag, prompting them to explore integration with new media. The fusion of urban radio and television media with new media represents a product of complementary advantages and mutual promotion. By leveraging new media’s distribution channels and product forms while capitalizing on their own talent and content strengths, traditional media can drive the construction of all-media platforms through technology-driven and content-optimized approaches, thereby expanding their influence.

However, with advances in information technology and the flourishing of new media, the advantages once held by radio and television media are no longer obvious. This is particularly true in live broadcasting’s ability to bring audiences closer to news events, where there is a clear trend of being replaced by new media. The popularization and application of mobile client terminals have given new media a first-mover advantage in mobile live streaming. Audiences no longer need to sit by televisions or radios; they can access live information anytime

and anywhere simply through their mobile phones, conveniently and quickly. New media has demonstrated advantages in mobile live streaming through its flexibility, timeliness, accessible material selection, and smooth communication. In contrast, traditional radio and television media, especially urban stations, have experienced tremendous impact and face severe competitive pressures.

The author's institution, Wuhu Radio and Television Station, launched a professional audio-visual news portal website—Wanjiang Pearl Network—in March 2007, using this as a foundational platform to explore the integration of traditional radio and television media with new media. In October 2017, the authoritative mobile client “Today Wuhu,” integrating graphics, audio, and video dissemination, was officially launched after revision, becoming a significant measure for Wuhu Radio and Television to build a mobile all-media platform. Only by actively integrating into new media can urban radio and television stations leverage respective advantages and maintain their own discourse power. Despite continuous challenges, it is foreseeable that future media platforms will be new platforms formed by the integration of traditional and new media—not only new achievements in technological fusion but also a necessity for updated news concepts.

1.2 The Tremendous Influence and Vitality of News Mobile Live Streaming

The evolution from traditional live broadcasting in radio and television media to current mobile live streaming on new media platforms is driven not only by tremendous technological progress but also reflects conceptual updates in news communication. Compared to traditional live broadcasting, mobile live streaming offers not only more convenient terminal display but also greater richness, flexibility, and bidirectionality in live broadcasting concepts, selection, and methods.

Relative to traditional broadcasting by radio and television media, news mobile live streaming centered on mobile terminals possesses three distinct advantages. First, the selection of live topics is more free and flexible. Live material is no longer limited to major news events or activities; highly participatory, influential, fun, and interesting activities frequently appear on mobile live streaming lists. For example, “Today Wuhu” conducted a graphic live broadcast earlier this year titled “Meeting on February 2nd! Flower Sea Folk Blessing Hundred Family Banquet,” focusing on folk customs and traditions that proved very popular with audiences. This transformation has turned previously “high-end” news event broadcasting into grounded, people-connected displays of local activities, narrowing the distance with audiences.

Second, the persistence, richness, and convenience of news mobile live streaming greatly surpass traditional broadcasting, exerting stronger influence on viewers. Simultaneously, thanks to information technology development, the complex technical requirements for live broadcasting are decreasing, allowing broadcast-

ers to devote more energy to the content itself. This significantly reduces the manpower and material resources consumed by live broadcasting, making it increasingly convenient to cover news events. “Today Wuhu” alone conducted over 40 various news-oriented live broadcasts in cooperation with radio and television media in the first half of 2018—four to five times more than the live broadcasts conducted solely by radio and television media in the same period last year. This enables mobile live streaming to devote more attention to topics with greater relevance to people’ s livelihoods, making it increasingly popular among ordinary citizens.

Third, mobile live streaming possesses interactive capabilities that traditional broadcasting cannot match. Mobile live streaming is essentially real-time interaction between people; the platform is no longer a pure audio-video or graphic push platform but has evolved into a venue for two-way communication. On May 9th this year, “Today Wuhu” live-streamed the opening ceremony of Wuhu’ s new Zhongshan Bridge. When the live reporter on-site immediately pointed out design issues regarding the excessively steep slope of the non-motorized vehicle approach bridge, citizens discussed this problem in the communication area, creating a hot topic. Subsequently, relevant departments promptly intervened to explain and take measures. The reflection and discussion of various focal issues kept the live broadcast popular for an extended duration, generating tremendous social response and receiving high praise. The news event live broadcast evolved into a concentrated discussion of public topics through interactive exchange.

1.3 Building Professional News Mobile Live Streaming

In an era where everyone can produce content, urban radio and television media must break through distribution channel limitations, leverage new media platforms, and build professional news mobile live streaming to continuously keep pace with developments and maintain competitiveness. The inherent characteristics of urban radio and television media provide them with certain resource advantages and strong feasibility in entering the mobile live streaming domain to launch programs focusing on local major events, hot topics of public concern, and live broadcasts of relevant activities in other cities.

First, they possess stronger local and community orientation, making it easier to attract attention by deeply cultivating urban soil. Urban radio and television media have been rooted in cities for many years, with interview tentacles extending to every corner, possessing 完善的采编体系和信息获得渠道, and having in-depth and detailed understanding of various urban conditions. Their understanding and grasp of various urban cultures are also more reasonable. Therefore, they can more easily identify events and topics that citizens care about, have significant influence, and possess greater community and local characteristics as mobile live streaming topics. Simply put, urban broadcasters not only have resource advantages for local hot events but can also disseminate news facts faster due to greater familiarity with local conditions.

Second, resource allocation is more optimized, making it easier to form mature operational teams. First, urban radio and television media's commitment to new media platform construction in recent years has resulted in relatively low platform costs. For instance, Wuhu Radio and Television's "Today Wuhu" APP serves as an important vehicle for integrating traditional and new media to build an all-media platform and an effective platform for creating professional news mobile live streaming. Since urban broadcasters possess their own new media platforms and traditional media platforms with convenient coordination, traditional media can provide content while new media provides technical support and platform construction, enabling live streaming to go online at any time. On the evening of March 22nd this year, when the "Blue Sky Defense" environmental inspection surprise operation was launched again in the Wuhu area, "Today Wuhu" proposed live streaming at 6 PM and fully launched it at 7 PM. Journalists from Wuhu Radio and Television's all-media platforms quickly joined the live broadcast, with bulletins, comments, video messages, analyses, and pictures rotating on stage. Within just one and a half hours, clicks exceeded 40,000. Second, urban radio and television media possess relatively mature live broadcasting and editorial teams. With the continuous lowering of live broadcasting technical thresholds, broadcasters' business advantages in audio-video collection technology, image-text processing, live process control, and related planning are extremely obvious, making it easier to form stable and professional operational teams. News mobile live streaming produced by such teams demonstrates stronger content expression advantages compared to other network platforms, providing audiences with better experiences. From Wuhu Radio and Television's actual operations, its traditional and new media have achieved complementary advantages, with resources reasonably allocated and continuously optimized.

Third, news resources are utilized fully with high added value. The organic cooperation between traditional and new media complements each other and achieves deep integration. In March this year, Wuhu Life Channel cooperated with the "Today Wuhu" APP to broadcast the "People's 315 Special Program" live at 8 PM, featuring on-site revelations, guest interviews, exchange of rights protection information and experiences, and reflection of consumer demands, achieving good push and dissemination effects. Both television ratings and client click rates reached historical highs. However, this was not an isolated live activity. As early as early February, the two parties had cooperated to open the column "Wuhu People's 315—All-Media Storm Coming," establishing a rights protection reporter group composed of senior journalists from the Life Channel and setting up a complaint zone to voice rights protection for Jiangcheng citizens. For over 20 consecutive days, the reporter group reported numerous consumer rights protection cases through text, pictures, and videos, actively contacting industry and commerce, quality supervision departments, lawyers, and experts to provide rights protection assistance to citizens. Through continuous reporting before the live broadcast, topic excavation, and accumulation of hot spots, the live broadcast generated strong anticipation and appeal.

2. Strategies for Developing Professional Mobile Live Streaming

2.1 Building Professional Mobile Live Streaming Teams

Although urban radio and television media possess technical and talent advantages in entering news mobile live streaming, converting these into actual operational “winning advantages” obviously requires much work. We must recognize that traditional media still show obvious gaps with new media in news service concept updates, application of new internet technologies, development of media product forms, especially in interactive communication with audiences and innovation in methods. These are crucial factors determining the success or failure of building professional news mobile live streaming.

News is also a service, and news mobile live streaming is even more so. We can no longer select live content from the traditional broadcasting perspective of being “high-end” and “educational,” ignoring audience concerns and imposing themes through forced ideological indoctrination. Instead, we should be people-oriented, respond to citizens’ concerns, think what they think, urgently address what they urgently need, and sincerely experience together with the audience. In late January this year, when Wuhu City encountered a rare snowstorm and low-temperature weather, Wuhu Radio and Television media cooperated with “Today Wuhu” to timely open a graphic live streaming special topic titled “Walking Together Through Wind and Snow, We Are Together.” All journalists from Wuhu Radio and Television’ s all-media platforms joined the live broadcast, bringing audiences firsthand information on weather, road conditions, safe travel, livelihood security, and public transportation. From 8 AM to 10 AM on January 28th, Wuhu Life Channel, News Channel, Comprehensive Frequency, and Traffic Frequency jointly broadcast a special program with “Today Wuhu” titled “Persistence in the Wind and Snow.” The live broadcast segment achieved a rating share as high as 15.96%, with APP clicks reaching 312,000 times that day, demonstrating the powerful influence of integrated media operations.

2.2 Strengthening Cooperation with Social Platforms to Reach Broader Audiences

Currently, mobile live streaming technology is developing rapidly with numerous live platforms. Urban radio and television media entering the mobile live streaming domain face unpredictable fierce competition. Objectively speaking, mobile news live streaming for most broadcasters’ self-owned new media has far from reached a prosperous stage, with platforms generally suffering from insufficient popularity. For instance, many live broadcasts on “Today Wuhu” basically have around 10,000 clicks, which is clearly insufficient. Therefore, the key to successful and effective news mobile live streaming lies in solving the traffic problem. Based on traditional broadcasters’ advantages in professional content production, which domestic large-scale online live platforms favor, we can consider cooperating with the latter to link and launch local news and live

broadcasts with strong regional news value and major activities on these platforms. This can greatly enhance the influence of live activities in a short time and significantly boost mobile live streaming traffic. For example, series celebration live broadcasts such as “Fantawild Ten Years, Joy With You” and on-site live broadcasts of the 8th (Wuhu) Science and Technology Expo on “Today Wuhu” could adopt cooperation methods with social media platforms such as Sohu News, Tencent WeChat, and Sina Weibo to boost popularity. Since these platforms gather large audiences, they can serve as channels to drive traffic to live broadcasts, representing an extremely effective approach for urban radio and television media to build professional news mobile live streaming and rapidly enhance brand influence.

2.3 Leveraging Content Production Advantages to Build Professional News Mobile Live Streaming

Content is the engine of media, and “content is king” remains the iron law of media competition. Urban radio and television media possess strong content production capabilities, and mobile live streaming should fully utilize these advantages to excavate high-quality live resources and improve live content quality. To leverage broadcasters’ content production advantages in building professional news mobile live streaming, two approaches are essential.

First, fully excavate and utilize live resources to thoroughly prepare for mobile live streaming. On one hand, as traditional media, urban radio and television stations have abundant program resources, hosts, and excellent video production teams that can guarantee the production of high-quality, professional content, making news mobile live streaming based on new media platforms more competitive than other new media platforms. On the other hand, urban broadcasters’ own distribution channels can simultaneously transform live content into brand columns, maintaining appeal to traditional radio and television program audiences. The superimposed influence of new media platforms and traditional broadcasting channels helps maximize the value of mobile live content and enhances the competitiveness of news mobile live streaming.

Second, employ rich and diverse activities as means to increase audience participation and enhance their loyalty. Improving live content interactivity can greatly increase user participation enthusiasm, thereby enhancing audience recognition of the live broadcast and media platform and improving their experience. This enables platforms to continuously attract new audiences and retain existing ones through each live broadcast, thereby continuously enhancing platform influence and live traffic. In February and May this year, the Today Wuhu APP launched two live activities: the “Wuhu Agricultural Products Exhibition and Sales Fair” and the “8th Wuhu Science and Technology Expo.” Both events were meticulously planned in detail. Well-known hosts from Wuhu Radio and Television acted as “tour guides.” In the former live broadcast, the host was particularly skilled at interaction, displaying detailed knowledge of agricultural products, providing professional and substantial introductions to

on-site product prices, tastes, and name origins, and even conducting real-time price bargaining. The discussion area of the live broadcast was extremely active, with comments rapidly refreshing the screen and attracting large numbers of viewers. Many audience members went to the site to purchase products after watching the live broadcast. In the latter live broadcast, robots and intelligent gaming products became the hottest keywords in real-time communication and interaction between the host and audience. Many audience members were attracted by the live broadcast to visit the site, making this year's Science and Technology Expo exceptionally popular. The emphasis on interactivity and communication in mobile live streaming has significantly improved audience participation while enhancing their recognition of the platform and their loyalty to radio and television mobile news live streaming.

In conclusion, in this era where mobile live streaming is blossoming everywhere, as traditional media, urban radio and television media should continuously strive for progress, follow trends, promptly utilize new distribution channels, build their own new media platforms, strengthen cooperation with powerful social platforms, and simultaneously leverage traditional media's advantages in teams, resources, and professional content. By seizing development opportunities in mobile live streaming and producing professional live programs, they can further expand their communication influence and leadership, secure a place in fierce competition, and revitalize traditional media in the new communication environment.

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

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