

Study on Media Convergence Innovation of Guangxi Daily Media Group (Postprint)

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Abstract

, in this new era, Guangxi Daily must adhere to the correct direction of newspaper operation, promote mainstream values, disseminate positive energy, and serve as a pacesetter in the integrated development of traditional mainstream media and emerging media. This will add new momentum to accelerating the realization of Guangxi's "two completions" goal—building a moderately prosperous society in sync with the rest of the nation and basically establishing a new strategic pivot for open development in southwest and south-central China—as well as to building an international passage facing ASEAN and forming an important gateway for the organic connection between the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and the Silk Road Economic Belt.

Full Text

Preamble

As internet communication flourishes, various internet applications built upon its foundation continue to emerge in an endless stream. In this process, new media forms such as Weibo, WeChat, and news apps have rapidly risen to become the most favored platforms for citizens to obtain news and information. Traditional newspapers and broadcasting media, however, face declining circulation and viewership, weakened communication power and influence, and shrinking advertising revenue. Confronted with the impact of new media communication and changes in how people access information, traditional media must acknowledge the transformation of the communication ecosystem, actively utilize new media platforms, adopt media convergence strategies, and strive to maintain their communication power and influence in the internet age.

Among traditional media, newspapers have the longest history as news media. In China's traditional news media landscape, provincial party newspapers represent an important category. Against the backdrop of media convergence,

provincial party newspapers have also advanced with the times, promoting media convergence strategies to adapt to the transformation of the communication ecosystem and maintain their influence in the new era.

Guangxi Daily Media Group stands as a relatively successful case of media convergence among provincial party newspapers. This article examines the concepts and initiatives of Guangxi Daily Media Group's media convergence in the context of new media communication.

2. Guangxi Daily Media Group's Media Convergence Innovation Initiatives

Traditional newspaper media convergence innovation requires the reconstruction and reengineering of communication concepts, content, processes, channels, platforms, and talent teams to create user-friendly experiences for news content dissemination. Facing the new communication ecosystem, Guangxi Daily has insisted on developing both traditional media and new media simultaneously, actively promoting integration in content, channels, platforms, operations, and management. Currently, Guangxi Daily Media Group has evolved into Guangxi's most comprehensive new media organization in terms of product forms, influence, communication power, staffing, technical capacity, and coordination with autonomous regional and local party committees and governments.

1. Overview of Guangxi Daily Media Group's Development

Guangxi Daily serves as the official newspaper of the Communist Party of China Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Regional Committee. On December 3, 1949, *Guangxi Daily* was officially launched as the organ of the Guangxi Provincial Committee of the CPC. On March 5, 1958, with the establishment of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, *Guangxi Daily* became the official newspaper of the CPC Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Regional Committee. On December 22, 2009, with approval from the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Regional Party Committee and Government, Guangxi Daily Media Group and Guangxi Daily Media Group Co., Ltd. were formally established, while retaining Guangxi Daily Press. By 2015, Guangxi Daily Press (Guangxi Daily Media Group) managed 30 internal departments (offices, divisions, centers), 14 city-level correspondent stations, seven newspapers, three periodicals, five websites, 20 subsidiaries, and one factory.

Guangxi Daily Press publishes seven newspapers: *Guangxi Daily*, *Nanguo Morning Post*, *Contemporary Life News*, *Nanguo Today*, *Nanguo City News • Home Weekly*, *Guangxi Legal Daily*, and Guangxi Mobile Newspaper (including mobile, Unicom, and telecom versions, as well as Fangchenggang Mobile Newspaper, Baise Party Building Mobile Newspaper, and Wuzhou Mobile Newspaper). Among these, *Guangxi Daily* is Guangxi's most authoritative and influential party newspaper with an average daily circulation of 230,000 copies. *Nanguo*

Morning Post is Guangxi's largest metropolitan newspaper in terms of circulation, advertising volume, and influence, with an average daily circulation of 300,000 copies. *Contemporary Life News* is Guangxi's first lifestyle service newspaper, with an average daily circulation of 130,000 copies. *Nanguo Today* represents a successful example of Guangxi Daily's cross-regional newspaper operation, with an average daily circulation of approximately 180,000 copies, making it the most influential metropolitan newspaper in Liuzhou and central Guangxi. *Guangxi Legal Daily* is Guangxi's only provincial-level legal party newspaper, adhering to the philosophy of "party newspaper nature, legal characteristics, and metropolitan newspaper style." It serves as an important public opinion front for implementing the comprehensive rule of law concept and building a safe and law-based Guangxi, with an average daily circulation of 150,000 copies. *Nanguo City News* is another newspaper in the "Nanguo" series, publishing a series of weekly publications such as *Home Weekly*, and serves as an economic and lifestyle weekly focusing primarily on real estate content.

Guangxi Daily Press also publishes three magazines: *Guangxi Pictorial*, *Nanguo Panorama*, and *Law and Economy*. The group operates five websites: Guangxi News Network, Nanguo Morning Post Network, Liuzhou Today Network, Guilin Red Bean Network, and Safe Guangxi Network.

2.1 Innovation in Communication Philosophy and Clarification of Media Positioning

As Guangxi's most influential new media group, Guangxi Daily Media Group has consistently adhered to the principle of politicians running the newspaper, serving as a disseminator of party policies, a recorder of contemporary events, a promoter of social progress, and a guardian of fairness and justice. The group owns multiple newspapers, periodicals, and websites, with correspondent stations in 14 prefecture-level cities, some of which have been upgraded to branch offices. With over 5,000 employees, it stands as Guangxi's most authoritative news medium and a media giant radiating influence toward ASEAN.

Guangxi Daily Media Group consistently upholds the principle that the party newspaper belongs to the party, holding high the banner, guiding public opinion, focusing on central tasks, serving overall interests, uniting the people, boosting morale, building consensus, clarifying fallacies, discerning right from wrong, connecting China with the world, and bridging official and civilian discourse to synchronize party aspirations with public sentiment. Metropolitan subsidiary newspapers such as *Nanguo Morning Post* connect with ordinary citizens and care about every household, leading Guangxi's newspaper market. The new media platform comprising Guangxi News Network, the Guangxi Daily client app, and its corporate Weibo, WeChat, and micro-video accounts further enhances the core competitiveness of media information content and advances the supply-side structural reform of news content production.

The group adheres to the "four closely-focused" core concept: closely focusing on

the central tasks of the autonomous regional party committee and government, closely focusing on major themes in Guangxi's economic and social development, closely focusing on hot, difficult, and questionable issues of public concern, and closely focusing on the group's own development needs.

Guangxi Daily Media Group actively explores new media expressions for mainstream news, approaching audiences with a conversational and communicative attitude through fresh expression and sincere communication. Whether covering major political events such as the National Two Sessions and the China-ASEAN Expo, or public emergencies such as flooded pigs in Hechi or developers slapping homeowners, Guangxi Daily and its new media platforms respond quickly without remaining silent, triggering extensive attention, forwarding, and commentary from followers. This demonstrates the authority and influence of the party newspaper, effectively guiding public opinion and building consensus.

2.2 Creating Quality Communication Content

As experienced content creators, traditional media represent an important force on new media communication platforms. Guangxi Daily Media Group's media convergence strategy reflects its combination of journalistic professionalism and innovative spirit. Precisely because of its profound accumulated experience in traditional news media operations, coupled with its timely media convergence philosophy, new concepts align with new trends, and new ideas initiate new steps. Guangxi Daily Media Group has produced a series of influential reports.

These impactful reports include: in February 2016, the "All-Media Live Studio" in Beijing during the National Two Sessions; in May 2016, the special "Learning from the East" coverage of the Guangxi Party and Government Delegation's visit to Zhejiang and Shanghai; in July 2016, the "Eight Conferences" review implementing the spirit of the autonomous region's major thematic conferences; and in September 2016, coverage of the 13th China-ASEAN Expo. Through all-media integration, comprehensive deployment, and round-the-clock broadcasting, these reports created successful examples of all-media coverage for Guangxi Daily Media Group, strengthening the communication power, guidance, influence, and credibility of the main news and public opinion front. They truly achieved the positive effects of shaping social ethos and building consensus.

2.3 Optimization of Communication Processes

In 2006, Xingui Network and Guilong Network were officially integrated into Guangxi News Network. In 2007, Guangxi Mobile Newspaper was launched. In 2008, Guangxi News Network introduced Guangxi Online Video. In 2013, the Guangxi News Network app, WeChat, Weibo, and micro-video accounts went online. In 2014, the Guangxi News Network WAP site was upgraded and launched. In 2015, Guangxi News Network comprehensively advanced media convergence, implementing unified procurement, classified processing, and centralized distribution of news and information to create an all-media "central

kitchen.”

Through the creation of this central kitchen, Guangxi Daily has formed a communication pattern featuring integrated planning, one-time collection, multiple generation, diversified dissemination, all-day rolling updates, and comprehensive coverage. Various “ingredients” such as text, images, audio, and video collected by journalists are carefully prepared by the central kitchen into various news “dishes” including text reports, photo stories, audio, video, animation, micro-periodicals, special topics, and H5 formats. These are delivered to major “restaurants” including newspapers, radio, television, the internet, and mobile internet, stimulating readers’ appetites and adjusted according to different audience needs, achieving all-media production through one-time collection, multiple generation, and multi-cloud distribution.

2.4 Construction of Communication Channels and Platforms

In implementing its media convergence strategy, Guangxi Daily Media Group has adopted the following measures to build communication channels and platforms for the new era.

2.4.1 Development of Digital Newspapers

All newspapers under Guangxi Daily Media Group—including *Guangxi Daily*, *Nanguo Morning Post*, *Contemporary Life News*, *Nanguo Today*, *Nanguo City News*, *Health News*, and *Guangxi Pictorial*—have developed digital versions. Users can access the original content and specific reports of these newspapers by visiting <http://gxb.gxnews.com.cn>.

2.4.2 Website Construction

Guangxi News Network, owned by Guangxi Daily Press, is a nationally key news website and an important platform for the autonomous regional party committee and government to release authoritative information, reflect public sentiment, and serve netizens. Established in January 2006 through the strong alliance of Xingui Network and Guilong Network, it is a large comprehensive website focusing on news and information, offering new media services such as video news and mobile newspapers. By the end of 2014, Guangxi News Network’s PC platform had reached 240 million page views, while its mobile platform had reached 30 million.

Currently, Guangxi News Network has transitioned from a traditional portal to an all-media operation platform, advancing toward the era of big data operations. It has built an integrated operation model for all-media and new channels, guided by product characteristics and user needs to achieve all-media and full-process transformation in content production.

2.4.3 Operation of Guangxi Daily's Official Weibo

As of August 22, 2017, Guangxi Daily's official Weibo account had 6.16 million followers. The positioning of Guangxi Daily's official Weibo is: authority leads the mainstream, communication builds strength! *Guangxi Daily* is characterized as a mature and steady "uncle," born on December 3, 1949, a Sagittarius full of vitality and humor. With broad interests and unique insights in politics, economics, society, and culture and sports, it frequently releases major authoritative interpretations. It can write excellent articles and play new tricks, discuss news on Weibo and WeChat, and show off its charm. Life would be much less interesting without knowing him!

Weibo content includes text, images, video, animation, and other formats. The Weibo page features friendly links where netizens can watch press conferences of the autonomous regional government, access electronic versions of *Guangxi Daily*, *Nanguo Today*, *Nanguo Morning Post*, and *Contemporary Life News*, and browse content on Guangxi News Network. Additionally, the Guangxi Daily Weibo page provides links to autonomous regional institutional Weibo accounts and department-specific reporter Weibo accounts.

2.4.4 WeChat Public Account Operation

Currently, social media has gathered massive numbers of users. Numerous traditional media outlets have recognized the importance of social media platforms represented by WeChat and have launched WeChat public accounts to achieve integrated development of traditional and new media, thereby expanding their communication power and influence, extending their brand value, and maintaining their competitive viability in the internet communication era.

As the new media platform of Guangxi's largest party newspaper within the autonomous region, the *Guangxi Daily* WeChat platform, established in 2013, has achieved considerable development, securing a position in mobile internet public opinion fronts and gaining high influence both within Guangxi and nationwide.

In 2015, *Guangxi Daily's* official WeChat account ranked within the top 10 among national provincial party newspaper WeChat accounts in terms of influence. In the "Paper Media Public Account Rankings" by the recognized industry outlet "Hedgehog Commune" and the "WeChat Public Account Peak Rankings" by Tsinghua University and China Youth Daily, *Guangxi Daily's* WeChat public account has consistently ranked among the top 10 national daily newspapers (party newspapers), placing 4th to 10th among national comprehensive daily newspapers after *People's Daily*, *Guangzhou Daily*, and *Southern Daily*. In December 2014, it set a Guangxi WeChat public account record with 875,000 single-article views.

The WeChat public account won the "2014 Micro-Government Influence Award." At the "WeChat Night" ceremony held in Guangzhou on January 11, 2016, *Guangxi Daily's* WeChat public account received the "WeChat Annual Out-

standing Media Public Account” award—the only media outlet in Guangxi to win this honor and the first time Tencent WeChat issued this award.

Guangxi Daily's WeChat platform was also among the first national media public accounts to introduce new technologies such as “Shake” and “360-degree panoramic news,” continuously innovating WeChat “gameplay” and receiving positive feedback from followers.

The influence and reputation of *Guangxi Daily's* official WeChat platform rely on more than 60 years of resource accumulation and platform building by Guangxi Daily Press. Through daily operations including fan interaction, event marketing, and daily content push, as well as through the fermentation of major public events such as the China-ASEAN Expo, beautiful rural construction, and the Two Sessions, it has gradually formed its own brand tone and operational paradigm. Some researchers believe that the problems, challenges, and accumulated experience *Guangxi Daily's* official WeChat platform has encountered during its operation represent invaluable assets for the WeChat transformation of local party newspapers and even local print media's new media transition in Guangxi—assets that can be deeply explored and internalized.

2.4.5 Guangxi Daily Client App

In 2013, Guangxi Daily Media Group established a New Media Department dedicated to developing a “new party newspaper” in the new media field. On December 22, 2014, the fifth anniversary of Guangxi Daily Media Group, the “Guangxi Daily” client app and Guangxi Daily Media Group's new media matrix and government new media were officially launched.

Positioned as “Guangxi's No. 1 News Release Platform,” the Guangxi Daily client app vigorously promotes the “fine processing” of newspaper and website news. Important original columns such as “What Are Autonomous Regional Leaders Busy With?” and “Where Are Party Secretaries and Mayors Going?” have become popular among Guangxi users. On Weibo, Guangxi Daily's corporate Weibo account has long ranked first among Guangxi media in terms of influence and activity on Sina's official rankings.

In addition to news content, the client app features a “Guangxi Release” section that includes columns for autonomous region releases, department releases, and prefecture-level city releases. Through the client app, users can not only keep abreast of important national and autonomous regional news but also learn about various new regulations and policies issued by autonomous regional departments and prefecture-level cities.

2.4.6 Building an All-Media Matrix

Through implementing its media convergence strategy, Guangxi Daily Media Group has built its own new media matrix covering various new media forms including news websites, internet communities, mobile newspapers, Weibo,

WeChat, and client apps. This includes 64 Weibo public accounts, 32 WeChat public accounts, and 112 Weibo and WeChat public accounts combined.

Guangxi Daily, *Nanguo Morning Post*, and *Contemporary Life News* have long ranked among the top Guangxi media Weibo accounts, with Guangxi Daily's WeChat ranking among the top 10 national daily newspapers and party newspapers, and *Nanguo Morning Post's* WeChat ranking within the top 30 overall.

Currently, Guangxi News Network's all-media matrix is combining with PC websites, WAP websites, WeChat, Weibo, micro-video, mobile newspapers, BBS, and other communication channels to achieve comprehensive coverage of communication terminals, occupying the new high ground of public opinion in the mobile new media era.

3. Prospects for Guangxi Daily Media Group's Media Convergence Innovation

Guangxi Daily Media Group has already built a multi-media communication pattern covering print media, online media, and mobile media, becoming Guangxi's most comprehensive new media organization in terms of product forms, staffing, technical strength, influence, communication power, reporting and operational capabilities, and coordination with autonomous regional and party committees at all levels. The group has become a large media conglomerate with multiple newspapers, periodicals, websites, and companies. By December 2014, its net assets reached 1.042 billion yuan, with profits exceeding 100 million yuan for five consecutive years and profit margins ranking among the top party newspapers nationwide. It has basically formed a new pattern with prominent newspaper main business, rapid new media development, and diversified media operation profits.

Standing at this new historical starting point, Guangxi Daily Media Group must continue striving to become a new-type media group with strong strength and communication power, credibility, influence, and competitiveness, focusing on the following aspects:

3.1 Upholding the Nature of Party Media

As a media group centered on *Guangxi Daily*, regardless of how it advances reform and innovation, Guangxi Daily Media Group must steadfastly uphold its nature as the official newspaper of the Communist Party of China Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Regional Committee and fulfill its functions as an organ newspaper. All reform initiatives aim to better serve the realization of these functions.

3.2 Highlighting Regional Characteristics of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region

Located on China's southern coast, Guangxi borders Guangdong Province to the east, Beibu Gulf to the south facing Hainan Province across the sea, Yunnan Province to the west, Hunan Province to the northeast, Guizhou Province to the northwest, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the southwest. It represents one of the main regions for Lingnan cultural inheritance. Its special geographical location and unique provincial conditions provide rich resources for Guangxi Daily Media Group's content production.

3.3 Deepening Media Convergence Strategy

Guangxi Daily Media Group has already conducted numerous explorations on the path of media convergence and achieved remarkable results. However, internet and new media communication continues to evolve. With advances in communication technology and updates in communication concepts, the media convergence process must continue moving forward. Only by keeping pace with the times can news media adapt to future social development.

3.4 Valuing Audience Needs

Communication activities themselves are not the goal of news media; achieving communication effects is the fundamental purpose. For Guangxi Daily Media Group's media platforms to effectively guide public opinion, promote mainstream values, and disseminate positive energy, they must first make audiences willing to access their platforms and receive, read, and view their content—this is the prerequisite for achieving communication effects. Therefore, in advancing its media convergence strategy, the group must maintain a clear understanding of the current communication ecosystem, research audience media contact behaviors and psychology, and improve and develop new communication platforms and content based on audience needs to provide unique user experiences.

In summary, in this new era, Guangxi Daily must adhere to the correct direction of newspaper operation, promote mainstream values, disseminate positive energy, and serve as a pacesetter in the integrated development of traditional mainstream media and emerging media. This will add new momentum to accelerating the realization of Guangxi's "two completions" goal—building a moderately prosperous society in sync with the rest of the nation and basically establishing a new strategic pivot for open development in southwest and south-central China—as well as to building an international passage facing ASEAN and forming an important gateway for the organic connection between the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and the Silk Road Economic Belt.

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