

Reflections on the Convergence Development of Traditional and New Media (Postprint)

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Abstract

With the advancement of social economy and the further deepening of informatization, traditional media and new media are gradually developing toward mutual integration and progressively entering the era of informatized all-media. Under the influence of informatization, channels for the public to access information are becoming increasingly diversified. As the primary carriers of information dissemination, traditional media and new media are also undergoing changes due to the impacts of economic globalization and industrial diversification. This paper analyzes the current status of integration between traditional media and new media and the dilemmas they face, and summarizes several targeted solution strategies.

Full Text

Abstract

With the progress of social economy and the further deepening of informatization, traditional media and new media are gradually moving toward mutual integration, ushering in an era of comprehensive information and omnimedia. Influenced by informatization, the public's channels for obtaining information have become increasingly diversified. As primary carriers of information dissemination, both traditional and new media are undergoing transformation under the influences of economic globalization and industrial diversification. This paper analyzes the current status and challenges facing the integration of traditional and new media, and summarizes targeted strategic solutions.

Keywords: Traditional Media; New Media; Convergent Development; Strategies

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Compared with traditional media, new media has gradually gained widespread social recognition for its comprehensiveness, timeliness, and interactivity, playing a vital role in people's lives and work. However, while bringing convenience, new media has also weakened the social status of traditional media, which now faces an existential crisis. In the omnimedia era, the integration of traditional and new media represents an inevitable trend in media development.

1. Traditional and New Media: Definitions and Distinctions

1.1 New Media

New media is a concept relative to traditional media. Based on the internet, it employs entirely new communication methods to disseminate information to the public. By understanding what appeals to mass audiences, it delivers content that viewers both enjoy and need, achieving more timely communication effects and more efficiently capturing audience interest. However, alongside this efficiency and convenience, new media also creates opportunities for ill-intentioned actors to exploit information transmission vulnerabilities to spread false information and publish unhealthy social commentary, creating social instability and causing serious adverse effects to varying degrees.

1.2 Traditional Media

The birth of traditional media has facilitated the development of human civilization, served as a major driver of productive labor, and significantly promoted political and economic advancement. Despite its profound significance, traditional media has notable limitations: its information dissemination methods are singular and processes are complex, preventing much information from reaching the masses in a timely manner and failing to meet public demand. Consequently, its status in the omnimedia era is gradually declining [1].

1.3 Key Differences Between Traditional and New Media

Technical Support: In traditional media forms, magazines and newspapers rely on printing technology, while radio and television depend on audio and electromagnetic wave technology. New media, by contrast, is built upon digital information technology and network technology. Compared with traditional media technology, new media technology demonstrates greater comprehensiveness and compatibility.

Operational Models: Traditional media emphasizes media presentation forms, whereas new media prioritizes meeting user needs, with its information dissemination process requiring technical support from operators [2].

Role Positioning: Traditional media possesses corresponding political attributes and primarily plays a role in guiding social values. Though its presentation forms have certain limitations, its authority is unmatched by new

media. New media offers rich presentation forms and diverse information, but the authenticity of much of its content cannot be guaranteed.

Communication Characteristics: Traditional media employs primarily one-way, point-to-multipoint dissemination, where audiences passively receive information without opportunities to express viewpoints or engage in discussion. New media leverages information technology to enable faster, broader, and more flexible information dissemination while providing platforms for information exchange. Its diverse communication forms can satisfy the varied needs of more users.

2. The Necessity of Convergent Development

2.1 Advances in New Media Technology

The development of new media technology presents both challenges and opportunities for traditional media. Marshall McLuhan's assertion that "the medium is the message" concisely captures the significance of communication media in social development. In other words, what triggers social transformation is not the content being communicated, but the communication medium itself. The widespread application of internet and new media technologies is driving tremendous changes in the media industry while promoting adjustments to the media market structure [3].

2.2 Diversified Public Needs

In today's internet era, media diversification and the public's varied needs are gradually transforming the traditional relationship between communicators and audiences. Due to the singular nature of conventional communication models, audiences could only passively receive information. However, the development of the internet and the emergence of various new media such as Weibo and WeChat have shifted communication toward two-way interaction, with audiences increasingly becoming active selectors and even disseminators of information. Meanwhile, the diversification of information channels has accelerated audience segmentation.

3. Current Status of Media Convergence

In the contemporary social context, the integration of traditional and new media is developing in both breadth and depth. At the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that efforts to integrate traditional and new media should be further strengthened. While respecting media communication and development laws, we must apply internet thinking, emphasize complementary advantages, and achieve deep integration across platforms, content, operations, and channels to ensure a correctly unified goal of building a three-dimensional, diversified communication system.

Currently, new and traditional media are moving toward interactive and mutually beneficial development. Some media institutions have already established their own online platforms, formulated comprehensive industry standards, and achieved orderly, standardized, and rational operational mechanisms. Additionally, social organizations and government agencies have created various platform activities that enhance citizens' right to know, advancing the integration process and enabling two-way development. The diversification of information media and channels satisfies people's varied lifestyle needs, facilitates public life, and improves quality of life [4].

4. Challenges in Media Convergence

Interest Coordination Difficulties: Many traditional media have experimented with audience growth through new departments, personnel, and platforms. However, this approach lacks necessary interpersonal connections and intimacy, resulting in low integration cohesion. When entities with non-unified operations are linked together, their conflicting interests lead them to continue operating independently, failing to achieve true growth targets.

Unsatisfactory Economic Returns: Compared with other countries, China's information media development remains relatively singular, lacking corresponding high-level talent and facing funding gaps. Under such circumstances, blind project investment and big data considerations often fail to produce satisfactory results. Therefore, when integrating with new media, traditional media must intensify technological transformation and model innovation to achieve qualitative leaps in convergence.

Transformation Pressure on Traditional Media: In the media market environment, new media has firmly established itself in fierce competition through its market-oriented DNA and popular new forms. In the omnimedia network era, new media has attracted large numbers of young audiences and developed rapidly in a short period through various mobile applications, bringing tremendous [development to society].

5. Strategies for Convergent Development

5.1 Channel Integration

Compared with traditional media, new media possesses superior communication channels. Therefore, channel integration should be emphasized in convergent development. On one hand, new media should organically integrate with traditional media to obtain authoritative information resources, gradually enhancing public credibility and achieving interactive information dissemination. On the other hand, popular emerging channels in new media should be preserved to fully leverage interactive advantages, enabling audiences to exchange information on platforms.

5.2 Resource Integration

Resource integration refers to the organic combination of spiritual and material resources from both new and traditional media. Material resources primarily include actual, historical, and future resources. China's 5,000-year cultural heritage represents important material resources for the media industry. Numerous outstanding achievements from New China's construction process serve as sources for media convergence and powerful drivers for media development. China's media industry has accumulated rich content resources over the years, while policy resources—a major advantage—provide navigational guidance and direction for efficient content development. These two aspects complement and promote each other, advancing media convergence. Furthermore, convergent development should integrate offline and online resources to more effectively attract user attention and develop each user into an individual media disseminator. This organic fusion of offline and online resources gives both greater vitality [5].

5.3 Content Integration

Regardless of media type, excellent content remains the primary factor in attracting audiences. Traditional media carries heavy political weight, with its information dissemination process supervised and managed by relevant departments, ensuring reliability and authority. New media, with its varied communication methods, has relatively lower information authenticity. Therefore, convergence should fully combine these advantages: mobilizing the diverse communication methods and content of new media while strictly applying traditional media's supervision and review systems to new media to ensure reliable and authoritative information dissemination, thereby achieving mutual learning and complementarity.

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

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