

Cultivating All-Media Talent in the Era of Media Convergence: Postprint

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Date: 2023-10-08T00:00:00+00:00

Abstract

The Internet has brought tremendous transformation to the media ecosystem. As the key to media competition lies in talent competition, the cultivation of all-media talents has become a focal point of industry attention. In April 2018, during the Syrian War, a CCTV correspondent stationed in Syria single-handedly shouldered multiple responsibilities—including on-camera reporter, editor, director, cameraperson, satellite transmission engineer, and new media live streaming—successfully completing the reporting mission. This paper will explore approaches to cultivating all-media talents in the era of media convergence from the dimensions of political literacy, professional skills, and all-media thinking.

Full Text

How to Cultivate All-Media Talent in the Era of Media Convergence

Abstract: The Internet has brought tremendous changes to the media ecosystem. As talent competition is key to media competition, how to cultivate all-media talent has become a focus of attention in the industry. In April 2018, during the Syrian War, a CCTV correspondent in Syria single-handedly shouldered multiple roles—including on-camera reporter, editor, director, cameraperson, satellite transmission engineer, and new media livestreamer—to outstandingly complete the reporting mission. This article explores how to cultivate all-media talent in the era of media convergence from the perspectives of political literacy, professional skills, and all-media thinking.

Keywords: Media Convergence; All-Media Talent; Political Literacy; All-Media Thinking; Multi-Position Training

Chinese Library Classification: G206

Document Code: A

Article ID: 1671-0134(2018)06-095-02
DOI: 10.19483/j.cnki.11-4653/n.2018.06.034

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Introduction

In the new era, the responsibilities and mission of the Party's news and public opinion work are to hold high the banner, guide the direction, focus on the center, serve the overall situation, unite the people, boost morale, shape customs, gather consensus, clarify fallacies, distinguish right from wrong, and connect China with the world. On February 19, 2016, President Xi Jinping emphasized at the Party's News and Public Opinion Work Symposium that media convergence development must be promoted. Media competition is fundamentally talent competition, and media advantage is core talent advantage. It is necessary to accelerate the cultivation of a news and public opinion workforce that is politically firm, professionally excellent, has a fine work style, and is trusted by the Party and the people. Media practitioners must enhance their professional capabilities through diligent study and extensive training, striving to become all-media and expert-type talents. Since President Xi proposed the concept of all-media talent, it has immediately become the direction for media practitioners' self-improvement and efforts. So, how can we cultivate all-media talent in the era of media convergence to promote high-quality and innovative media development?

1. Firm Ideals and Beliefs, Raise Political Stance

Cultivating all-media talent requires prioritizing Party spirit cultivation and theoretical knowledge study to enhance political responsibility and mission. On March 31, the websites "Toutiao" and "Kuaishou" broadcast programs that violated social morality. The National Radio and Television Administration attached great importance to this issue and immediately, together with local management departments, seriously summoned the main responsible persons of both websites for a talk. According to the "Regulations on the Management of Internet Audio-Visual Program Services," the Administration ordered the two websites to immediately rectify the situation, comprehensively inventory their program libraries, immediately remove programs violating social morality, and hold accountable the auditors and supervisors responsible for broadcasting illegal, non-compliant, and harmful audio-visual programs.

This phenomenon of some new media platforms broadcasting programs that violate social morality prompts us to consider: whether traditional or new media practitioners, in the process of serving audiences and catering to their psychology, must we enhance political literacy and raise political stance? The responsibility of media lies in conveying the voice of the Party and government and guiding audiences to establish correct worldviews and values. If media workers themselves hold wrong viewpoints, lack correct positions on major issues

of right and wrong, or play a wrong or negative role, the consequences would be unimaginable. The problems with the aforementioned new media websites sufficiently demonstrate that the political literacy of their relevant personnel urgently needs strengthening.

To enhance political literacy, media workers must first establish correct political direction, firm up ideals and beliefs, and raise political stance, enabling programs or short videos to play important roles in guiding public opinion, inheriting culture, leading social customs, communicating with hearts, and inspiring wisdom. As President Xi Jinping pointed out at the Party's News and Public Opinion Work Symposium, media practitioners must undertake these responsibilities and missions, which is the essence we must earnestly study and comprehend to enhance political literacy and raise political stance.

On April 14, war broke out in Syria. Within minutes, CCTV News launched live broadcasts across its new media platforms. Xu Dezhi, CCTV's correspondent stationed in Damascus, Syria, provided a large amount of on-site information for domestic audiences. At the live broadcast site, he single-handedly shouldered multiple roles—including on-camera reporter, editor, director, cameraperson, satellite transmission engineer, and new media livestreamer—while conducting multiple television connections and continuously performing new media live broadcasts. CCTV News praised Xu's battlefield live broadcast with the comment: "One person is a whole team." This introduction to the war correspondent Xu Dezhi's multiple roles in Syria provides an excellent interpretation of the definition of all-media talent.

2. Expand Learning Areas, Enhance Professional Skills

In the era of media convergence, not only do traditional media practitioners feel tremendous pressure, but new media practitioners also face similar impacts. The constant updating of new equipment and technologies and the continuous innovation of communication methods—including current drone filming technology and VR virtual technology—challenge every media practitioner's thinking and adaptability.

What kind of person can be called an all-media talent? All-media talent refers to individuals who possess all-media thinking and concepts, are familiar with the communication patterns, knowledge, and skills of various communication carriers, skillfully use various modern communication means for creative communication labor, and make contributions to communication activities. The communication carriers mentioned here include newspapers, radio, television, outdoor media, internet, and mobile phones, while the communication skills include text interviews, on-camera interviews, writing, photography, videography, audio and video editing and production, and digital transmission technologies for internet and mobile media.

Now, local media practitioners are gradually transforming toward all-media talent requirements in their work. On June 23, 2017, after Anhui's college en-

trance examination admission scores were announced, Pan Yu'ang from Hefei 168 Middle School became Anhui's top liberal arts student. While many media reporters flocked to the school, a photojournalist from *Xin'an Evening News* did not stick to convention by merely taking a few photos to complete the task. Instead, through live broadcasting, the journalist uploaded pictures and exclusive video interviews of the student to editors in the rear via mobile terminals. After simple processing, the interview content was disseminated through the newspaper's official website, Weibo, WeChat, and other new media platforms, achieving rapid information dissemination and excellent communication effects. This photojournalist's performance demonstrates that traditional print media workers are not just engaged in news or feature program editing but are also information analysts and product processors. As long as they are willing to find ways, they can always present better works, which also poses challenges for traditional television media practitioners.

To achieve rapid development in the era of media convergence, traditional television media must transform practitioners' all-media thinking, which is crucial. The application of new equipment and technologies is a vital component. The use of drones and handheld gimbals, as well as VR virtual technology, is not only necessary for photojournalists to master but also for editors and reporters to understand and learn. Only by mastering their usage principles and characteristics can we utilize them effectively in programs through various technical means. The beautiful, high-end, and magnificent aerial footage we see today, along with three-dimensional images produced through virtual reality technology, provide audiences with an immersive experience and elevate program presentation to a new level.

Relatively speaking, new media workers must not only master advanced technical means and innovative communication skills but also learn the political literacy and professional skills of traditional media workers. Traditional television media has obvious advantages over new media in program planning, editing, and production, especially in large-scale television variety show live broadcasts, where new media production teams still have a long way to go. New media live broadcasting features fast dissemination speed, strong personalization, and strong interactivity, but it cannot be simply understood as a single anchor holding a mobile phone for live broadcasting. If evaluated by television program standards, new media live broadcasting still needs improvement in content and live broadcast planning capabilities.

3. Possess All-Media Thinking, Strive for Multi-Position Training

Currently, there are four main forms of media in the communication field: professional media, institutional media, self-media, and platform media, each with different characteristics and advantages. However, all-media talent needs to master multiple information expression skills to improve efficiency and quality in processes such as news topic searching, news fact verification, news multimedia presentation, and big data news production.

To possess the qualities of all-media talent, media practitioners need to have all-media thinking and strive for multi-position training to familiarize themselves with the work requirements and characteristics of various positions, enabling them to be well-informed and improve their comprehensive capabilities.

As a provincial traditional media organization, the program production team of Anhui Broadcasting International Channel already requires editing and reporting personnel to have all-media thinking in daily program production, fully utilize new technologies, apply innovative media communication methods, strengthen content construction, assume social responsibilities, and tell good stories of China in the new era. For example, before filming the three-episode series *Exploring Huangshan*, the production team designed two different filming schemes for television and new media communication. In addition to using advanced equipment such as drones and handheld gimbals to improve picture quality and enrich visual perspectives, the team also comprehensively considered the presentation forms of new media short videos and WeChat official accounts, achieving multi-channel, all-media production and broadcasting models. Team members must have the ability to work independently in program filming, interviewing, writing, post-production, and music. Additionally, they are required to have “cross-border narrative” capabilities—to conduct categorized interviews, adaptive production, and diversified releases on the same topic, forming all-media synergy and presenting a three-dimensional and diverse communication effect. After program completion, not only did it achieve good ratings when broadcast on television, but the carefully produced English and Russian versions of short videos, along with text and images, were also launched on Anhui Province’s first audio-visual government affairs app “Dolphin Vision” and American Facebook official page, YouTube, WeChat official accounts, and other new media platforms, creating a “screen-swiping effect” and achieving excellent communication results.

In the era of media convergence, cultivating all-media talent requires not only high-level attention from media leadership to arrange and guide practitioners to actively participate in relevant professional training and multi-position training but also demands that practitioners be politically aware, direction-oriented, passionate, and culturally grounded while emphasizing interest and service orientation. It also requires media practitioners to take conscious action to adapt to the development needs of the era of media convergence, perform well in segmented communication, targeted communication, and external communication, and promote high-quality media development.

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

Source: ChinaXiv — Machine translation. Verify with original.