

Problems and Countermeasures of Traditional News Media WeChat Official Accounts (Post-print)

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Abstract

The comprehensive development of new media has not only propelled the all-round development of the modern media and information industry, but is also gradually transforming the development of traditional media. The development of new media does not signify the disappearance of traditional media; traditional media should actively adapt to the developmental changes of new media, comprehensively promote the mutual integration between the two, actively engage in the operation of WeChat Official Accounts, and continuously gain market recognition. This article first analyzes the main problems existing in traditional news media's WeChat Official Accounts and proposes corresponding countermeasures. In the new media era, due to the objective existence of information fragmentation, news media need to comprehensively and effectively organize various fragmented information through complete information integration formats, continuously transform people's traditional reading habits, provide timely and comprehensive feedback, categorize and group users' basic information, and achieve precise push notifications to users.

Full Text

Problems and Countermeasures of Traditional News Media WeChat Official Accounts

Abstract

The comprehensive development of new media has not only propelled the all-around advancement of the modern media and information industry, but is also gradually transforming the development of traditional media. However, the rise of new media does not signify the disappearance of traditional media.

Traditional media should actively adapt to the changes brought by new media, comprehensively promote integration between the two, vigorously develop WeChat Official Account operations, and continuously gain market recognition.

This paper first analyzes the main problems existing in traditional news media's WeChat Official Accounts and proposes corresponding countermeasures. In the new media era, due to the objective existence of information fragmentation characteristics, news media need to comprehensively and effectively organize various fragmented information through integrated forms, continuously change people's traditional reading habits, provide timely and comprehensive feedback, categorize and group basic user information, and achieve precise push notifications to users.

Keywords: Traditional News Media; WeChat Official Account; Problems

Introduction

With the extensive development of digital and information technology, internet-based new media has gradually become the primary channel for news dissemination in China, reshaping the country's new media ecological environment. According to the 41st Statistical Report on China's Internet Development recently released by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), as of December 2017, China's internet user base reached 772 million, with 40.74 million new users added throughout the year. The internet penetration rate stood at 55.8%, up 2.6 percentage points from the end of 2016. This massive number of internet users has also propelled the comprehensive development of the new media industry. The full development of new media has not only advanced the modern media and information industry but is also gradually transforming traditional media. The rise of new media does not mean the demise of traditional media; rather, traditional media should actively adapt to the changes brought by new media, comprehensively promote integration between the two, and vigorously develop WeChat Official Account operations to continuously gain market recognition.

1.1 Severe Content Homogenization

Traditional media profit models primarily involve transmitting information to audiences, selling information resources, or creating value through advertising functions. In the new media context, audience resources are gradually dispersing, and audience attention is being diverted. The traditional secondary-sales profit model of news media is gradually changing, with advertising revenue declining and the information sales function weakening.

1.2 Information Fragmentation

With the comprehensive development of the internet era, information has exploded in volume, generating considerable information garbage. Compared with

traditional reading methods, fragmented information reading is gradually changing people's reading habits. This fragmented reading approach, enabled by electronic devices, lowers the barrier to reading. However, this vast amount of information sources makes it difficult to form a stable knowledge system during information formation, and the scattered nature of knowledge leads to a lack of systematic learning. As people primarily consume various fragmented information pieces during reading, content production by communicators has also assumed a fragmented characteristic. In the traditional media era, fragmented information sources could be integrated through various special topics. However, on WeChat Official Accounts, except for some official and brand media that can maintain information originality, many media outlets, in their haste to quickly collect and publish information, pay little attention to the content quality of their WeChat Official Accounts, often patching together information from various platforms to sensationalize, resulting in low credibility of information dissemination and affecting the authority of media communication.

1.3 Unclear Profit Models for New Media

In the development of new media, users have become the most valuable resource for media platforms; only with a massive user base as guarantee can the value of information be realized. Faced with fierce competition in the WeChat Official Account market, traditional news media are gradually seeking transformation and development. However, under the influence of high homogenization, relying on traditional paid models for media profit will not ensure survival. For example, *Southern Metropolis Daily* uploads its traditional newspaper content to its WeChat Official Account, along with corresponding advertisements to the WeChat platform. Although the WeChat Official Account can generate 60 million yuan in online advertising revenue, this merely maintains normal operations without achieving profit growth. If sustainable funding sources cannot be provided, the normal operation of the WeChat Official Account platform will be affected.

1.4 Limited Functions of Subscription Accounts

With the comprehensive development of WeChat Official Accounts, they have gradually evolved into various forms of service content. Service accounts primarily provide customer service-based content, while subscription accounts are mainly used for individuals and media. Therefore, traditional media generally do not choose subscription accounts to obtain information services. These subscription accounts are primarily constrained by information function development and corresponding push services, making large-scale reporting difficult. WeChat Official Accounts mainly conduct various information and consulting activities, with their primary function being regular information push through subscriptions. However, this information push is not a reminder-style service but rather attracts users through a 'push' rather than 'pull' approach. Consequently, many users subscribe to WeChat Official Accounts but have relatively

low reading rates, and information spreads slowly. Many users are not fixed customers of WeChat Official Accounts, and text reading rates are relatively low. Meanwhile, with the comprehensive development of WeChat Official Accounts, information redundancy has accelerated, and follower loss has become a normalized trend. Some WeChat Official Accounts have shown negative growth, with poor promotion effectiveness and low-quality content becoming important factors affecting development. When content fails to attract users, they will inevitably unsubscribe.

2.1 Content Resource Advantage as Core Competitiveness

Currently, competition in the WeChat Official Account market is extremely fierce. Due to severe content homogenization among WeChat Official Accounts, content duplication and information transmission interruptions easily occur. Among numerous WeChat Official Accounts, to gain competitive advantage requires continuous content innovation, serving as both information organizer and information bearer. On the one hand, traditional business models relying on information forwarding should be abandoned, and news originality should be strengthened. Compared with traditional news media, WeChat Official Accounts are supported by strong newspaper teams behind them for information development. Developing original content can effectively solve differentiated competition problems and reduce potential copyright infringement issues during information reprinting. On the other hand, information should be filtered according to internet information development patterns, and content targeting should be enhanced from the perspective of user psychology. In the process of improving resource integration advantages, the social influence of WeChat Official Accounts is also expanded.

2.2 Conducting In-depth Reporting on Social Hotspots

In-depth news reporting involves comprehensive analysis of the causes and consequences of events during systematic information excavation and news reporting processes, enabling the public to fully understand news information and grasp its connotations through detailed content. Meanwhile, in-depth news reporting remains a fundamental element of news communication, achieving multi-angle information development and striving for comprehensiveness through comprehensive and effective news dissemination. In the new media era, due to the objective existence of information fragmentation characteristics, news media need to comprehensively and effectively organize various fragmented information through integrated forms, continuously change people's traditional reading habits, and satisfy audience psychological needs for truth exploration amid information redundancy through in-depth reporting.

2.3 Achieving Precise Information Push

Currently, although WeChat Official Accounts have realized the function of news communication and provided more opportunities for traditional media develop-

ment through new media growth, successful operational models remain rare. This is related to the relatively short development time of WeChat Official Accounts and intense industry competition. For traditional media development where ‘those who gain users gain the world,’ securing greater user support represents key development content. How to effectively obtain subscription numbers and achieve comprehensive and effective user communication is the prerequisite for interactive information development. Meanwhile, in the big data era, through comprehensive use of data technology to excavate basic information data for reasonable information push on WeChat Official Accounts, media should actively change the situation of single information sources and distribution, strengthen interactive information characteristics, and achieve transformation in information communication and interaction. Through customized and personalized information services, timely and comprehensive feedback, categorizing and grouping basic user information, precise push notifications to users can be realized, thereby attracting user participation and increasing subscribers.

2.4 Striving to Seek Multiple Profit Models

The profit models of traditional media WeChat Official Accounts can be innovated in several aspects: First, strengthen advertising profit model innovation. The advertising profit model is a relatively traditional approach; in the new media era, network information technology can be fully utilized for advertising innovation by embedding advertisements through soft article editing to expand advertising coverage. Second, Guangdiantong. The Guangdiantong format, first launched by Tencent as a new precision advertising profit model, achieves precise advertising promotion through professional data processing and editing work, charges based on click-through data, and applies the revenue comprehensively to WeChat Official Accounts. Third, implement charging services. Currently, some celebrities conduct professional customized service activities through their WeChat Official Accounts, generating revenue through various consultation fees. For example, *Luogic Talkshow* has launched what the industry calls ‘the most unreasonable ever’ paid membership system, while legal and psychological consulting WeChat Official Accounts have also introduced consultation fee services. From the perspective of traditional news media, to achieve comprehensive development and enhancement of WeChat Official Accounts in the future, it is necessary to strengthen charging management, realize profits from WeChat Official Accounts, and thereby provide an economic foundation for their operational development.

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

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