Postprint of the 2017 Report on Convergence Development Practices of Chinese Industrial and Economic Media

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Abstract

On one hand, the "converged media" trend is unstoppable, with "two micros and one terminal" (WeChat, Weibo, and client applications) becoming standard configurations for traditional media. Platform-based layouts such as "central kitchens" and cloud-based dissemination have emerged successively, enabling traditional media to transform with the posture of a new aircraft carrier and regain their influence in communication power, guidance power, impact power, and credibility. On the other hand, medi…

Full Text

Preamble

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2017 Report on the Convergence Development Practice of China's Industrial and Economic Media

Since August 2014, when the "Guidelines on Promoting the Integrated Development of Traditional and Emerging Media" was approved by the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform, the convergence of traditional and new media has become a central focus for mainstream media outlets at both national and local levels. After more than three years of accelerated development aimed at "deep transformation, deep integration, and profound reform," traditional mainstream media have established comprehensive integrated development frameworks across content, channels, platforms, operations, and management.

On one hand, the "converged media" trend is unstoppable, with "two micros and one terminal" (WeChat, Weibo, and client applications) becoming standard configurations for traditional media. Platform-based layouts such as "central kitchens" and cloud-based dissemination have emerged successively, enabling traditional media to transform with the posture of a new aircraft carrier and regain their influence in communication power, guidance power, impact power, and credibility. On the other hand, media convergence has not yet overcome its "pain points," with new problems emerging. Data from this survey reveals a pronounced "80-20 phenomenon" across media outlets' "two micros" platforms: print media content demonstrates insufficient online dissemination power, interaction with users needs improvement, client-side user activity remains low, and there remains considerable room for secondary dissemination through aggregated news platforms.

During a year of leveraging new media for transformational breakthroughs, revenue from technology platforms remains a formidable challenge. According to collected "member unit media convergence development survey reports," only a handful of industrial and economic media have achieved revenue stability or profitability.

Notably, after completing their new media layouts and commencing operations, traditional media face serious issues of unauthorized reprinting of high-quality content, with infringement and plagiarism proving difficult to eradicate. The unauthorized use of traditional media's premium content directly results in insufficient traffic and activity on their "two micros and one terminal," preventing the enhancement of operational effectiveness. This represents a fundamental problem requiring urgent resolution following traditional media's transformation.

This report, supported by "Yuanben Blockchain" technology, collected new media data from 100 industrial and economic media outlets, including 78 WeChat public accounts, 62 Sina Weibo accounts, and 39 Toutiao accounts. Using data from January 1 to December 4, 2017, as the analytical sample, combined with survey results from the "China Industrial and Economic Print Media Convergence Development Questionnaire" completed by 18 industrial and economic newspaper representatives, this report provides comprehensive data analysis on the construction, dissemination, guidance, and service functions of industrial and economic new media platforms to achieve more objective understanding and evaluation, helping these media understand their strengths and weaknesses in the context of industry development trends and adopt practical solutions.

Among the 100 industrial and economic media outlets surveyed, approximately 80% possess WeChat public accounts, with 75 publishing articles in 2017; about 70% have official Weibo accounts, with 62 posting updates in 2017; roughly 40% operate Toutiao accounts and publish content; approximately 40% have proprietary client applications; all maintain official websites; and about 13 have completed layouts across all aforementioned new media carriers. This demonstrates that by 2017, "newspaper-network integration" had become an irreversible trend for industrial and economic media.

Table 1 Overall Data for Industrial and Economic New Media: WeChat Overall Data

- Average number of articles: 80,547
- Average read count: 302.87 million
- Average like count: 2.537 million
- Toutiao read count: 141.469376 million
- Average Toutiao read count: 3.62742 million
- Toutiao comment count: 245,783
- Average Toutiao comment count: [value missing in original]
- Average WCI value: [value missing in original]

Weibo Overall Data: - Total fans: over 30 million - Total Weibo posts: 93,909 - Total comments: approximately 1.2 million - Total reposts: approximately 115,000 - Total likes: approximately 1.91 million

Data monitoring period: January 1, 2017 to December 4, 2017.

Twenty-nine media outlets achieved over 100,000 views per article. The most prominent was "China Education Daily," with 327 articles surpassing 100,000 views and receiving 485,922 total likes. As a rapidly rising third-party comprehensive information platform, "Toutiao" has become highly favored by industrial and economic media due to its high user activity. All 39 industrial and economic media with official Toutiao accounts demonstrated strong performance, with approximately 46,000 total articles generating around 140 million total reads, averaging over 6,000 comments per media outlet and more than 3 million reads. Among these, "People's Political Consultative Conference Network," "China Business Network," "China Real Estate News," and "China Consumer News" performed most excellently, each exceeding 10 million total reads.

In comparison to Toutiao, industrial and economic media's performance on Weibo was slightly modest. Sixty-two industrial and economic media accumulated over 30 million followers, with 93,909 total Weibo posts, approximately 1.2 million total comments, approximately 115,000 reposts, and approximately 1.91 million likes. "China Business Journal" ranked first across all metrics with 1,705,495 total likes, 643,866 reposts, 1,078,831 total comments, 12,477 Weibo posts, and 23,860,903 followers, leading by a significant margin.

This report, through "Yuanben" blockchain technology, extracts comprehensive internet big data to analyze the operational status of industrial and economic new media. It adopts the WeChat WCI index from Qingbo Big Data to analyze WeChat activity rates, original content status, posting patterns, dissemination power distribution, and copyright infringement. Combined with the "China Industrial and Economic Print Media Convergence Development Survey" results, it summarizes three trends and recommendations based on the development status of various industrial and economic new media platforms.

1. WeChat Communication Index WCI TOP50

Table 2 Industrial and Economic Media WeChat Communication Index WCI TOP50

[List of media outlets with their WeChat IDs - preserved as in original]

1.2 WeChat Communication Power Distribution by Interval

Compared with last year, the overall quality of industrial and economic media WeChat public accounts has improved, though the number of high-quality accounts remains relatively small. Similar to last year, the majority of industrial and economic newspaper WeChat public accounts have WCI values below 900, accounting for 97% of the total, indicating generally weak influence with few outstanding accounts. Among them, "China Education Daily," "China Work Safety News," and "China Business Journal" have maintained WCI values above 900 for two consecutive years, providing valuable experience for emulation.

The question of how industrial and economic media can move media convergence from shallow waters into deep waters—by targeting readership characteristics and preferences, integrating boutique content creation with fan operations, enhancing user stickiness and activity through detailed service functions, and expanding public account influence and communication power—remains a topic worthy of exploration.

Figure 1 [Figure 1: see original paper] Industrial and Economic Media WeChat Public Account WCI

Figure 2 [Figure 2: see original paper] Activity Rates of Industrial and Economic Media Units on New Media Dual-Micro & Toutiao Platforms

2.1 WeChat and Weibo Activity Analysis

WeChat activity has increased substantially, surpassing Weibo. Industrial and economic new media activity is measured by the proportion of active and dormant accounts. During the monitoring period, accounts updating daily on WeChat or more than five times daily on Weibo are considered active, while those remaining inactive for extended periods are considered dormant.

As shown in Figures 2 and 3, among the 62 industrial and economic media with Weibo accounts, 24 were active (38.7%), representing a 52% increase year-over-year; nine were dormant (14.5%), remaining consistent with last year. Among the 78 industrial and economic media with WeChat public accounts, 69 were active (88.5%), representing a nearly 15.5-fold increase compared to last year; five were dormant (6%), a 2.3-fold improvement over last year.

Among the 39 industrial and economic media with Toutiao accounts, nine were active (17.9%) and six were dormant (15.38%). The data indicates that industrial and economic media have significantly increased their operational focus on

WeChat public accounts compared to Weibo platforms. Notably, "China Business Journal" and "People's Railway Network" published over 2,000 WeChat articles in 2017.

Figure 3 [Figure 3: see original paper] Dormancy Rates of Industrial and Economic Media Units on New Media Dual-Micro & Toutiao Platforms

2.2 WeChat Original Content Rate Analysis

Data reveals low original content rates on WeChat public accounts, with nine media outlets producing zero original content. Approximately 53.8% of media maintained original content rates below 20% of total posts; 17.9% had original rates between 20%-40%; 10.3% between 40%-60%; and only 18% achieved original content rates exceeding 60% of total posts. "China Economic Times" demonstrated the highest original content rate at 92.6%. These findings indicate that industrial and economic media need to strengthen their awareness of original content creation.

The professional characteristics of industrial and economic media determine that content influence is their lifeline. The originality, uniqueness, perspective, and expandability of professionally written content constitute their core competitiveness. Media must not sacrifice these fundamentals to cater to audience reading preferences in the new media environment. Beyond maintaining content uniqueness and professionalism, media should study new media communication content and rules, increase cultivation of digital technology talent, enhance WeChat self-media operational capabilities and brand awareness, and ultimately attract high-quality audience groups.

Figure 4 [Figure 4: see original paper] WeChat Original Content Rate of Industrial and Economic Media

2.3 Posting Patterns and Communication Effect Analysis

Monthly posting volumes on "dual-micro" platforms are relatively similar, with consistent trends and fairly average monthly quantities. As shown in Figure 5 [Figure 5: see original paper], except for December (which only includes four days of statistics), the 58 Weibo accounts and 78 WeChat accounts of industrial and economic newspapers in 2017 showed minimal monthly fluctuations, with overall consistent trends across both platforms. Neither National Day nor Spring Festival holidays significantly impacted posting volumes.

Data indicates differences in hourly posting volumes between the two platforms, likely related to staff workload and audience usage habits. In terms of daily posting time distribution, Weibo begins at 7:00 AM, while WeChat starts at 6:00 AM. Weibo reaches its daily peak at 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM, with a secondary peak between 14:00-16:00. WeChat's peak posting period is 16:00-17:00, with a secondary peak at 10:00-11:00. Weibo posting volume decreases after the

11:00 AM peak, rebounds at 13:00, then remains relatively balanced throughout subsequent time periods, essentially stopping after midnight. WeChat posting volume decreases from 18:00 to 23:00-24:00.

Statistics show Weibo posts exceed 10,000 articles daily between 9:00-10:00 AM, while WeChat posts exceed 10,000 articles daily between 16:00-17:00, closely related to audience browsing habits.

Figure 5 [Figure 5: see original paper] Monthly Posting Volume of Industrial and Economic Media "Dual-Micro" Platforms

Figure 6 [Figure 6: see original paper] Hourly Daily Posting Volume of Industrial and Economic Media "Dual-Micro" Platforms

2.4 Analysis of Copyright Infringement Across Industrial and Economic Media WeChat and Weibo Platforms

"Yuanben Blockchain" conducted a comprehensive internet search of over 80,000 articles from 78 industrial and economic media WeChat public accounts and, based on article similarity, discovered that 240,000+ articles from 27,350 websites or media outlets potentially infringed upon industrial and economic media public account content, with similarity exceeding [threshold not specified].

Among these, 24,709 websites (90.3%) had fewer than 10 suspected infringing articles; 1,221 websites (46.2%) had 10-20 suspected infringing articles; 831 websites (31.5%) had 20-50 suspected infringing articles; 315 websites (11.9%) had 50-100 suspected infringing articles; 225 websites (8.5%) had 100-500 suspected infringing articles; 30 websites (1.1%) had 500-1,000 suspected infringing articles; and 10 websites (0.7%) had over 1,000 suspected infringing articles.

The massive number of websites with suspected infringement not only indicates the prevalence of self-media infringement but also reflects weak copyright protection awareness among most industrial and economic media. It can also be inferred that WeChat's built-in anti-infringement editing functions do not provide adequate protection. The market urgently needs more standardized industry norms and advanced technological solutions to reduce infringement.

Figure 7 [Figure 7: see original paper] Analysis of Infringing WeChat Public Account Quantity

If infringement is defined as text similarity exceeding 50%, "Yuanben Blockchain" comparison of 245,690 articles revealed that text infringement more commonly involves partial modification rather than pure copying. Articles with 90%-100% text similarity account for only 14.8% of cases. This reminds industrial and economic media that beyond addressing complete copying, they must also monitor partial plagiarism.

Figure 8 [Figure 8: see original paper] Overview of Text Similarity in WeChat Articles

Through comparison of over 80,000 articles from 78 industrial and economic media WeChat public accounts, "Yuanben Blockchain" identified 33,005 articles potentially subject to plagiarism. Among these, 29,853 articles (90%) were plagiarized fewer than 20 times, while 19 articles (0.06%) were plagiarized over 90 times.

This suggests that if industrial and economic media priced single original articles for authorization, they could typically license to approximately 20 self-media outlets. Once the paid authorization environment and mechanism for WeChat public accounts are further optimized, industrial and economic media could generate considerable licensing revenue.

Figure 9 [Figure 9: see original paper] Overview of Plagiarism Frequency for Infringed Articles

Recommendations and Trends

1. Transition from "Shallow Integration" to "Deep Convergence" Between Traditional and New Media

After several years of development, print media new media platform layouts have been largely established. Weibo, WeChat, mobile apps, and official websites have become standard configurations for most traditional industrial and economic media. However, the phenomenon of "newspaper online editions" with homogeneous information and lack of unique, professional content has seen limited improvement. Most media remain at the preliminary stage of reprinting and integrating industry news or hot topics in content editing, resulting in shallow-level user activity and stickiness operations.

Media convergence has achieved certain successes in talent introduction, marketing operations, organizational restructuring, and process reengineering. If future efforts can focus on unified strategic planning and effect evaluation across multiple carriers, readjust evaluation and assessment mechanisms, emphasize continuous cultivation of content talent and continuous introduction of technical talent, and establish clear and unified standards, media convergence will achieve sustained deep development.

2. Development Potential for Visualized and Audible News Carriers and Socialized User Operations in Industrial and Economic Media

With improved basic network services and reduced costs, video content production is demonstrating high-growth trends, and audiovisual information acquisition will become the mainstream trend in future online content development. Industrial and economic media should break old patterns, explore possibilities for audiovisual news content, and cover more third-party platforms through audiovisual media to acquire more users and generate higher brand value.

Only when valuable content is combined with more popular content carrier formats can information products be precisely matched with users' personalized needs. High-quality content always has a market, with the premise for achieving optimal communication effects being continuous adjustment of presentation methods and timing according to market demands.

In April 2017, the Ministry of Culture released the "Guidelines on Promoting Innovative Development of Digital Cultural Industries," noting that digital cultural industries have become the main event in cultural industries. As users constitute the core of the online world, social functions hold important positions in new media products, making innovation in social functions a key point in new media product development. Industrial and economic media also need to focus on socialized operations of their existing user groups to maintain high activity levels.

3. Copyright Content as Foundation: Industrial and Economic Media Should Emphasize Copyright Asset Authentication, Standardize Authorization Practices, and Enhance Copyright Asset Value

Report data reveals that unauthorized news reprinting has become normalized. While the large number of online media, massive information volume, and rapid dissemination speed present advantages, they also constitute a double-edged sword. The WeChat public account domain particularly suffers from serious plagiarism and infringement. Plagiarism not only undermines the originality and professionalism of industrial and economic media content but also causes user loss, further damaging the value chain of content monetization and user monetization.

In recent years, the Party and government, based on the rule of law and from the perspective of public opinion and propaganda, have attached great importance to news copyright protection. The time is ripe for strengthening news copyright protection, and industrial and economic media should proactively develop awareness of copyright asset protection and operation.

Rather than taking remedial action after infringement occurs, media should first clarify copyright ownership certification, then conduct infringement searches to identify infringing parties and protect their rights. Beyond legal weapons and administrative penalties, they should utilize new technologies for rights protection. Recent technologies such as "digital evidence preservation," "timestamping," and "blockchain" offer excellent solutions.

3. Explanation of New Media Communication Index

WeChat Communication Index WCI (V12.0)

Where: - R = total read count of all articles (n) during the evaluation period - Z = total like count of all articles (n) during the evaluation period - d = number of days in the evaluation period (generally 7 days for weekly, 30 days for monthly, 365 days for yearly, and actual days for other custom periods) - n = number of articles published by the account during the evaluation period - Rmax and

Zmax = highest read count and highest like count among articles published by the account during the evaluation period

[Note: The formula appears incomplete in the original text]

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

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