

Guo Quanzhong: Eight Major Technical Pain Points in Media Transformation (Postprint)

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Abstract

In major news reporting, platforms can establish multi-level review processes tailored for new media needs while effectively aggregating user information from Weibo and WeChat to conduct profiling analysis, thereby providing precise personalized services and marketing that create new business models. Given the rapid publication speed of new media, these platforms also offer timely retraction services, enabling one-click withdrawal. For quantitative assessment of new media performance, solutions ...

Full Text

Preamble

In major news reporting, platforms can establish multi-level review processes tailored for new media needs while effectively aggregating user information from Weibo and WeChat to conduct profiling analysis, thereby providing precise personalized services and marketing that create new business models. Given the rapid publication speed of new media, these platforms also offer timely retraction services, enabling one-click withdrawal. For quantitative assessment of new media performance, solutions can adapt to different media organizations' requirements, capturing comprehensive network-wide data including original article identification, tracking corresponding readership, click-through rates, comment volumes, and transmission data across the entire network.

The newly launched mobile collaboration platform differs from previous mobile editing systems by not only facilitating mobile content creation but also providing data on recommended hot news topics. In collaborative production, it enables the quick formation of temporary reporting teams for coordinated work. In helping media organizations rebuild user connections, the platform establishes a user center that integrates websites, print media, clients, and other channels. Hyper-convergence solutions represent fusion across the entire production and

business management workflow, as well as at the user and data levels. In the new media sphere, this means building competitive new media product matrices while providing mobile collaborative office application systems. On the big data front, it helps users manage content data, user data, and behavioral data.

The process of hyper-convergence involves not just technological integration but also the fusion of management, business, data, and entire user ecosystems. Borrowing a phrase from Tencent: this is destined to be an extraordinary migration—you will lose some things, but you will gain much more.

Eight Technology Pain Points in Media Transformation

“In media transformation, one methodological principle is crucial: we must look at the present from the future’s perspective, clearly understand future development trends, and work backwards to find the transformation path.”

—Guo Quanzhong, Department of Social and Cultural Teaching and Research, National Academy of Governance

Currently, traditional media face eight major technology pain points in their transformation process:

Pain Point 1: Emphasis on Editorial, Neglect of Operations and Management

In traditional media, editorial work, advertising operations, and distribution receive significant attention, while management and technology are most easily overlooked. Technology departments in traditional media have historically suffered from low status, primarily focusing on maintenance and equipment troubleshooting, coupled with poor compensation compared to internet companies and limited promotion opportunities. In the past, traditional media development relied mainly on editorial and operational efforts, with minimal technological change, making the “emphasis on editorial, neglect of operations, no management, no technology” approach somewhat rational. However, since the late 1990s, internet technology has begun playing a decisive role in media transformation. Under these circumstances, neglecting technology is entirely unjustified. Technology now determines media transformation, so media organizations must cultivate a technology gene and establish a Chief Technology Officer or Chief Data Officer position in their organizational structure. Without valuing technology, they cannot keep pace with transformation. The first pain point to address is the need to prioritize technology, including the technical proficiency of talent, as well as the status and compensation of technical personnel.

Pain Point 2: Focus on One-Time Outsourcing, Neglect of Iteration

One of the internet’s essential characteristics is rapid iteration. However, traditional media rarely update their technical architecture once established. The internet era prioritizes user experience, which requires technical iteration to ensure. When system problems arise, they must be quickly resolved through iterative updates and bug fixes. In transformation, media organizations must first

build a genuine in-house technical team, then establish closer relationships with technology companies to solve iteration problems through collaboration. Media transformation requires shifting traditional mindsets, being willing to pay premium prices for quality products, and prioritizing technical system iteration.

Pain Point 3: Emphasis on Traditional IT Technology, Neglect of Internet Technology

Today's slow progress in internet transformation relates to the inertia of prioritizing traditional IT technology. In reality, successful companies are internet enterprises, not traditional IT firms. The long-standing emphasis on IT technology has caused us to overlook new internet technologies.

Pain Point 4: Focus on PC, Moving to Mobile, but Neglecting Data and Intelligence

The shift from PC internet to mobile-first strategies in the mobile internet era has largely exhausted mobile dividends. The real opportunities now lie in big data and artificial intelligence. While mobile-first has become standard, we should prioritize big data and AI technologies, though we must avoid pitfalls in the process. The core of big data and AI application lies in whether data can be integrated and utilized effectively. Zhejiang Daily Press Group's "Media Cube" technology platform exemplifies thoroughness in this regard—only through data integration can media organizations quickly leverage big data and AI technologies to capture market opportunities early. Therefore, the methodological principle of looking at the present from the future's perspective is crucial in media transformation. Zhejiang Daily Press Group's transformation from acquiring gaming companies for internet transition to laying out big data industries demonstrates a clear understanding of future trends and working backwards to find a suitable development path.

Pain Point 5: Emphasis on Content Extension, Neglect of User Retention

Traditional media's internet transformation has primarily focused on content extension, from early electronic editions to PC platforms and the "two micros and one client" (Weibo, WeChat, and news apps), extending content across platforms with minimal effect due to lack of user data and difficulty forming user retention. Transformation must therefore build user retention platforms to truly establish proprietary user data.

Pain Point 6: Emphasis on Hardware, Neglect of Institutional Restructuring

Even the best hardware cannot achieve effectiveness without matching institutional mechanisms. Institutional restructuring must be reconstructed according to new technical requirements to maximize technology's potential. For example, Zhejiang Daily's "Media Cube" technology platform not only operates regularly but also supports data-driven evaluation of every reporter. Truly solving problems in the future requires completely following internet principles to reconstruct institutional mechanisms.

Pain Point 7: Emphasis on Closed Systems, Neglect of Openness

The internet trend demands attention to openness, including technology that must be extensible and compatible with future innovations. With adequate security measures, we must embrace future changes with a more open mindset.

Pain Point 8: Lack of Determination and Ambition to Become a Transformation Driver

While traditional media doesn't prioritize technology, technical personnel must also ask themselves whether they have the ambition and determination to drive transformation. Internet company founders are mostly technical talent who can drive product transformation. However, technical personnel's low status in traditional media has led to self-marginalization. Today, especially in new product development, technical personnel must shoulder responsibility in the transformation process, playing a driving role and becoming the "locomotive" of change.

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

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