

A Study on Integration Strategies for Traditional Television and New Media in the Context of Media Convergence: Postprint

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Abstract

In recent years, with the continuous development of information technology, emerging media have proliferated rapidly, gradually breaking the monopoly of traditional television in the market and making media convergence an unstoppable trend. Against the backdrop of deepening reforms in the media sector, while media convergence has created disruptions in the media market, it has also brought new ideas and opportunities for the development and reform of the media industry.

Full Text

Preamble

Research on Integration Strategies for Traditional Television and New Media in the Context of Media Convergence

Abstract: In recent years, with the continuous development of information technology, emerging media have sprung up vigorously, gradually breaking the monopoly of traditional television in the market. Media convergence has become an unstoppable trend. Against the backdrop of deepening reforms in the media sector, media convergence has not only brought shocks to the media market but also provided new ideas and opportunities for the development and reform of the media industry.

Keywords: media convergence; traditional television; new media; integration; strategic research

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1. Development Status and Crisis of Traditional Television Media

Since the term “new media” emerged and gained popularity, it has attracted constant attention. With continuous advancements in information technology and deepening reforms in the media sector, new media has penetrated every dimension of the media landscape. While developing, new media has attempted to integrate and innovate with traditional media, giving rise to new forms such as internet radio, mobile television, IPTV, and online video. These new media forms have delivered fresh and unique experiences to audiences while simultaneously delivering an unprecedented impact to traditional television, forcing a transformation in the media market structure from monopolistic control to multi-media coexistence. Fundamentally, this structural shift stems from enhanced audience demand for personalization and the development of diversified information reception channels.

According to survey data from the Shanghai Media Group, traditional television audiences are aging severely, composed primarily of middle-aged and elderly people over 45. In contrast, new media audiences are considerably younger, with viewers aged 18-35 accounting for as much as 67.4%. This indicates that traditional television suffers from serious audience aging, while younger demographics prefer new media for entertainment. Traditional television viewers watch approximately 174 minutes per day on average, whereas new media users spend about 141 minutes online daily. This demonstrates that new media attention resources are growing rapidly and catching up with traditional television. Traditional television markets are essentially saturated, with audience purchasing power gradually declining. Conversely, new media markets offer vast space and rapid differentiation, though attention resources remain unevenly distributed among new media platforms. Consequently, traditional television’s development space is shrinking, while new media’s prospects remain broad. In summary, new media attention resources are gradually surpassing those of traditional television, while young audiences are flooding into new media markets, continuously strengthening new media’s purchasing power and dominance.

How can traditional television media, once at its peak, escape this predicament, adapt to the new landscape, satisfy emerging audience demands, and continuously reform and develop toward new media? This is a shared concern and consideration within the industry.

1.1 Development of Traditional Television Media

Since its emergence half a century ago, television has continuously brought surprises to people. With the rapid development of digital information technologies such as integrated circuit technology, digital processing technology, digital signal compression technology, and computer technology, television image quality

has improved, sets have become thinner, and screen sizes can be customized according to audience needs. By processing various data information, television satisfies diverse audience demands. Television applications have become increasingly widespread, developing rapidly and bringing rich and colorful entertainment and life experiences to people, while enabling traditional television media to monopolize the market and become the dominant force for over half a century.

1.2 Crisis Facing Traditional Television Media

In recent years, new media forms based on digital technology and information networks have emerged endlessly, such as mobile television, IPTV, and the internet. These platforms possess numerous advantages, including specialized content dissemination, large-capacity and high-quality data storage, and interactive communication methods, which greatly satisfy audience needs and activities. Currently, these diverse new media forms have delivered a severe impact to previously dominant traditional television, forcing changes in the media market structure and gradually replacing the single-media monopoly with multi-media coexistence. Fundamentally, this structural transformation stems from enhanced audience demand for personalization and the development of diversified information reception channels.

2. Trends in Media Convergence Development

Media convergence leverages complementary advantages among media to achieve mutual integration and penetration of different functions, primarily encompassing aspects such as media structure, processes, forms, and communication methods. Consequently, media convergence exhibits characteristics of multi-level orientation, multi-directionality, and complementarity, providing favorable conditions for traditional television media to break through limitations and seek new development. Various conditions and indicators demonstrate that media convergence is unstoppable and represents the inevitable path for media development.

3.1 Building Brand and Image

The brand economy has gradually grown into a dominant economic force worldwide, with brand power representing influence. Due to the rise of new media, competition among media outlets in China has intensified, inevitably leading to mutual interference through similar program formats and images. However, influenced by the trends of media convergence and rapid technological transformation, audiences enjoy broader and more diverse options in media selection, with stricter demands for program personalization and quality. In this severe situation, establishing a clear, unique, and representative brand image has become the primary task for traditional television media integration. For example, “Zero Distance to Fire Safety,” a brand program of Yunnan Satellite TV co-hosted

by the Fire Brigade Corps and Yunnan Radio and Television Station, has become popular among citizens by promoting daily fire safety knowledge and fire regulations in an entertaining and accessible manner, while comprehensively introducing the good deeds of the fire brigade that are not widely known, making audiences more willing to learn about Yunnan Radio and Television Station and Yunnan Satellite TV.

Thus, brand strategy is the first step and the core foundation of media integration. Traditional television media already possesses significant advantages in brand resources and can leverage media convergence to enhance brand awareness and connotation, thereby improving brand benefits. Rapidly developing new media also needs to build brands to expand audience resources, increase visibility, and cultivate loyal long-term viewers. Through media convergence, the advantages of traditional and new media can complement each other to create a more competitive and influential brand, maximizing benefits and extending resource development.

3.2 Integrating New Media with Traditional Television to Achieve Three-Dimensional Communication

3.2.1 Traditional Television Media and the Internet

A large number of young viewers have shifted from traditional television to new media platforms such as the internet. Consequently, the internet's vast inclusiveness and broad platform have attracted the attention of traditional television media, making integration between traditional television and the internet imperative.

In traditional television operation models, production and broadcasting are fixed in schedule and quantity, leaving audiences with limited choices. After integrating with the internet, programs can be uploaded online, categorized, and organized for easy audience search and selection, enabling viewers to choose programs autonomously rather than passively watching "whatever television broadcasts," thereby increasing audience autonomy and diversity. Meanwhile, program replay functions can be added, allowing viewers who missed broadcasts to re-watch content. Audience interaction can also be enhanced by enabling viewers to rate and evaluate programs, with highly-rated programs being recommended and repeatedly broadcast on the platform.

3.2.2 Integration of Traditional Television Media with Mobile Devices

Against the backdrop of media convergence, the communication industry plays an increasingly important role. The emergence of mobile entertainment such as IPTV, mobile games, and mobile reading has gradually transformed communication from a simple transmission function into a comprehensive service platform. Mobile devices have become new mainstream platforms, fully leveraging their advantages of portability and anytime-anywhere accessibility to compensate for

television's immobility.

The integration of traditional television media with mobile devices primarily involves developing mobile television services. According to relevant survey data, in 2011, 65.7% of Chinese mobile video users utilized the “mobile TV” function, 50.4% used the “mobile internet on-demand video program” function, and 44.9% used the “mobile video download” function. This indicates that mobile television services have a large audience, and the integration of traditional television media with mobile devices holds broad prospects.

The main process of mobile television services involves communication networks connecting to television stations that produce ready-made programs, with mobile carriers charging audiences through value-added services or program fees. Mobile television services provide programs broadcast on television stations, on-demand programs specially produced for mobile carriers, and live video programs. Simultaneously, operators must fully consider user habits, data and network speed impacts, and types of mobile devices used for video playback, striving to ensure user satisfaction and enjoyment.

3.2.3 Transformation of Traditional Television Media into New Media

With the development of the times and social progress, the challenges facing traditional television media are increasing. Television stations must keep pace with the times, continuously reform and innovate, learn from new media advantages, and explore new operation models during integration with new media to ensure successful transformation to a higher level. While exploring new models, they must maintain high hardware technology standards and regularly update their technical infrastructure to provide guarantees for new operation models. Meanwhile, teleshopping, with its advantages of industrial chain value-added, increased profit channels, and freedom from geographical constraints, has changed the long-standing situation of broadcasting institutions relying too heavily on advertising revenue, illuminating the path forward for traditional television media development.

In conclusion, facing the rapidly developing new media industry, traditional television media should recognize both the enormous crises and challenges before them as well as the development opportunities they face. How to fully utilize integration with new media for self-improvement and transformation is the core issue that traditional television media must carefully consider.

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

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