

Postprint: Analysis of the Publishing Operation Model for “Modern Paper Books” Based on the RAYS System

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Abstract

“Modern Paper Book” is based on the RAYS system, a pioneering comprehensive media convergence solution developed by Wuhan University of Technology Digital Communication Engineering Co., Ltd., which constructs a complete, win-win closed-loop ecosystem among publishing units, editors, and readers, thoroughly assisting publishing units and editors in achieving transformational integrated development. This article conducts an in-depth analysis of the business models of publishing units, editorial content production models, and reader reading models based on the “Modern Paper Book” system, with the aim of providing reference and reflection for publishing units in transition.

Full Text

An Analysis of the Publishing Operational Model for “Modern Paper Books” Based on the RAYS System

Abstract: The “Modern Paper Book” is an innovative concept built upon the RAYS system, a comprehensive media convergence solution developed by Wuhan University of Technology Digital Communication Engineering Co., Ltd. It creates a complete, win-win closed-loop ecosystem among publishing houses, editors, and readers, fundamentally assisting publishing houses and editors in achieving transformational integrated development. This paper provides an in-depth analysis of the operational models for publishing houses, editorial content production, and reader engagement within the “Modern Paper Book” system, aiming to offer insights and reference for publishing houses undergoing transformation.

Keywords: Modern Paper Book; media convergence; publishing house; reader interaction; operational model

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I. The Modern Paper Book System Based on the RAYS System

The “Modern Paper Book” system is a new concept proposed based on the RAYS system, a publishing integration solution independently developed by Wuhan University of Technology Digital Communication Engineering Co., Ltd., a co-builder of the Publishing Integration Development (Wuhan) Key Laboratory under the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television. This system creates a virtuous ecological chain among publishing houses, authors, editors, and readers, establishing a distinctive operational model that contributes to promoting integrated development in the publishing industry.

(1) Connotation of Modern Paper Books

A “Modern Paper Book” is a content production method tailored to the mobile internet era, featuring paper publications with online derivative content resources and services, and equipped with “interactive” functions. By printing QR codes in traditional paper books and periodicals, these codes provide supporting online derivative content resources and services, guiding users to scan and pay for in-depth reading content or other value-added services during their reading process. Simultaneously, the system can quickly capture reader data and analyze reader preferences after scanning, enabling publishing houses to continuously provide precise knowledge and services to readers, thereby forming a new consumption model.

Currently, over 200 renowned publishing houses have participated in the production of “Modern Paper Books,” including People’s Publishing House, Changjiang Children’s Press, and the *Global People* and *Global Times* magazines under People’s Daily. As of October 2017, 530 million traditional paper books nationwide have been successfully integrated with the RAYS system, generating 150 million yuan in additional online revenue.

(2) Content Service Model of Modern Paper Books

The “Modern Paper Book” adopts the DLC content service model. DLC (Downloadable Content) translates to “additional content download package” or “downloadable resource package,” a professional term from the gaming industry. Here, the DLC content service model refers to publishing houses providing content resources and services to readers in DLC format.

Based on this DLC model, publishing houses can further excavate the content of traditional paper publications, offering readers online derivative content resources and services built upon traditional paper publications. Some of these content resources are free shared resources that users can access without payment, while other digital content resources that meet readers’ precise needs

require payment.

(3) Core Technical Support for Modern Paper Books

The RAYS system provides a technical support platform for content production, content operation, reader management, and revenue management of “Modern Paper Books.” From editors producing online derivative content resources and services, to operating these resources and services, to managing and analyzing reader scan-back data, and finally to revenue generated from reader scanning and payment, the RAYS system enables editors to achieve real-time online control, ensuring technical participation and support throughout the entire content production process of “Modern Paper Book.”

The RAYS system consists of four core portals: publishing house portal, editor portal, author portal, and operation portal, each with distinct responsibilities yet interconnected. The publishing house portal is primarily responsible for overall project control of “Modern Paper Books,” including content control, revenue control, and data control, enabling senior publishing house executives to have a clear understanding of their modern paper book production status. The editor and author portals are mainly responsible for content production; editors and authors can create highly personalized “Modern Paper Books” based on their paper publication content, utilizing 21 standard book-making templates and 303 internet applications provided by the RAYS system. The operation portal is used by the publishing house’s digital center and editorial departments to package, price, and conduct continuous operation and management of online derivative content and services.

(4) Product R&D Model of Modern Paper Books

From the initial development stage, the RAYS system has established a “user-centered” product R&D model. The team has assembled professionals from publishing, product development, operations, technology, design, and other fields, gradually completing iterative upgrades from RAYS 1.0 to RAYS Blue Ocean, and establishing a management approach for product user experience. Through enhancements in five dimensions—business experience, operational experience, visual experience, contextual experience, and care experience—it ensures optimal user experience.

II. Publishing House Management Model Based on Modern Paper Books

In the “Modern Paper Book” system, publishing houses play the crucial role of “core manager.” All applications and services provided by the RAYS publishing house portal revolve around management functions.

(1) Content Management for Publishing Houses

In traditional publishing workflows, content production is compartmentalized, with separate blocks that lack strong coordination, resulting in low efficiency and quality of content production and underutilization of resources. The “Modern Paper Book” production process tightly connects publishing houses with authors, editors, and digital center personnel, building a platform for multiple parties to jointly participate in content creation and review, leveraging respective advantages to jointly produce high-quality online digital content and resources.

In the production phase of online derivative content and services, authors and editors focus on production, while digital center personnel are responsible for pricing and shelving content resources and services, as well as operation and maintenance. Publishing houses then review the resources. Furthermore, “Modern Paper Books” strictly adhere to the publishing “three reviews and three proofreads” process. After editors complete online content and services based on paper books, they conduct the first review, editorial departments conduct the second review, then submit to the publishing house portal for final review and authorization, and finally the digital center publishes the content. This entire process fully ensures content standardization and accuracy.

(2) Revenue Management for Publishing Houses

The “Modern Paper Book” adopts a scientific revenue distribution system that ensures revenue generated from reader scanning and payment enters the publishing house’s account immediately. Publishing houses can conduct overall control and analysis of online revenue generated from all their books, and can also autonomously allocate revenue by setting profit-sharing ratios for editors, authors, and operations teams, thereby safeguarding the production enthusiasm of editors and authors.

III. Editor Content Production Model Based on Modern Paper Books

As with traditional publishing content production, editors remain the “core content producers” in the “Modern Paper Book” system. All derivative content resources and services are planned and produced by editors. The “Modern Paper Book” system has created an open book-making platform for editors and, centered on content production, provides a series of service measures and incentive methods to mobilize editors’ enthusiasm for content production.

(1) Workflow for Editors Producing Modern Paper Books

In traditional publishing workflows, book production—from topic planning to editing, proofreading, printing, and sales—features almost entirely one-way processes with minimal internet technology participation. The “Modern Paper

Book” workflow optimizes each stage based firmly on traditional publishing processes, while incorporating cutting-edge big data technology and the most advanced internet operation methods.

When producing a “Modern Paper Book,” editors can simultaneously plan on-line derivative content and services during the topic planning phase, placing QR codes on the book’s cover and interior pages to ensure content integration between the book and the online platform. If editors lack sufficient time to plan online content and services, they can also pre-print empty QR codes before printing, configuring the QR codes and resources before the book goes on sale, allowing more adequate time to create an excellent modern paper book. The entire production process fully follows traditional workflows, helping editors master “Modern Paper Book” production techniques in the shortest time possible and produce high-quality content.

(2) Editor Shared Content Operation Model

Editors involved in producing “Modern Paper Books” can access shared supporting services, including mature operation templates, reader data, case libraries, etc., helping them produce high-quality “Modern Paper Books” more quickly.

Based on the existing 530 million “Modern Paper Books,” multiple sets of mature operation standard service templates have been compiled, covering most types of books and periodicals on the market. Each operation standard service template includes operation instructions, supporting service standards, and digital resource acquisition recommendations, enabling editors to achieve “foolproof book production” based on these standard templates.

Obtaining reader data is also an essential stage in editors’ “Modern Paper Book” workflow. The traditional one-way communication model of paper books is completely overturned. Massive behavioral data obtained from reader scanning is collected and organized by the system, forming detailed data reports and professional analysis research reports that are shared with editors and fed back into the content production stage, providing data support for editors’ book production.

Additionally, editors receive monthly “Modern Paper Book Success Case Collections” in print or electronic format, learning the most direct book-making experience from successful cases of transformed paper books and publishing houses. This content-sharing approach guides editors in making “Modern Paper Books,” improving training efficiency and creating conditions for interaction and exchange among editors.

(3) Incentive Methods for Editor Content Production

The “Modern Paper Book” system always regards editors as the core content producers, making it particularly important to mobilize their content production enthusiasm. In previous practices, many editors initially encountering “Modern

Paper Books” often developed resistance. Therefore, the “Modern Paper Book” system has created a series of editor content production incentive measures to stimulate editors’ enthusiasm through online activities, capital introduction, and optimized revenue distribution methods. These incentive policies run through the entire process of editors producing “Modern Paper Books.”

When editors are unfamiliar with “Modern Paper Books,” “Red Packet Book Production” is used to stimulate their participation enthusiasm. “Red Packet Book Production” is an online mini-game for training editors in “Modern Paper Book” production, guiding editors to familiarize themselves with production methods through task completion and rewards. After completing all tasks, editors can receive 2,400 yuan in incentive funds. This incentive method, combining fun and interactivity, helps editors initially adapt to the “Modern Paper Book” production process in an enjoyable learning experience.

As editors gradually adapt to the “Modern Paper Book” production process and can participate in production, another incentive method emerges—fund support. The Publishing Integration Development (Wuhan) Key Laboratory under the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television provides a special “Editor Innovation Special Fund” for editors. Based on “Modern Paper Book” concepts, editors can apply for high-quality projects according to relevant requirements. After projects pass evaluation and are implemented, editors can receive 10,000 to 30,000 yuan in innovation special funds, further stimulating production enthusiasm and enabling editors to produce more sophisticated and higher-quality “Modern Paper Books” after mastering the production process.

After “Modern Paper Book” projects are implemented and revenue is generated from reader scanning and payment, the “Modern Paper Book” system optimizes this revenue by adopting an innovative pre-positioned revenue-sharing system. This ensures that after readers scan and pay, revenue is distributed according to relevant ratios and immediately enters editors’ own accounts, available for withdrawal at any time, making editors’ income from “Modern Paper Books” tangible and visible, and ensuring that labor and revenue form a direct positive correlation.

IV. Reader Reading Model Based on Modern Paper Books

The “Modern Paper Book” not only changes the content production and management models of publishing houses and editors but also reshapes readers’ reading models. In the “Modern Paper Book” system, readers are the true center, advocating that everything should deliver value to readers as the closed loop, with the goal of enabling readers to obtain valuable knowledge increments.

(1) Combination of Fragmented Reading and Deep Reading

In the mobile internet era, readers’ reading methods have undergone disruptive changes, with mobile fragmented reading gradually becoming the mainstream. However, problems such as information redundancy, crude and thin content, and

low reading efficiency resulting from mobile fragmented reading have become increasingly prominent. In recent years, readers' demand for deep reading has gradually recovered, and knowledge payment has become a trend in content production.

The "Modern Paper Book" perfectly combines the deep reading of paper books with the fragmented reading on mobile phones, allowing readers to enjoy rich and colorful online derivative content and services while engaging in deep reading based on paper books. This satisfies their diversified needs while ensuring quality reading behavior. For example, a student preparing for the IELTS exam purchases an IELTS study guide published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. Previously, he could only read this book in the study room, but now, by scanning the code to access online content resources based on this book, he can listen and watch while walking, making full use of fragmented time to achieve effective knowledge increments. This deep reading + fragmented, offline + online reading model fully satisfies readers' reading needs in the mobile internet era.

(2) Obtaining Precision Services Based on Traditional Paper Books

The "Modern Paper Book" quickly collects reader behavioral data through scanning, enabling the system to accurately record readers' reading progress and knowledge mastery. Editors or authors then conduct comprehensive assessments, fully utilizing their professional capabilities and rich resources in vertical fields to provide proactive care and deliver precise knowledge content and services. Therefore, after scanning a QR code in a "Modern Paper Book," readers not only immediately obtain derivative content and services for that book but also receive more continuous and in-depth precision services later.

For example, on the RAYS system reader data page, an editor can see a female reader named LINDA from Wuhan, Hubei, aged 30-39. Her child studies third-grade English every Wednesday and Friday from 18:30-20:00, creating her demand for purchasing relevant tutorial books. The data shows she browsed the sales page for elementary English word tutorial books for nearly one minute. Subsequently, the system will continuously serve this reader, pushing high-quality tutorial content and services related to third-grade elementary students to meet her deep needs.

As artificial intelligence technology commercialization gradually lands, "Modern Paper Books" also integrate AI services, consolidating massive content data and behavioral data to optimize computing results and help readers obtain better contextual experiences. For instance, in basic learning interactions such as listening, writing, and reading, technologies including emotional speech conversion, pronunciation recognition, text recognition, and graphic recognition are employed to create more personalized scenarios for specific reading experiences.

(3) Realizing Interaction with Content Producers

In traditional paper book reading, readers remain passive, one-way recipients, unable to achieve interaction and exchange with content producers and other readers.

The “Modern Paper Book” enables readers to interact with other readers, editors, and authors through scanning codes. Through a “Modern Paper Book,” readers can establish connections with favorite authors, interact with editorial board experts, and even form communities with readers sharing similar interests and fields.

Simultaneously, based on the UGC (User-Generated Content) model, readers can upload their reading questions and thoughts through applications such as reading cards and Q&A, with high-quality content becoming part of the paper book and continuously expanding the book’s value.

The “Modern Paper Book” adapts to mobile internet era reading habits, creating entirely new content production and operation models. While firmly based on traditional publishing workflows, it integrates the most advanced internet technologies and thinking, optimizing the division of labor at every stage and for every role, ultimately creating a perfect, win-win publishing ecological chain with value creation for readers as the closed loop. In this ecological chain, publishing houses, authors, editors, and readers each perform their duties, jointly create value, and ultimately achieve mutual benefits.

The “Modern Paper Book” system helps authors and editors obtain additional income, interact with readers in real-time to enhance reader stickiness, and obtain reader data to accurately understand reader preferences and feed back into content production.

From the publishing house perspective, “Modern Paper Books” help publishing houses open new revenue sources to achieve substantial income growth, build interactive platforms between readers and content producers to change the predicament of losing touch with readers, collect, organize, and analyze reader behavioral data to establish massive reader databases, and comply with mobile internet development trends to thoroughly achieve transformational integrated development.

From the industry perspective, “Modern Paper Books” help the press and publishing industry build a brand-new publishing integration ecosystem, create a digital content profit model with content providers as the main commercial value, change the ways users obtain and disseminate knowledge, and lead the transformation, integration, upgrading, and industrial development of China’s press and publishing internet + initiative.

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