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## Research on the Effective Integration of Traditional Media and New Media: Postprint

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### Abstract

The advent of the Internet has precipitated a transformative shift in media communication modalities, catalyzing the emergence and rapid proliferation of new media grounded in traditional media. The effective integration of traditional and new media to maximize their dissemination capacity, guiding power, influence, and public credibility constitutes not only a critical imperative for the media sector, but also a significant research priority within the domain of national ideological security. This article commences with an examination of the current developmental trajectories of traditional and new media, proceeds to analyze prevalent challenges inherent in the integration process, and subsequently proposes recommendations regarding mechanism optimization and talent cultivation, leveraging distinctive attributes for precision communication, and facilitating user interoperability to enable transformative adaptation, thereby furnishing valuable references for the efficacious convergence of both media paradigms.

### Full Text

#### Abstract

The advent of the internet has revolutionized media communication methods, giving rise to new media rooted in traditional media and enabling its rapid development. How to effectively integrate traditional and new media to maximize communication power, guidance, influence, and credibility is not only a critical question for media organizations but also an important issue for national ideological security. This article examines the current development status of traditional and new media, analyzes common problems in the integration process, and proposes recommendations on improving mechanisms and cultivating talent, leveraging distinctive features for targeted communication, and facilitating user interoperability to support transformation. These suggestions aim to provide valuable references for the effective integration of both media forms.

## Introduction

New media represents a novel media form that has developed based on traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television. It utilizes digital, network, and mobile technologies to deliver information and entertainment to users through internet channels. In the current environment of continuous evolution in internet technology and communication mediums, the integration of traditional and new media has transitioned from an academic concept to a practical reality, attracting widespread attention. For instance, *People's Daily* launched its Weibo account in 2012, and by August 2017, had accumulated over 94 million followers, 199 million client app downloads, and nearly 13 million WeChat subscribers. Through this media convergence, *People's Daily* has evolved beyond a traditional “newspaper” into a comprehensive media platform reaching 635 million users across print, WeChat, Weibo, client apps, and television.

### 1. Current Status of Traditional-New Media Integration

The integration of traditional and new media has attracted broad attention at all levels, from central to local media outlets, which have actively entered the new media communication field. Transformations in social information dissemination methods have compelled traditional media to actively adapt and accelerate effective integration with new media, while new media must reasonably “sublate” traditional media to truly surpass it.

#### 1.1 Matrix Communication: The New Normal for Integration

Since the launch of the WeChat Public Platform, its media attributes have become immediately apparent, leading the new media communication wave with its unique advantages. Enterprises, institutions, social organizations, media outlets, and individuals have registered public accounts to push information. Other platforms such as Weibo and client apps have also flourished, becoming powerful catalysts for media integration. Many traditional media organizations have adopted these new communication methods, amassing followings in the millions or even tens of millions, forming powerful communication matrices. This model, where media leverage new technologies or platforms to form vast communication arrays that generate strong communication power and influence, has become the most common form of integration explored by traditional media at all levels, from central to county-level outlets.

#### 1.2 Accelerating Integration Through Continuous Innovation

Following the development of internet technology, new media communication initially took the form of websites and forums. The emergence of Weibo and WeChat further advanced traditional-new media integration. Particularly, WeChat public accounts, which require minimal investment yet deliver quick results and strong interactivity, have rapidly become essential communication tools for traditional media at all levels. Meanwhile, new media communication

methods developed with social capital, such as Toutiao accounts, UC accounts, and Pear Video, have also attracted numerous media organizations. By utilizing these new media products, traditional media continuously seek synergistic points for integration, expanding their communication reach and enhancing their influence. Additionally, client apps that encompass news, website originals, and new media content have gained favor, with many traditional media organizations investing in these more complex and costly products. From a technological perspective, new communication platforms continue to launch innovative products to meet the needs of media integration development.

### 1.3 Information Surplus and Urgent Transformation Needs

Historical analysis reveals that every communication technology revolution inevitably triggers changes in media dissemination methods. In the 1870s, the 普及 of laser phototypesetting technology ushered in a peak development period for the newspaper and publishing industries. Beginning in the 1970s, television media experienced rapid growth. By the end of the last century, the 普及 of internet technology made the network a crucial information dissemination channel, achieving a qualitative leap in both the volume and speed of information transmission. Data from the 2017 Tencent Global Partners Conference shows that WeChat's average daily logged-in users reached 902 million in September, with users sending 38 billion messages daily (equivalent to 42 messages per person per day). As the amount of information audiences can receive grows exponentially, the traditional media-led communication model is gradually shifting to an audience-driven media selection model. Failure to recognize these changes and proactively seek development will inevitably lead to elimination.

[Figure 1: see original paper] *People's Daily* All-Media Communication Matrix (Source: Baidu Wenku *2018 New Media Development Trends Research Report*)

## 2. Problems in Traditional-New Media Integration

While new media flourishes and traditional media continuously seeks transformation, neither can replace the other within a certain period. Traditional media such as radio, television, newspapers, and magazines still play irreplaceable roles. From both national and media development perspectives, traditional and new media must pursue a path of mutual integration and common development. However, practical integration efforts have encountered problems at both the conceptual and institutional levels, some of which are critical and require high attention to ensure proper development direction.

### 2.1 Lagging Concepts and Professional Talent Shortage

For media professionals, the rapid development of new media with its obvious advantages has severely impacted traditional media. In recent years, cases of traditional print media disappearing or being acquired have become common, making everyone aware of the necessity and importance of integration, with

many establishing new media departments. However, in practice, new media remains a nascent force. Compared to traditional media's deep roots, investment in human, financial, and material resources often amounts to "loud thunder but little rain." In some media organizations, new media departments and traditional editorial departments operate independently or even compete, making it difficult to achieve equality in staffing and hardware support, let alone integration and development.

Furthermore, new media led by Weibo and WeChat has a short history. Since WeChat's emergence in 2012, the tremendous changes in communication methods it brought were unexpected by many, particularly media organizations facing an immediate professional talent gap. *News Front* predicted that China would face a shortage of 600,000 to 800,000 new media and media integration professionals within three to five years. Compounding this problem, China's traditional journalism education system and teaching methods have not fully adjusted, leaving graduates with weak practical skills and new media operation capabilities, unable to meet the rapid changes in media or satisfy the talent needs for future media development.

## 2.2 Singular Forms and Insufficient Development Momentum

In facing traditional-new media integration, all parties must address fundamental questions: What form should integration take? Who integrates whom? Who takes the dominant position? Should traditional media personnel integrate into new media departments to manage Weibo, WeChat, and client apps, or should new media staff enter traditional media organizations to develop new media? These are common confusions in media integration.

In practice, many traditional media adopt a perfunctory approach by simply establishing a new media department and assigning managers or teams for Weibo and WeChat, creating a superficial appearance of integration while the two remain essentially separate operations. When traditional media enter new media, should they cultivate their own Weibo and WeChat followers from scratch, develop APP client apps directly, or cooperate with others by entering third-party platforms? These decisions require scientific planning based on actual conditions. Otherwise, media organizations can only passively adapt to social development, following others' footsteps and never discovering first-mover opportunities.

Data shows that by 2016, all top 100 Chinese newspapers had launched WeChat public accounts, and 93% had developed proprietary APP clients, though radio and television APP adoption rates remain relatively low. Analysts believe that traditional media's declining control over Weibo and WeChat platforms has led the entire industry into difficulty. Therefore, developing independent client apps will be the primary transformation form for traditional media in the next one to two years.

[Figure 2: see original paper] Traditional Media WeChat Public Account Satu-

ration (Source: iMedia Consulting *2017 China New Media Industry Panorama Report*)

### 2.3 Bland Content and Insufficient Advantage Utilization

A notable phenomenon in traditional-new media integration deserves attention: “non-media” communication represented by self-media thrives. Since the launch of WeChat public accounts, many private self-media operations have quickly seized opportunities, focusing on publishing timeliness, content editing, and user interaction to achieve considerable influence. In contrast, some traditional media maintain a wait-and-see attitude, completely unaware of their survival crisis, merely moving newspaper or television content unchanged to Weibo and WeChat, rarely re-editing or adapting it. This approach treats new media as a content porter, failing to combine traditional media characteristics with user needs, resulting in low readership and attention—evident from the message view counts of many county and provincial media public accounts.

Additionally, two extremes exist in managing timeliness: one 偏向 traditional media, causing delayed information publication that becomes stale news unable to attract audiences; the other 偏向 new media, which can lead to false news or clickbait headlines, often resulting in reversed narratives. Therefore, how to leverage respective advantages of traditional and new media to create content that is both engaging and truthful, while maintaining appropriate speed, is a critical consideration.

## 3. Strategies for Effective Traditional-New Media Integration

Integrating traditional and new media requires 打通 multiple media platforms and addressing numerous issues related to information content, technical means, and talent teams to form an efficient system that conforms to communication laws. Only through improved mechanisms can complementary advantages be realized, achieving parallel development and close coordination for optimal integration results.

### 3.1 Improve Mechanisms and Build Talent Teams

The primary consideration in traditional-new media integration is human factors: leadership awareness and technical personnel reserves. Leadership must possess urgency, responsibility, and mission in driving media integration development. Only with top-level commitment, sufficient resources, and an effective internal coordination mechanism can integration proceed smoothly. Many traditional media organizations are internally divided into editorial, business, and logistics departments, with editorial sections further segmented by beat reporters who rarely collaborate and sometimes guard their territories. During integration, these structural barriers must be overcome.

Additionally, most traditional media, particularly at municipal and county levels, face policy restrictions on compensation and promotion, making it difficult to recruit large numbers of internet and new media operation professionals from outside. Unable to bring in “outside monks,” they must focus on developing existing staff. With a projected talent gap of 600,000 to 800,000 new media professionals, training and upgrading current practitioners becomes essential.

### 3.2 Leverage Strengths and Create Distinctive Content

Effective integration requires comprehensive planning to maximize communication power and influence. By developing or introducing third-party tools to 打通, analyze, and mine existing reader and user data, integrated media can fully attract and serve user groups, achieving significant improvements in both communication effectiveness and economic returns.

For example, China Central Television (CCTV) leverages its advantage as the nation’s largest television network to create a video-focused “central kitchen” for information dissemination, integrating website, audio-visual, and interactive content. This approach consolidates its traditional media advantages while continuously capturing new media markets, achieving remarkable results. During the 19th Party Congress, CCTV used mobile livestreaming, V-view videos, infographic interpretations, animated content, and VR to release relevant information, generating over 2.5 billion total views. Particularly, the live broadcast of the new Politburo Standing Committee meeting on October 25 attracted over 20 million simultaneous online viewers.

Therefore, traditional-new media integration must consider respective realities, leverage inherent advantages, and create distinctive content.

[Figure 4: see original paper] CCTV New Media Multi-Screen Communication Platform Diagram (Source: CCTV.com, 2017-07-12)

### 3.3 Precision Communication to Drive Development

Traditional media editorial teams excel at producing high-quality, in-depth reports, while new media offers advantages in dissemination speed, broad user bases, and precise understanding of user consumption psychology. In an information-cluttered world, integration must consider: Which audiences are you targeting? What value can you provide them? With more choices available, audience loyalty to any single media outlet continuously decreases, and attention spans shorten, demanding increasingly precise communication. iMedia Consulting data shows that in 2017, 40% of users spent less than 15 minutes per session on traditional media WeChat public accounts, showing a clear preference for “fragmented” reading.

Consequently, in traditional-new media integration, greater emphasis must be placed on audience experience. Information should be strategically “fragmented” for dissemination to better enhance influence and meet audience

needs. Beyond considering parent media characteristics, new media communication must involve self-fragmentation of information, using traditional media resources through new media channels for the broadest possible dissemination.

### 3.4 User Interoperability to Create Virtuous Cycles

Traditional media such as radio, television, newspapers, and magazines have established user groups over long development periods. Particularly, authoritative traditional media can inject powerful momentum into new media development simply by leveraging their brand influence. Many media organizations now discuss “fan economy,” referring to the economic value fans or users can generate. CCTV, for instance, has both a stable and massive television audience and followers on WeChat, Weibo, and client apps. If these groups can be effectively interconnected, traditional viewers can become new media followers, while new media users can significantly enhance parent media influence.

Furthermore, for media practitioners who have built personal micro-accounts on new media platforms—such as anchors, reporters, and commentators with extensive followings—traditional media can attempt to convert personal fan attention into parent media attention. By leveraging these local “big V” accounts as “engines” for attracting followers, media organizations can maximize new media utility while expanding traditional media influence.

### 3.5 Leverage External Forces to Innovate Development Paths

Due to policy support, many county-level traditional media face minimal operational pressure but lack sufficient funds, talent, and technology for new media development or integration attempts. Developing and managing a client app requires a stable team and significant investment. Some provincial traditional media have adopted an approach where, beyond pushing latest news and providing customized media services, they 捆绑 development with municipal and county media outlets by absorbing their subscriptions to form a province-wide communication complex. For county-level media, this 借力 approach offers a viable solution. Additionally, some traditional media strengthen their new media influence through 强强 cooperation.

While new media poses significant challenges to traditional media, it also serves as a powerful catalyst. Driven by new technologies, both are continuously deepening integration breadth and depth to create new audience experiences. As communication technology advances, the boundaries between traditional and new media are dissolving, giving rise to new hybrid forms that drive self-evolution and upgrading of media formats. Emerging developments such as robot writing, automatic information screening and editing, automatic image interpretation, and bullet comment sentiment analysis represent the initial stages of so-called intelligent media emerging from deep integration. In conclusion, traditional-new media integration is a complex and arduous task, affecting everything from national ideology to individual media organizations. It requires

not only long-term perseverance but also the courage to confront problems and challenge difficulties. Through continuous cultivation of all-media talent, exploration of more suitable integration forms, and 挖掘 of distinctive content, true integration can be achieved through 良性 interaction, better promoting media development and celebrating the new era.

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

*Source: ChinaXiv — Machine translation. Verify with original.*