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Challenges and Development Postprint of News Editing in the New Media Era

Authors: Sun Tingting

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Abstract

To deeply understand the significant impact that the new media environment has brought to news editing work, the author conducted a thematic analysis. The research suggests that its challenges are mainly manifested in the weakening of editorial control in news editing work, the highlighting of inadequacies in front-stage work capabilities of news editors, deviations from journalistic professional ethics, and the erosion of the social responsibility of news editors. Therefore, countermeasures including transforming work concepts, enhancing comprehensive capabilities, emphasizing social practice, and strengthening information and knowledge management are proposed.

Full Text

Challenges and Development of News Editing in the New Media Era

Abstract: To comprehensively understand the significant impact of the new media environment on news editing, this study conducts a thematic analysis. The research identifies that challenges primarily manifest in the weakening of editorial control, insufficient front-stage competencies, deviation from journalistic ethics, and erosion of social responsibility. Accordingly, it proposes countermeasures including transforming work concepts, enhancing comprehensive capabilities, emphasizing social practice, and strengthening information and knowledge management.

Keywords: new media; news editing; challenges; development

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Author: Sun Tingting

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of information technology, a new media environment characterized by digitalization, multimedia, and networking has gradually taken shape. In this context, news editing has shifted from behind-the-scenes to front-stage operations, with technical requirements evolving from singular to composite and the work environment becoming more diverse and complex. Understanding the challenges facing news editing in the new media era and identifying appropriate countermeasures is crucial for improving news editing practices. Based on this, this study examines the challenges and development of news editing work in the new media environment.

2.3 Increased External Interference in News Editing

News editing possesses its own professional ethos, emphasizing service to the public and adherence to principles of truthfulness, objectivity, and fairness. Upholding this professional spirit is vital for strengthening editors' sense of responsibility and execution. In traditional media environments, news editing operated behind the scenes with minimal external interference. However, the new media environment has transformed this landscape. While direct public engagement enriches news resources, it also exposes editorial work to various social influences. For instance, economic interests may tempt editors to publish emotionally charged or highly manipulative sensationalized news, causing negative social impacts. Moreover, beyond professional editors, the public can now participate in news production. Without professional ethical constraints, ordinary citizens may also spread incomplete or biased information when tempted by various interests, leading to numerous social problems.

2.1 Weakened Control Rights in News Editing

Traditional news editing enjoyed dominant control over news information. In the new media era, however, news publication is no longer the exclusive domain of editors. Anyone can publish information through online platforms, making everyone a potential news producer and distributor. This has significantly weakened editorial control and reduced command over information flow. Previously, decisions about what news to publish or suppress, what to edit or block, rested primarily with editors—control now undermined by the new media environment. This erosion of control also reflects information resource abundance. Traditional editors have lost their dominant advantage, as various information resources can be conveniently pushed to the public anytime and anywhere, becoming “competitors” to mainstream news. Particularly for hot-button issues, if mainstream news editing fails to respond promptly to existing public opinion, it risks losing narrative initiative and creating social impact.

2.4 Erosion of Social Responsibility in News Editing

News editing carries social responsibilities, including ensuring the public's right to know and enabling societal response to changing circumstances to advance social progress. In the new media environment, these responsibilities remain significant and meaningful. However, examining current practices through the lens of social responsibility reveals prominent issues. For example, inappropriate dissemination of violent news has triggered public security problems, and unscientific reporting of fraud-related news has led to a series of fraud cases. This indicates that while editors control information, they often fail to adequately consider social responsibility, resulting in social problems. News editing must deeply grasp the relationship between media and social environments, clarifying boundaries to avoid social issues arising from poor judgment.

2.2 Insufficient Front-Stage Skills in News Editing

Traditional news editing operated primarily behind the scenes, interacting mainly with reporters without requiring direct engagement with the public. However, the new media environment demands faster news dissemination, particularly requiring timely interpretation and response to hot issues. This necessitates a shift from backstage to front-stage, with editors directly participating in field interviews and conducting immediate collection, editing, broadcasting, and control to accommodate rapid news cycles. This presents higher demands on traditional news editing, especially regarding the ability to interact constructively with society and respond decisively and scientifically to breaking news events.

3. Development of News Editing in the New Media Era

3.1 Emphasizing Product Market Management Concepts in News Editing

The new media environment's shift from backstage to front-stage imposes higher requirements on editing work itself while also demanding greater responsiveness to social needs. News editors are no longer absolute controllers of publication. They cannot fully control what content is disseminated or suppressed. To improve effectiveness and market acceptance, editors must treat news as a product, using market demand as the starting point for production. Through market research to understand current social concerns and demands, editors can then process and publish relevant information to meet public needs and enhance social effectiveness. However, blindly catering to market demand inevitably creates problems, as satisfying unhealthy social demands leads to negative outcomes. Therefore, for hot issues, editors must uphold professional responsibility and mission, editing news that guides and assists the public from a service-to-society perspective, using interpretation and analysis to foster positive public understanding.

3.2 Enhancing Comprehensive Front-Stage Skills in News Editing

The new media era has driven transformation and innovation in news editing, rendering traditional methods inadequate. Front-stage editing requires comprehensive competencies. First, editors must improve news integration capabilities. The new media environment presents vast amounts of diverse information requiring editors to process scattered, meaningless data into valuable news. Second, editors need strong communication skills. To enhance interactivity, editors must master internet-based communication, proficiently using WeChat, Weibo, QQ, and email to interact with society, collect valuable leads, and organize them for publication. They must also excel at live broadcast communication, possessing the control and communication skills to manage field interviews and guide productive news livestreams. Third, editors must cultivate the ability to improve audience news literacy. Editorial effectiveness is not merely reflected in publication but also in audience reception. If audiences lack corresponding interpretive skills, editorial impact cannot be fully realized. Therefore, editors must possess the capacity to enhance audience news comprehension.

3.3 Integrating Practice with News Editing Work

Traditional news editing did not directly engage with society but processed materials collected by reporters. In the new media environment, however, news editing requires social contact and interaction to produce high-quality content. This demands that editors enter the field to experience the freshness and authenticity of news information firsthand, creating valuable news. Without practical engagement, editing may distort information, triggering social problems. Experiencing news from practice demonstrates responsibility for truthfulness and comprehensive understanding of news' social role. Without such experience, news reports cannot vividly reflect events' characteristics and may even present starkly divergent accounts.

3.4 Improving Information Application and Knowledge Management in News Editing

The new media environment is characterized by diverse, complex, and massive information. Editors must identify main narrative threads from chaotic data and extract valuable news points to form effective reports. Simultaneously, they must strengthen knowledge management. The complex social situations facing news editing in the new media environment require profound understanding based on comprehensive knowledge reserves. Editors must continuously enhance learning and establish learning systems through online platforms to ensure sustained, innovative, and effective editorial capabilities.

3.5 Strengthening Professional Ethics and Social Responsibility

Professional ethics are the cornerstone of work. In the new media era, facing various temptations, targeted professional ethics education for news editors is

essential. Through lectures, exchanges, social practice, and institutional development, editors' understanding of their work's importance can be enhanced, professional ethical behavior clarified, and conduct regulated. Concurrently, editors' sense of social responsibility must be strengthened through joint education on journalistic and social responsibility to achieve effective unity between news impact and social outcomes.

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(Author's affiliation: Baishan Radio and Television Station)

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

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