
AI translation · View original & related papers at
chinaxiv.org/items/chinaxiv-202310.02685

An Analysis of the Development Path of Television Media in the Digital Media Era: Postprint

Authors: Li Yan, Zhao Peng

Date: 2023-10-08T00:00:00+00:00

Abstract

With the advancement of technology, media communication technologies have continuously developed, ushering in the digital media era. Concurrently, traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television are facing existential and developmental challenges. The emergence of digital media, including mobile phones and the Internet, has resulted in declining audience numbers and advertising revenues for traditional media. This phenomenon has garnered widespread attention from both academic and industry circles. Based on concrete examples, this paper investigates, from the perspectives of content and channels, how television media should evolve within the context of the digital media era.

Full Text

Preamble

Exploring the Development Path of Television Media in the Digital Media Era

Abstract: With technological advancement, media communication technologies continue to evolve, ushering humanity into the digital media era. Concurrently, traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television face existential and developmental challenges. The emergence of digital media, including mobile phones and the internet, has led to declining audiences and advertising revenues for traditional media. This phenomenon has attracted widespread attention from both academia and industry. Based on specific case studies, this paper examines how television media should develop within the digital media era from two perspectives: content and channels.

Keywords: television; digital media; content; channels; development

CLC Number: G229.29
Document Code: A
Article ID: 1671-0134(2017)06-095-02
DOI: 10.19483/j.cnki.11-4653/n.2017.06.029
Authors: LI Yan, ZHAO Peng

1. Content Development Strategy

The emergence and rapid development of digital media have transformed the media landscape and communication ecosystem, posing severe challenges to television media. However, compared to digital media, television media maintains greater authority and professionalism in content. Consequently, television should fully leverage these content advantages to enhance its influence.

1.1 Guarantee Program Quality

Digital media has made content publishing more convenient and accessible, and with the proliferation of self-media, everyone can potentially become a “media person.” Yet the absence of gatekeepers has resulted in digital media being flooded with low-quality and even vulgar content. In contrast, television media employs professionally trained personnel and maintains strict review systems throughout content collection, production, and broadcasting, thereby excelling in gatekeeping. This ensures that television content can withstand quality tests and has cultivated an irreplaceable credibility over time. Television media, particularly as mainstream media, should produce high-quality content with social benefits. Cultural programs are especially important in this regard. For instance, CCTV’s 2016 cultural quiz show *Chinese Poetry Conference* stood out amid numerous talent shows and web series, refreshing audiences and sparking widespread social discussion that ignited a poetry revival. The program not only achieved high ratings but also promoted the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese culture.

1.2 Increase Program Depth

A defining characteristic of digital media is content fragmentation. Weibo posts, for example, are subject to character limits that hinder the communication of in-depth content. Traditional media like television, however, employ more professionally trained personnel capable of producing substantive content. Television media should therefore capitalize on this advantage to enhance content depth. In news reporting, commentary and investigative programs can reflect social issues and demonstrate journalistic depth—precisely where television media excels. CCTV’s *News Investigation* and *Focus Interview* exemplify this approach. *News Investigation* employs investigative journalism to uncover truth, pursuing rationality, balance, and depth while striving to expose social problems. Its

content encompasses government oversight, criticism of social ills, and attention to vulnerable groups, prompting audience reflection. The program plays a significant role in building a harmonious socialist society and wields considerable influence among viewers. Given the severe fragmentation and homogenization plaguing digital media, television media's commitment to in-depth programming creates a distinctive contrast that attracts audience attention and supports its survival and development.

1.3 Establish Television Brands

“Television brand refers to the sum total of audience perceptions—the combination of programs, services, and experiences that television provides and audiences receive. It represents the essence of competition for television media in the 21st century.” To attract audiences and achieve both economic and social benefits, television media must establish strong brands, which concerns not only revenue but also survival and development. Unlike digital media, television faces temporal and spatial constraints—only a limited amount of programming can be broadcast daily. While digital media enjoys temporal freedom and spatial infinity, simultaneously offering multiple programs for audience selection, television cannot. Rather than blindly imitating digital media through constant program changes and launches, television media should focus on building brand programs to secure stable audiences and maintain or increase ratings.

In news programming, CCTV maintains the greatest influence. Its *News Broadcast* has adhered to a fixed schedule since inception, establishing itself as a brand program with considerable credibility. Consequently, it commands a loyal audience base that watches consistently. Internationally, programs such as CBS's *60 Minutes*, BBC's *Newsnight*, and NBC's *Dateline* serve as flagship news programs that anchor brand identity and ensure industry standing. Successful entertainment programs similarly prioritize brand building, as exemplified by Hunan TV's “happiness” orientation. With multiple branded entertainment programs including *Happy Camp* and *Day Day Up*, Hunan TV has embodied entertainment and joy since *Happy Camp*'s launch, even branding its hosts as the “Happy Family.” This “happiness” orientation has formed a television brand that firmly controls audience remote controls, enabling *Happy Camp* to maintain stable viewership and consistently rank among top variety shows despite competition from new programs.

The analysis demonstrates that brand building is crucial for television media survival and development. Essential strategies include: First, improving personnel quality—media professionals must ideologically recognize brand importance and possess brand-building skills, which is most critical. Second, conducting thorough audience research, as audiences determine program success. Brand programs must suit audience preferences, making pre-production analysis and positioning essential for popularity. Third, emphasizing social benefits, which enhance program influence and facilitate brand shaping. “Television brands in a socialist harmonious society must reflect strong social values and people-oriented

orientation.”

2. Channel Development Strategy

In the digital media era, communication channels have diversified, and traditional media’s channel control has weakened. Building bridges between content and audiences has become a critical challenge. Many television media now adopt digital strategies to broaden channels and change their passive position. CCTV News has achieved notable success in digital channel development strategy.

2.1 Leverage Other Successful Network Platforms

CCTV News initially leveraged established social media and portal platforms such as Sina Weibo, Tencent Video, and Toutiao to publish content and enhance social influence. These platforms, powered by digital media technology, understand audience needs and continuously improve user experience while aggregating hundreds of millions of users—crucial resources for expanding CCTV News’s influence. CCTV News established its WeChat official account in 2013, which, after years of operation and refinement, has matured considerably. It now sends multiple updates daily at irregular intervals, reaching a broad audience where each post exceeds 100,000+ views, playing an important role in information dissemination and public opinion guidance. This strategy transformed CCTV News from single-screen linear dissemination to multi-screen interactive communication, expanding reach and improving effectiveness. Television media should therefore learn to utilize successful network platforms, continuously expand audience scale across these platforms, diffuse content widely, and ultimately penetrate every corner of digital media.

2.2 Build Own Client Applications

While utilizing external platforms, CCTV News actively explores building its own client application as another integration approach. In 2013, CCTV established a new media team within its network communication center to work within the news center, focusing on media convergence exploration. Following dedicated efforts, CCTV launched the “CCTV News” client in July of the same year. The client represents a key measure in CCTV’s channel strategy and a successful exploration of integrated television-digital media development, consistently ranking among top news applications. Its success stems from three main factors: First, complementary advantages with television—the client combines television’s content resources with digital media’s technological strengths. CCTV possesses high-quality editorial teams, influential hosts, journalists, and commentators, rich news resources, and credible brand advantages. The client leverages these strengths using digital technology to produce timely, high-quality, influential content. Second, transforming journalists from passive to active—CCTV restructured its journalist team to meet client needs, building a rear news command system that enables journalists to produce digital

content beyond traditional reporting, achieving “one interview, multi-platform distribution” and extending talent advantages across terminals. Third, respecting digital media interactivity and valuing user experience to adjust reporting tone. While traditional CCTV reporting maintained a serious demeanor, the client shifted from didactic approaches to styles closer to the masses, reality, and life. Based on user experience and feedback surveys, it continuously adjusts to launch illustrated, diverse content, enhancing attention and influence.

3. Conclusion

In essence, television media must accomplish two tasks to withstand digital media challenges: fully leverage content advantages—firmly grasping the most irreplaceable aspects—and adopt digital media technology for channel development. As science and technology continue advancing, new media forms will inevitably emerge. By accomplishing these two tasks, television media will secure space for survival and development.

References

- [1] Chen Changyan, Xu Yuan. Content Advantages of Television Communication in the New Media Environment. *News Communication*, 2012.
- [2] Zhang Junchang, Lü Peng. Green Ratings and Television Brands. *Modern Communication*, 2007.
- [3] Lu Ye, Zhao Min. *Introduction to Contemporary Radio and Television* [M]. Fudan University Press.

(Author Affiliation: Yantai Radio and Television Station Television Center)

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

Source: ChinaXiv — Machine translation. Verify with original.