

Reconstructing the Editorial Process to Enhance the Influence of Traditional Media in the Post-Print Era

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Abstract

Owing to the rapid development of the Internet, the news production methods and communication effects of traditional media have been profoundly impacted. To enhance their influence, traditional media must inevitably leverage new media effectively. Based on the characteristics and current development status of traditional and new media, this paper clarifies the distinctions and connections between them, proposes the necessity of transforming the editorial process to enhance the influence of traditional media, and further discusses the methods and approaches for reconstructing this process.

Full Text

Research, Innovation and Practice: Reconstructing Editorial Process to Enhance Traditional Media Influence

Abstract: Due to the rapid development of the Internet, traditional media's news production methods and communication effectiveness have been profoundly impacted. To enhance their influence, traditional media must effectively utilize new media. Based on the characteristics and development status of both traditional and new media, this paper clarifies the differences and connections between them, proposes the necessity of reforming the editorial process to improve traditional media influence, and further discusses the methods and approaches for reconstructing the editorial process.

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Today's society is one of rapid transformation, with the Internet developing at an especially swift pace that has brought tremendous impact to traditional media. The most important characteristics of news are timeliness and authenticity. Traditional media offers higher authenticity but poorer timeliness, whereas new media possesses rapidity and round-the-clock availability, along with rich formats, convenience, and strong interactivity. However, the separation between the two has resulted in tremendous waste of news resources. Changing the existing situation where traditional and new media operate independently—particularly enabling traditional media to leverage new media technology to rejuvenate itself and generate new chemical reactions—presents a major challenge for the traditional media industry. Achieving convergence between traditional and new media means enabling organic factors to interact and resources to be deeply shared, realizing “integrated planning, one-time collection, multiple generation, and diversified dissemination” for traditional media. To achieve this goal, reform of the existing editorial process is necessary, as this constitutes both the condition and internal demand for deep integration.

2. The Necessity of Reconstructing Editorial Process to Enhance Traditional Media Influence

Regardless of how times develop, people's demand for information is rigid, which determines that media will exist long-term. However, traditional media has encountered developmental bottlenecks and cannot fully satisfy public information demands in the Internet era. For traditional media to survive and develop in the Internet age, it must learn to utilize Internet technology and new media platforms. Transformation is the only way forward.

In the context of media convergence, traditional media's singular information production and dissemination methods face increasing impact from new media. How traditional media can leverage new media platforms to improve communication effectiveness on their existing foundation presents a serious challenge. Among solutions, the “central kitchen” model has become an innovative approach to media convergence, with many media organizations actively practicing it.

1. Characteristics and Development Status of Traditional and New Media

Both traditional and new media serve as carriers of information transmission and platforms for publicly releasing and exchanging information, sharing characteristics of public orientation, interactivity, neutrality, and ideological nature. Public orientation means news is directed toward the general public. Interactivity refers to the public release and mutual exchange of information. Neutrality indicates an impartial stance toward both positive and negative attitudes in society, without bias or exaggeration. Ideological nature means that while

information is largely concrete and objective, it inevitably contains abstract ideological content that requires selective development by media.

Traditional media's characteristics lie in its authority and stability, whereas new media's features include round-the-clock availability, timeliness, and diversified content formats. Traditional media possesses abundant and reliable information resources but suffers from limited information volume and insufficient timeliness. New media, conversely, disseminates rapidly, better aligns with reader interests, and contains vast information, yet lacks first-hand news resources and suffers from serious content dependency. Both traditional and new media have their respective strengths and weaknesses.

Currently, many traditional media outlets possess first-hand news resources but lack content operation concepts. For survival, they are “wasting” precious information resources—providing large amounts of free reading to the public through new media like the Internet. While this free access seemingly wins traditional media communication power and influence, it has caused a sharp decline in subscriptions, severely impacting revenue and hindering the sustainable development of newspapers.

3. Methods for Reconstructing Editorial Process to Enhance Traditional Media Influence

3.1 Conceptual Integration as the Prerequisite for Editorial Process Reconstruction

Traditional media is constrained by fixed publication cycles, whereas online media enjoys greater freedom to track the latest news events and adjust reporting plans promptly based on audience reactions, thereby meeting mobile communication needs. To integrate traditional and new media, the layout-dominated editorial management approach must be transformed into an all-day, all-media, full-process management model.

In recent years, platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, and client applications have developed rapidly, becoming essential software in people's daily online lives. People are willing to obtain information through these channels and to forward and discuss messages via them. Therefore, under the new editorial process, media workers must gradually adapt to the rapid dissemination characteristics of websites, Weibo, WeChat, and other platforms—speed represents a media organization's strength to a certain extent.

Since different communication channels have distinct characteristics—for instance, Weibo and websites prioritize speed while WeChat emphasizes depth and image, and newspapers operate on a daily cycle to report the same news at different levels, pursuing speed, comprehensiveness, and depth respectively—the goal of reconstructing the editorial process is to achieve a transformation from traditional media's singular “one-time collection, one-time dissemination” production model to new media's “integrated planning, one-time collection, mul-

multiple generation, and diversified dissemination.” Reconstructing the editorial process requires achieving integration in concepts, business models, and technology.

3.2 Reconstructing Editorial Process Driven by All-Media Platforms

To achieve integrated production between traditional and new media and realize “integrated planning, one-time collection, multiple generation, and diversified dissemination,” it is essential to establish a sound, effective, and scientific communication and coordination system between them. The most critical aspect is changing the current pattern of separation, independent existence, and insufficient communication, and creating a platform for unified command and effective communication of news releases across both traditional and new media. This primarily involves placing news creation processes such as topic selection, planning, interviewing, and publishing from different media onto the same platform. This not only reduces communication costs across regions and media but also enables more effective integration of new and traditional media, enhancing the socio-economic benefits of news dissemination.

In the overall architecture of the new editorial process, the editorial office should serve as the “brain” and command center—the key node in the planning, collection, editing, and distribution network—responsible for coordinating publicity tasks, planning major topics, and directing interview resources. The editorial linkage platform is a permanent operating institution composed of interview centers, editing centers, and technical centers. It executes directives and collects feedback on needs, with personnel drawn from various departments including newspapers, websites, terminals, and micro-media. Together they form a unified work team that follows the editorial office’s command to produce and process all-media news products, with all products entering the backstage news database directly.

Traditional editorial personnel are redefined into roles such as commanders, information officers, collectors, and processors, with the addition of technical teams and promotion operation teams. Through effective division of labor and cooperation, they ultimately achieve “integrated planning, one-time collection, multiple generation, and diversified dissemination” for major reports.

3.3 Building a Talent Team to Support Editorial Process Reconstruction

To achieve the transformation from traditional print media to all-media, human factors are crucial. The reconstruction of the news talent team determines the success or failure of process reconstruction.

The reconstruction of the editorial process should change the singular news production model of “one-time collection, one-time dissemination” from the past, placing higher demands on journalists’ and editors’ professional skills and media literacy. As information collectors, journalists must send collected information

back to editors for organization and arrangement as quickly as possible. Editors then process and produce content according to the characteristics of their respective media for dissemination through channels such as websites, WeChat, and client applications. Journalists in the media convergence context face higher work requirements, and traditional editorial personnel must continuously enhance their new media awareness and operational skills. Editors are no longer editors in the traditional sense; they must conduct secondary creation and processing of materials, master multimedia editing skills and the characteristics of different communication channels, and adapt to various media's dissemination features to make works more suitable for different media's dissemination characteristics.

Therefore, under the premise of integrating new and traditional media, the business capability of the editorial team is closely related to the success of media convergence. Media organizations must strengthen talent team building, enhance business training, and conduct practical exercises to improve the professional competence of journalists, editors, and related media personnel. We should develop editorial staff's professional literacy in three aspects: first, the ability to organize, arrange, plan, and disseminate multimedia resources; second, proficient mastery of professional skills and knowledge for various media; and third, the capability to write different types of manuscripts.

3.4 Enhancing Professional Ethics of Journalists

The value of news lies in its authenticity. When some media provide information that does not conform to reality, or even violates laws and ethics, with fake and vulgar news spreading throughout society, the public will lose confidence in news media and may even scorn it.

Due to new media's blind pursuit of speed and click-through rates, sensationalist news has become commonplace, and gossip for attracting eyeballs floods the Internet. This lacks morality and even challenges the law, creating sensations to gain attention without exploring the truth and causes of events, losing the original characteristics of media messages: rapidity, accuracy, and truth-seeking. Therefore, in the process of integrating traditional and new media, it is essential to strengthen the professional ethics of journalists, uphold the authenticity of news, and cultivate and enhance media workers' competence.

4. Conclusion

The convergence of new and traditional media is a long and arduous journey, and reconstructing the editorial process is the most crucial link in this process. The integration of traditional and new media should follow President Xi Jinping's guidance: "To promote the integrated development of traditional and emerging media, we must follow the laws of news communication and emerging media development, strengthen Internet thinking, adhere to the complementary advantages and integrated development of traditional and emerging media, insist on

advanced technology as support and content construction as the foundation, and promote deep integration between traditional and emerging media in content, channels, platforms, operation, and management.” We believe that through the test of time and practice, a batch of new mainstream media with diverse forms, advanced methods, and strong competitiveness will surely emerge.

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

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