

Reflections on Industry Digital Publishing Strategies in the New Reading Era: Postprint

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of big data and omnimedia, people's reading habits are undergoing a transformation from "paper-based reading" to "electronic reading," with the latter inaugurating a novel reading epoch distinguished by attributes such as "universality, cost-effectiveness, convenience, interactivity, and audio-visual integration." Within this emergent reading paradigm, traditional publishing appears to be confronting a "winter period," or even facing outright obsolescence. From environmental and trend perspectives, digital publishing that accommodates the new reading era has indeed become a burgeoning publishing trend attracting widespread attention and pursuit. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that digital publishing cannot be completely severed from traditional publishing. Against the backdrop of deep integration between traditional and digital publishing, particularly in the context of industry publishing, digital publishing for industries still has a considerable journey ahead when compared to traditional publishing.

Full Text

Preamble

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Title: Strategic Reflections on Industry Digital Publishing in the New Reading Era

Abstract: Against the backdrop of big data and omnimedia, reading habits are shifting from "paper-based reading" to "electronic reading." Electronic reading is creating an entirely new reading era characterized by universality, economy, convenience, interactivity, and audiovisual richness. In this new reading era, traditional publishing appears to be facing a "winter," with some even declaring its imminent demise. From an environmental and trend perspective, digital publishing that caters to the new reading era has indeed become an emerging

trend attracting widespread attention and pursuit. However, it must be recognized that digital publishing cannot be completely divorced from traditional publishing. Against the backdrop of deep integration between traditional and digital publishing, industry digital publishing, in particular, still has a long way to go compared to traditional publishing.

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1. Factors Affecting the Rapid Development of Digital Publishing

Digital publishing represents a new publishing paradigm that utilizes digital technology for content editing and network-based distribution. The current forms of industry digital publishing products primarily include industry e-books, digital newspapers, digital journals, online educational publications, web maps, database publications, and mobile publications (mobile newspapers and journals). Distribution channels mainly rely on wired internet, wireless communication networks, and satellite networks, with terminals encompassing PC/Mac computers and mobile devices including Android phones/tablets, iPhones, and iPads. In recent years, industry digital publishing has achieved remarkable progress, accumulated valuable experience, and played an active role as a vital force in the publishing industry through complementary, interpenetrating, and mutually beneficial integration with traditional publishing. However, certain ideological and behavioral constraints in conceptual thinking and development pace continue to impede efficient and rapid advancement.

1.1 Scale and Brand

Although new technologies, products, and business models continue to emerge in digital publishing, and various industry publishing institutions have actively leveraged internet portals and mobile clients to produce diverse digital publications such as e-books and digital newspapers—thereby enriching the reading experiences and personalized needs of industry professionals, service targets, and the public—industry digital publishing has yet to establish core competitiveness or brand effect in terms of either content quality or dissemination impact, especially when compared to traditional paper media and specialized digital publishing.

1.3 Demand and Supply

As the new reading era witnesses the gradual emergence of diverse reading demands, the scale of both industry systems themselves and the public seeking industry dynamics and policy information continues to expand. This has generated increasingly robust demand for digital reading consumption through online, mobile, and terminal-based platforms. In response to this explosive demand, industry digital publishing has yet to establish a comprehensive, operational, and effective mechanism system across the entire industrial chain—including content provision, technology provision, network service platform provision, financial services provision, and terminal provision—and remains ill-adapted to the growing digital reading consumption demand.

1.4 Transition and Transformation

During the transformation from traditional publishing centered on books, newspapers, and journals to emerging publishing characterized by electronic, networked, and digital formats, most industry publishing institutions have essentially completed digital upgrades to their publishing processes, media, distribution methods, and reading behaviors. However, the critical question remains whether they have utilized this valuable transitional period to focus on editorial team building and cultivate a comprehensive talent pool possessing both traditional publishing experience and capabilities in internet editing and data analysis. Launching new media companies, releasing e-books, developing mobile apps, or operating WeChat and Weibo accounts without studying new media production factors and media resource integration constitutes merely “changing venues” rather than genuine transformation.

1.5 Marketing and Profitability

While industry digital publishing has established its presence in form and even demonstrated innovation in format, content remains the hard core of competitiveness—content is paramount. In the era of “data is king” and “content is king,” whether digital publishing involves simple content provision or deep editorial processing of content, particularly industry-specific content, directly determines the quality, character, and level of digital publications. Currently, most if not all industry digital publications merely represent the electronic, digital, and networked conversion of traditional publication content based on copyright convenience. Although various marketing models such as digital libraries, academic journal databases, digital schoolbags, and cloud publishing have become increasingly established and mature—providing profit models and space for industry digital publishing—models do not automatically translate into profits. Achieving profitability requires mastering these models. In the new development environment that emphasizes both social and economic benefits, understanding and proficiently applying various marketing models is fundamental for industry digital publishing. More importantly, it is essential to research and select models most suitable for generating profits. Amid

fierce competition involving massive content, vast user bases, and numerous channels, key success factors include operational content, efficient methods, reasonable pricing, correct timing, and precise delivery. Further efforts in channel integration are necessary, adopting a “borrowing a boat to sail to sea” mindset by actively cooperating with channel providers, conducting deep content processing, and ensuring the provision of personalized and valuable digital content products. On this basis, industry digital publishing should strive to obtain user information from channel providers to comprehensively enhance publication quality and establish a cooperative, open win-win situation.

2. Five Critical Breakthrough Areas for Industry Digital Publishing in the New Reading Era

Based on the above analysis, industry digital publishing must strive for breakthroughs in the following five dimensions in the new reading era:

2.1 Clarifying Relationship Positioning

Despite digital publishing’s advantages in rapid search, massive storage, low cost, and convenient editing, it cannot sever its inherent connection with traditional publishing. Digital publishing represents merely a conceptual update and new technological application of traditional publishing; its relationship with the traditional publishing industry is neither antagonistic nor substitutive, but rather a supportive complementarity. Since they are complementary, traditional publishing need not feel despondent, nor should digital publishing be arrogant. Instead, both traditional and emerging media should clarify their attributes and positioning across publishing concepts, production methods, operational mechanisms, and management systems. Particularly as a new phenomenon, industry digital publishing must systematically clarify and overcome tendencies and misconceptions such as: “publication digitization equals digital publishing,” “digital publishing is a future matter unrelated to current traditional publishing,” “content alone guarantees victory,” “digital publishing relies solely on innovation,” “digital publishing is exclusively the digital department’s responsibility,” “traditional editors remain the main force in digital publishing,” “digital content licensing cooperation constitutes digital publishing,” and “digital publishing requires self-built platforms.” Only by doing so can it truly become an expert in industry digital publishing.

2.2 Grounding in Industry Business

“Industry” essentially means “content.” Regardless of traditional or digital publishing—past, present, or future—industry business will ultimately become the main pillar of industrial segmentation. Industry digital publishing has not altered the essential characteristic of publishing as content editing and processing;

“content is king” remains the iron law for both traditional and emerging publishing. Strictly speaking, technology is merely a means, while meeting users’ unique needs and experiences is the ultimate goal. Industry digital publishing possesses abundant content resources including industry dynamics, policies and regulations, document compilations, system data, typical experiences, advanced deeds, and cultural life. By rapidly enhancing content creation and processing capabilities, continuously optimizing and integrating content resources, and conducting deep development, core content competitiveness will quickly emerge through advanced digital information technology. Simultaneously, cultivating core competitiveness in industry digital publishing is a systematic project. In the process of transforming unique, inherent industry business resources and traditional content resources into valuable digital content resources, digital content product structures must be carefully planned to ensure that even fragmented push-based delivery based on user demand does not compromise the systematization and systematization of core content.

2.3 Revitalizing Channel Resources

The industry digital publishing value chain comprises at least four components: users, technology providers, operators, and service providers—all collectively referred to as channels. Industry digital publishing cannot succeed without channels. Among these, the user resources of industry traditional publications form the cornerstone, with industry professionals, service targets, and the public concerned with industry development serving as the fundamental channel support. Although industry digital publishing lacks relatively accurate judgment regarding user reading needs and experiences compared to technology and operational service channels, it enjoys natural convenience and advantages in capturing digital publishing demands from traditional publication users, providing personalized digital publications, conducting interactive user relationship management, delivering growth value, and retaining and expanding users and user groups. On this foundation, further efforts in channel integration are required, adopting a “borrowing a boat to sail to sea” mindset by actively cooperating with channel providers, conducting deep content processing, ensuring the provision of personalized and valuable digital content products, striving to obtain user information from channel providers, comprehensively enhancing industry digital publication quality, and establishing a cooperative, open win-win situation.

2.4 Exploring Business Models

The key to conducting multi-level deep development and excavation of massive digital content and effectively strengthening digital product operations and multi-media coverage lies in exploring and innovating business models. Accumulated practical experience demonstrates that portal platform, application-plus-terminal, and operator models constitute the primary business models for industry digital publishing. Under the premise of highlighting distinctive features and conforming to trends, the portal websites universally established by indus-

try publishing institutions at all levels provide operational platform support for industry digital publishing. These portals serve as important digital carriers for disseminating information, integrating marketing, conducting interactions, maintaining user resources, and establishing networks, capable of fully satisfying the personalized needs of users at all levels. Furthermore, based on the popularity of mobile internet technology and smartphones, industry digital publishing must deeply explore the user-demand and experience-oriented application-plus-terminal model—a fiercely contested battleground. Simultaneously, given the dominance of mobile operators and the sustained efforts of e-commerce platforms, industry digital publishing should, on the basis of enhancing electronic copyright awareness and securing electronic publication pricing rights, boldly and extensively engage in multi-level, multi-angle cooperation with operators.

2.5 Strengthening Team Building

Compared with traditional publishing, digital publishing possesses unique business processes. The core of digital publishing involves using technology for development and systematically operating precise release and push mechanisms. This objectively requires industry digital publishing to cultivate and reserve a talent team that understands both industry business and publishing operations, possesses computer network knowledge, masters digital content deep editing, comprehends digital publishing commercial operations, demonstrates market observation and product innovation capabilities, and maintains close attention to market mechanisms, marketing strategies, and industrial convergence. The approach should combine internal cultivation with external recruitment and integrate ideological transformation with business transformation. While actively introducing compound talents who understand publishing, master technology, and can manage operations, vigorous efforts must be made to stimulate the enthusiasm and creativity of internal practitioners within the industry, institutions, and units for exploring and researching digital publishing business, encouraging all departments to actively develop digital product projects. Through lectures, seminars, symposiums, and other formats, professional training and guidance in digital publishing should be further strengthened to foster digital publishing thinking, vigorously create a digital culture atmosphere, and effectively propel internal talent to quickly become the backbone of industry digital publishing.

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

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