

A Brief Analysis of Expression Innovation in Television News Programs in the Era of Media Convergence: Postprint

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Abstract

The emergence of the Internet and the development of new media technologies, coupled with the widespread adoption of diverse terminals such as smartphones, tablets, and computers, have fundamentally altered the dominant position of traditional media. For television media, particularly television news programs, providing users with a comfortable information environment necessitates a user-centric approach, accelerated innovation, and effective integration of all-media resources. This paper examines the novel characteristics of the media convergence era, analyzes the challenges and opportunities confronting television news programs, and proposes several perspectives on innovating news program expression while aligning with user demands.

Full Text

A Brief Analysis of Expression Innovation in Television News Programs in the Media Convergence Era

Abstract: The emergence of the Internet and the development of new media technologies, coupled with the widespread adoption of various terminals such as smartphones, tablets, and computers, have altered the dominant position of traditional media. Television media, particularly television news programs, must center on user needs, accelerate the pace of innovation, and effectively integrate all-media resources to provide users with a comfortable information environment. This paper begins with the new characteristics of the media convergence era, analyzes the challenges and opportunities encountered by television news programs, and offers several perspectives on how to innovate news program expression based on meeting user needs.

Keywords: Media convergence; television news programs; expression; innovation

1. New Changes in News Information Presentation in the Media Convergence Era

Media convergence can be simply summarized as the integration of all traditional media such as newspapers, television, and radio with all emerging media such as mobile phones and computers, enabling the sharing of information collection, integration, and dissemination, and distributing the resulting information products across different media channels. In the media convergence era, news information has undergone significant changes in both production methods and dissemination channels.

1.1 Changes in News Information Production Methods

In the media convergence era, the emergence and development of new media have turned everyone into editors and journalists. Users are no longer passive recipients of news information but active producers. Due to the openness, interactivity, and extensive information resources of new media, users can utilize these channels to collect and integrate information resources, and the news information they produce is sometimes more timely and universal. Additionally, professional news producers also mine news materials through new media channels, integrate online resources, and form entirely new multi-perspective news reports through interaction with ordinary users. Therefore, the media convergence era is one where user-generated content (UGC) and professionally generated content (PGC) coexist.

1.2 Changes in News Information Dissemination Channels

News information can be produced by different users and different media, and once formed into news products, can be disseminated through multiple channels. According to relevant data, by 2016, China's internet user population had exceeded 710 million, with mobile internet users accounting for over 93% [1]. Meanwhile, television news ratings have declined significantly, the audience share of major satellite TV news programs has dropped year by year, and television viewers are even being lost at a rate of nearly 2% [2]. This is undoubtedly a major blow to television news.

2. Changes in User Needs in the Media Convergence Era

The reason why news information production and dissemination channels have undergone tremendous changes in the media convergence era is also because users have become more discerning in their selection and dissemination of news information. Generally speaking, user needs exhibit three new characteristics.

2.1 Preference for Personalized, Targeted Aggregated News Expression

With the development of the social economy, people's lives and work pace has accelerated dramatically. In this context, people hope to utilize fragmented time to read and disseminate news information without temporal or spatial constraints. Therefore, the short, flat, and fast production and dissemination characteristics of new media precisely meet the needs of users in the new era. However, while new media brings convenience to users, it also creates numerous problems such as information overload and information fatigue, mainly in two aspects: First, due to the popularization of new technology, ordinary amateur users can also produce news and disseminate it through channels like Weibo and WeChat. Then, professional news producers, in pursuit of timeliness and freshness (the so-called 'chasing hot topics'), use this information without verifying sources or authenticity, and disseminate it to the public through media channels. This results in an overwhelming volume of online news that is difficult to distinguish between true and false. Second, users do not only seek fragmented information but also desire comprehensive, in-depth understanding of news events. However, current information is too scattered, and media outlets often fail to investigate news stories or uncover information behind the news, leaving users' information needs unmet. Therefore, users in the new era seek both targeted, personalized news and comprehensive, in-depth aggregated information.

2.2 “Immersive” Multi-dimensional Presentation Better Attracts User Attention

When consuming news information, users face attention constraints, meaning that only novel and innovative news presentations can attract their attention. New media technology integrates and stores news information from different terminals and different media, then presents it on a single news platform. In this process, faced with such massive amounts of information data, how to attract users' attention with a vivid and creative presentation form that immerses users in the information is a question that both new media and traditional media must consider in the media convergence era.

2.3 Pursuit of Reciprocal Interactive Multi-dimensional Communication

Users are the masters of information dissemination in the media convergence era, and they hope to participate in the process of news information dissemination and simultaneously express their views on news. In the past, traditional media's news information production and dissemination often involved professional journalists broadcasting and sharing through methods like news reading, with poor timeliness and interactivity in feedback. In the new media environment, users can participate in news information production and dissemination at any time, express their views on relevant content, and opinion leaders may

even emerge. After reciprocal and in-depth interaction, new news information content may appear. This reciprocal, interactive multi-dimensional communication has important directional significance for innovation in both content and form of television news programs.

3. User-Centered Expression Innovation in Television News Programs

In the media convergence era, facing the challenges and opportunities brought by emerging media and the diverse changes in user needs, television news program expression must innovate, and it must conduct multi-dimensional innovation in both content and form centered on user needs. Content innovation in television news program expression can mainly be considered from the perspectives of information material collection and integration, news topic selection, and news production, while form innovation can be approached from the angles of news forms, news expression methods, studios, and journalists.

3.1 Innovation in Information Material Collection and Integration

Before producing news, the first step is to collect and integrate news information materials. In the media convergence era, television media can combine material collection with new media. That is to say, on-site collection remains important, and field investigation is still the most critical part. However, to obtain multiple perspectives, especially the voices of the masses, television media can refer to foreign media such as ABC and CNN, which have established dedicated Twitter journalists to capture various news trends on Twitter and combine them with field investigations. This method of material collection and integration can make news reporting more comprehensive, objective, and authentic.

3.2 Innovation in News Topic Selection

News topic selection is crucial to television news program expression, and innovation can be approached in three aspects: First, topics should reflect macro-level thinking, but material selection should start from the micro-level. That is, attention should be paid to local news dynamics, and universal news value should be excavated from small, individual news phenomena and facts to achieve a “seeing the big in the small” effect. Second, freshness of topic selection should be emphasized. In addition to timeliness, news must have freshness, meaning the news facts you report are materials that others have not reported. Therefore, paying attention to new dynamics and new problems around you is necessary to achieve exclusive reporting effects. Third, angles should be cleverly chosen. Many news materials may have been used by other media, and how to use the same material to report “exclusive news” is something television news workers need to consider carefully.

3.3 Innovation in News Production

Content innovation in news also includes innovation in news production, which is actually the deep integration of material collection, news topic selection, and news production. This integration includes the fusion of user-generated and professionally generated content, media convergence, and cooperation among multiple media outlets. For example, in the integration of user-generated and professionally generated content, user-generated content can be moved to television media, and then through professional editorial expression, the news can be made not only professional but also permeated with user perspectives. Additionally, in terms of media cooperation, collaboration can occur in material collection and integration. For instance, different media outlets can send journalists to different news scenes, then organize and share the news materials, enabling news reporting to reflect the principles of comprehensiveness and authenticity.

4.1 Adding New News Forms

Innovation in the form of television news programs can first utilize new technologies to add news forms. For example, data news [3] has emerged with the development of big data. Data news is a new form of news presented in a visualized format based on mining and statistical analysis of user data. This new news form not only reduces the cost of user understanding but also, for television news programs, enhances the visual quality of television news and fully utilizes the advantages of technology and television news itself.

4.2 Adhering to All-Media Operation

Applying all-media operation to the form of television news programs means strengthening the connection between television news and social media as well as other media. For example, in connecting with social media, television media can create their own social platforms, such as Weibo official accounts, WeChat public accounts, and official BBS forums. In terms of connecting with other media, information from newspapers can be moved to television news programs and interpreted from entirely new angles, and resource sharing can be achieved through connections with other media.

4.3 News Studio Innovation

The studio is the dispatch center for news information, that is, the crucial place for integrating and controlling various information. Currently, in terms of news studio innovation, major television stations have basically achieved the dispatching of various video signals. For example, studios have already connected video signals such as traffic management monitoring signals and environmental control signals into the studio, and then specialized journalists provide commentary on these information-rich videos, allowing users to understand news dynamics in real time.

4.4 Emphasizing the Role of Journalists and Deepening Interactive Communication

In the innovation of television news program expression, the author believes that the most critical aspect is to emphasize the role of television journalists, including anchors, reporters, and behind-the-scenes staff. In particular, anchors and hosts are key personnel who directly connect with the audience. They can explain news through chatting and conversation formats, allowing viewers to express their opinions. What needs to be noted here is that anchors and hosts should interact with the audience in an equal and friendly manner, provide timely feedback, and design diversified and vivid program expression styles centered on program positioning.

5. Conclusion

In the media convergence era, television news programs face both challenges and opportunities. The challenges mainly arise because the methods of news information production and dissemination have changed under the impact of new media, and people's needs have changed. However, it is precisely these challenges that point out the direction for reform for television news programs. In the new era, it is necessary to start from users, fully utilize the advantages of emerging media, and combine them with their own original advantages to innovate in both content and form.

[1] CNNIC. Statistical Report on Internet Development in China [R]. 2016 (7):

[2] 2016 First Half Television Overall Ratings and Drama Development Report: The Competitive Landscape is Changing [EB/OL]. Media Review, 2016-08-06. <http://mt.sohu.com/20160806/n462855488.shtml>.

[3] Guo Qin. Data Journalism: A New Model of News Reporting in the Big Data Era [D]. Central China Normal University, 2014: 10.

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

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