

A Study on the Development of Culinary Programs at Nanchang Radio Station Under Media Convergence: A Case Study of “Eat Well Drink Well” Postprint

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Abstract

With the advent of the Internet era, the audio-only nature of radio can no longer satisfy audience demands. The convergence of radio and new media has become an inevitable trend. In contemporary radio programming, particularly food-related programs, audience expectations extend beyond passive listening to emphasize interactive participation. This paper analyzes the current status of local food radio programs in Nanchang, incorporating listenership data from the “Eating and Drinking” program to explore an innovative development pathway suited for local food radio broadcasting in Nanchang.

Full Text

Preamble

Research on the Development of Food Programs on Nanchang Radio Under Media Convergence: A Case Study of “Chī Xiāng Hē Là”

Abstract: With the advent of the internet era, radio’s sole audio element can no longer satisfy audience demands, and the integration of radio with new media has become an inevitable trend. In today’s broadcast programs, particularly food programs, audience needs extend beyond mere listening to include interaction. This paper analyzes the current state of local food broadcast programs in Nanchang and, combined with listening data from the “Chī Xiāng Hē Là” program, explores an innovative development path suitable for local Nanchang radio food programs.

Keywords: radio; media; food; “Chī Xiāng Hē Là”

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This study employs a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative analysis. To quantitatively understand the audience profile of local food broadcast programs in Nanchang, research team members conducted a six-month survey starting in October 2016, sampling radio listeners in Nanchang and collecting 310 valid questionnaires. To better understand audience psychology, the team also conducted in-depth interviews with frequent listeners of food radio programs. This paper analyzes the survey statistics and interview content to propose corresponding recommendations.

[Figure 1: see original paper] What channels do you typically use to learn about food?

1.2 Low Actual Audience Listening Rates

Chinese people's love and sophistication for cuisine has remained constant throughout history, from ancient imperial banquets to modern food culture and documentaries like *A Bite of China*, which have introduced Chinese culinary culture to the world. Television food programs make people drool with desire. Can radio food programs not also claim a piece of this pie? The survey reveals that busy people primarily learn about food through friends' conversations, WeChat/Weibo platforms, and mobile apps. Radio programs rank in the middle, not the preferred choice.

Overall, Jiangxi Traffic Radio 105.4 and Charm 93.4 previously had food programs, but now there are almost none—only one program remains: “Chī Xiāng Hē Là” on Nanchang Radio's Big Eyes 89.7 frequency. Therefore, coverage of local food programs is extremely low. A search on the radio app Dragonfly FM reveals at least two similar programs in other provinces. The survey found that 41.75% of respondents have almost never listened to food programs, 26.26% listened once or twice and stopped, and only 31.99% listen regularly. The state of local food programs is not optimistic.

Currently, the only local food program in Nanchang is “Chī Xiāng Hē Là,” airing Monday through Friday from 16:30 to 18:30 on Nanchang Radio Big Eyes 89.7. This program will serve as the primary research subject for this study.

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2. Audience Listening Patterns of “Chī Xiāng Hē Là”

2.1 Audience Composition

This survey randomly distributed questionnaires to 310 radio listeners, among whom only 31.99% (99 people) regularly listen to food programs. Of these 99 individuals, 71 (71.72%) have listened to “Chī Xiāng Hē Là.” The following analysis examines the demographic composition of this program’s audience through categorical statistics on gender, age, occupation, and preferences.

Survey results show that among “Chī Xiāng Hē Là” listeners, males account for 43.66% and females for 56.34%—a 12.68% gender gap favoring female listeners. Among regular food program listeners, young and middle-aged audiences (20-30 years old) constitute the majority at 52.11%, followed by the 30-40 age group at 33.8%. The top three occupational categories are white-collar workers, students, and freelancers. Overall, the primary audience consists of white-collar workers with certain economic foundations and education levels, as well as younger students.

2.2 Audience Uses and Gratifications in the New Media Era

The “Uses and Gratifications” theory examines communication activities from the audience’s perspective, emphasizing the audience’s active role and prominent status. Its core concept is that “the audience is active” in media usage. In the new media era, this theory becomes even more representative and significant. Through survey questionnaires, this study investigates how audiences use food programs to satisfy their culinary desires.

2.2.1 Desire for Professional, Integrated Information In the new media context, audiences prefer program content that is targeted and professional rather than broad “point-to-mass” broadcasting. Their motivations for listening to food programs include food recommendations, host restaurant explorations, and offline listener tasting group activities. Food programming is thus moving toward diversification and specialization—these are precisely what audiences most need satisfied [Figure 2: see original paper].

2.2.2 Emphasis on Personalized “Private Customization” Experiences The survey shows that 85.92% of listeners are willing for food programs to provide private customization services—a significant departure from traditional broadcasting’s mass-market approach. Audiences hope to obtain personalized services that meet individual needs. “Chī Xiāng Hē Là” has launched offline tasting events, and not a single listener considered them unnecessary. These events amplify audience self-experience, providing greater emotional enjoyment through food. The survey confirms that tasting groups indeed meet audiences’ customized demands .

TABLE:1 What do you think are the advantages of the 897 Tasting Group interaction? (Multiple choice) - Preview food experience to facilitate later selec-

tion: 52.11% - Communicate with hosts: 80.28% - [Other options implied but not fully visible in original]

2.2.3 Diversified Interaction as a Crucial Element Due to past technological limitations, listeners could only interact with programs via telephone or text messages. Today, multi-platform and multi-angle communication provides entirely new interaction models. Audiences have transformed from mere information recipients and users into active disseminators and producers. This multi-dimensional, cross-platform communication model has become beloved and relied upon. The WeChat public platform for “Chī Xiāng Hē Là,” named “Foodie Paradise,” is highly interactive with nearly 40,000 followers and nearly 1,000 new additions daily. Its custom menu features three categories: “Foodie Guide,” “Tasting Group Registration,” and “Reward Points Club.” The survey demonstrates high audience recognition and demand for this interactive platform [Figure 3: see original paper].

Overall, “Chī Xiāng Hē Là” innovates both online and offline to meet market and listener demands, providing audiences with as many media and platforms for interaction as possible to satisfy their culinary enjoyment. However, the program still faces problems in terms of local listenership and market share.

2.3 Program Issues

2.3.1 Low Audience Ratings and Market Coverage The above survey reveals that Nanchang has only one local food program with extremely low coverage. Among 310 questionnaires, only 99 people regularly listen to food programs, and just 71 have heard this specific program. According to the *December 2016 Nanchang Area Radio Market Research Report*, the program’s ratings and market share during evening peak hours rank fifth in the region .

TABLE:2 Nanchang Area Radio Stations with Listening Advantages by Time Slot - Time: 17:00-18:00 - Average Rating: [data not fully visible] - Market Share: [data not fully visible] - Ranking: 5th place for Nanchang Radio Big Eyes 897

2.3.2 Inability to Fully Meet Audience Needs In the new media information age, audiences no longer passively accept information but actively seek valuable content they desire. The survey found that only 31.99% of food enthusiasts listen via radio. Additionally, most people consider radio program formats monotonous, inadequately integrated with new media, and unable to satisfy “visual” demands [Figure 4: see original paper].

[Figure 4: see original paper] Reasons why the “Chī Xiāng Hē Là” program cannot fully satisfy you

3. Development Strategies

3.1 Adding Audience-Driven, Personalized Program Elements

Recent media buzzwords suggest transforming “broadcasting” into “narrowcasting,” viewing the “mass” as “niche,” and converting “listeners” into “users.” As living standards improve, media services have shifted toward “tailor-made” customization. Beijing People’s Radio’s *Eat, Drink, and Have Fun* helps listeners find restaurants that meet personal needs. Shandong Radio Arts Channel’s *Happy Tea House—WeChat Location Helps You* uses WeChat’s real-time location sharing to facilitate urban “mutual assistance.”

3.2 Building a Tangible Broadcast-Internet Convergence Platform

Advances in new media technology have created new opportunities and conditions for radio media innovation and transformation. Media convergence has many definitions, but media expert Henry Jakub’s definition is particularly clear and vivid: he describes it as the flow of news, information, and other content across different media platforms (radio, television, newspapers, internet). Today’s radio products should integrate content and format across different media platforms, creating broadcast-APP interconnectivity, program-specific APP customization, and interactive broadcasting with internet live streaming.

3.3 Creating a Culturally Resonant Food Brand with User Stickiness

Only with branding can programs achieve greater social and economic benefits. Chutian Traffic Radio’s *Hào Chī Lǎo* program published a *Hào Chī Lǎo Dìníng Guide Yellow Pages*, a mutually beneficial approach that enhances brand image, program authority, and appeal while improving radio ratings and market share. Host or food expert brand logos, signatures, cartoon images, customized program gifts, and exclusive program events can all generate significant promotional effects and social influence for hosts and programs.

Today’s society has entered the web 3.0 era—an internet platform centered on “multidimensional interaction.” Food radio programs must break free from initial one-way broadcasting and continuously integrate with new media, different ports, and various platforms through multi-screen convergence. Through ongoing technological and content innovation and full integration of online-offline merchant-listener interaction, they can create entirely new branded food programs that offer audiences more “customized” choices and enjoyment. Only then can regional food radio programs remain vibrant and dynamic.

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

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