

Reflections on the Development of Integrated Media in County-Level Radio and Television Stations: Postprint

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Abstract

The advent of the network information era and the explosive growth of mobile Internet applications have precipitated significant transformations in media ecology and landscape, ushering in the integrated media era that presents both opportunities and challenges for county-level radio and television stations. In accordance with the essence and modalities of integrated media, these stations must evolve their development approach to keep pace with the times, actively pursue resource sharing and complementary advantages with emerging media, thereby advancing the construction of an integrated media framework for county-level radio and television stations.

Full Text

Preamble

The advent of the network information age and the explosive growth of mobile internet applications have fundamentally transformed the media ecosystem and landscape, giving rise to the era of converged media. This presents both opportunities and challenges for the development of county-level radio and television stations. By embracing the essence and forms of converged media, these stations must evolve their development strategies in step with the times, actively exploring resource sharing and complementary advantages with emerging media platforms to foster the construction of a converged media framework.

1. Interpretation of the Converged Media Era' s Connotation

National leaders have explicitly stated in the “Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Integrated Development of Traditional and Emerging Media” that we must

further advance the integration of traditional and new media, deepen internet thinking in broadcasting development, and achieve complementary advantages and resource integration between traditional and new media. With advanced technology as the foundation and scientific content construction as the goal, this integration should deepen across multiple dimensions—including content, platforms, management, and channels—to rapidly establish a comprehensive, three-dimensional, and integrated information dissemination system. The power of media convergence is evident: converged media represents a strategic alliance among print, audio, video, and digital formats. In this era, both information transmission technology and content resources require interaction and integration. For mass media outlets like county-level radio and television stations, this represents an entirely new development concept. They must seize the momentum of the converged media era, face challenges head-on, and actively explore development pathways within this new framework.

Converged media is, in essence, about achieving resource integration and complementary advantages—not only integrating technical forms but also realizing the organic unification of content resources. For county-level radio and television stations to develop a converged media framework, they must drive reform internally, establish the audience’s central role in development, ensure content quality, adhere to people-centered principles, and avoid putting the cart before the horse.

2.1 Development Ideas for Converged Media

The “Internet Plus” era has opened new horizons for the media industry, accelerating reform processes and presenting traditional media with both greater opportunities and formidable challenges. Facing the “barbarian at the gate” of new media, many have proclaimed that traditional media will ultimately be replaced—a reality that objectively demands traditional media adapt to the times, absorb and draw upon new media’s strengths, and achieve cooperative interaction and resource sharing to promote healthy, stable development.

Converged media is an era that is both “fast” and “joyful.” In this new age of rapid information development, some things may become obsolete before we even have time to contemplate them. This requires us to always keep pace with the times, stay at the forefront, and follow the era’s footsteps. We must consistently uphold a spirit of learning, summarizing, and innovating to further broaden our professional scope and deepen our expertise. For instance, China Mobile’s internet users—primarily the 25-40 age group—represent a consumer force that cannot be ignored, as entrepreneurship and consumption have become the largest market segments. Over the two decades from 1998 to 2018, China’s mobile internet users grew at a staggering rate of 46%, rapidly covering the entire nation with lightning speed.

Today, the big data era has arrived, digital technology is maturing, and information transmission technology is spreading with unstoppable momentum,

bringing interactivity and sharing capabilities to journalism professionals across different media platforms. Based on the realities of broadcasting development in the new era, we can summarize media convergence into two forms: first, convergence in the technical domain; second, convergence in the content domain. Examples familiar to all—such as mobile television, satellite television, and IPTV—represent the integration of electronic computing with television services and information. At present, mobile client applications are no longer unfamiliar and have been widely integrated into new media platforms like WeChat public accounts. Related applications are developing at a mushrooming pace. Given this development trend, radio and television must absolutely not fight alone in their future development path; they must achieve strong alliances to build an “aircraft carrier” for information dissemination and public opinion guidance. This objectively drives county-level broadcasting units to awaken alongside the converged media era—those who awaken earlier in this era are more likely to seize the initiative in complex competition, achieve dominance, master discourse power, enhance brand recognition, and serve effectively as the “mouthpiece” of the Party and government.

2.2 Development Strategies for Converged Media

First, construct information-based new media platforms. Facing the strong impact of new media, county-level radio and television stations must not retreat from difficulties but rather ride the waves, actively embracing new media and exploring cooperation and complementarity to rapidly build comprehensive digital media platforms. County-level broadcasting units must deeply understand the broad context of the information age. In promoting the development of a converged media framework, they must break free from traditional development concepts and overcome inherent “stacking models,” actively dismantling barriers between traditional and new media. They should introduce new technologies, research and develop new technologies, respond proactively to big data era requirements, integrate cloud computing and intelligent technologies, and advance their own digital construction to lay a solid foundation for deep integration with new media.

To catch up with the pace of the converged media era and rapidly establish a three-dimensional, all-round media model, county-level stations must not isolate themselves but actively promote internal and external innovation to build an information-based media platform as quickly as possible. Specifically, this can be achieved through the following approaches: (1) Actively conduct internal organizational restructuring and reorganization, effectively breaking down barriers between functional departments, strengthening collaboration and integration across departments, and exploring multi-modal and multi-format convergence and integration from perspectives of content, resources, personnel, and technology to achieve joint development, overall layout, and unified planning across multiple departments. (2) Based on the converged media development framework and audience needs in the new era, redefine work processes. According to

news gathering, editing, and production processes in the converged media era, further optimize internal organizational structures, clarify the basic functions and responsibilities of personnel in each position, define management scope and mission, achieve coordinated working frequencies across media platforms, and create new prospects for broadcasting development. (3) Actively build internet-based media platforms, establishing a “two micros and one client” dissemination model that actively integrates WeChat, Weibo, and client platforms to achieve “four-network integration” of telecommunications networks, broadcasting networks, television networks, and the internet, thereby building a systematic, shared new media mechanism to promote converged media development [1].

Second, actively build highly interactive UGC models. The UGC model refers to user-generated content resources that leverage strong interactive characteristics to transform traditional information dissemination methods and create new models where uploading and downloading occur simultaneously [2]. In the UGC model, users assume multiple identities: first, as consumers of information resources; second, as disseminators of information resources; third, as producers of information resources; and fourth, as constructors of information resource networks. Based on this, county-level broadcasting units should effectively draw upon the development experience of online social platforms and video streaming platforms to quickly build UGC-based modules that establish interactive and sharing relationships among information producers, disseminators, and viewers, thereby gradually increasing topic discussion heat, broadening the scope of topic dissemination, and promoting the further development of radio and television stations.

For example, in the mobile APP of a county-level broadcasting unit, we can establish a “Today’s News” section equipped with citizen journalism functionality. After citizens submit news content to the APP, platform administrators must review the relevant news content to fulfill their gatekeeping function. News information that passes review is then displayed on the platform. This approach not only enhances interactivity between media and audiences but also increases the enthusiasm of the masses to participate in news production and dissemination, which helps strengthen audience stickiness and build the brand image of county-level radio and television stations. More importantly, this method can enrich the diversity and practicality of media content, truly embodying the news dissemination philosophy of serving the people and reporting for the people. Meanwhile, topic discussion sections can be established where citizens can express their views, helping county-level broadcasting units better listen to public voices and promote the healthy, sustainable development of news platforms.

Third, focus on audience experience and hold branded activities. In converged media development, enhancing the visibility of traditional media and strengthening the bond between media and audiences are key. Therefore, county-level radio and television stations must actively build their brands and strengthen interaction with audiences through diversified activities. For example, every region has characteristic festivals, such as the Water Splashing Festi-

val of the Dai people and the Kimdala Festival of the Korean people. During festival periods, county-level radio and television stations should adopt synchronized broadcasting, television, and online live streaming methods, using online live broadcast and offline interaction to bring the latest audio-visual experiences to local residents, thereby increasing ratings and listenership [3]. At the same time, county-level radio and television stations can organize public activities jointly with relevant regional departments—for instance, organizing essay contests with cultural centers, or photography contests and city story contests with urban construction departments—encouraging citizens to create works and conducting voting and selection through the county-level radio and television client. Presenting selected excellent works to citizens through the APP helps enhance interactivity between broadcasting units and audiences, thereby increasing the support and enthusiasm of the masses for county-level radio and television development.

Conclusion

County-level radio and television stations exploring converged media development paths is necessary to adapt to new media development trends, to improve their visibility and ratings, to serve effectively as the “mouthpiece” of the Party and government, and to meet the public’s information acquisition needs. It is hoped that this article can help county-level broadcasting units deeply understand the profound connotation of the converged media era, recognize the opportunities and challenges they face in their own development process, and actively build new media information dissemination platforms from two key points—content resources and technical forms. By exploring cooperation and resource sharing with new media and achieving complementary advantages between old and new media, county-level radio and television stations can ultimately promote their sustainable development.

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[2] Zhu Min. Discussion on Development Ideas for County-level Radio and Television Stations in the Converged Media Era [J]. Journal of News Research, 2018, 9 (16): 197.

[3] Lü Dan. How County-level Radio and Television Stations Can Promote Converged Media Development [J]. China Cable Television, 2018 (8): 984-985.

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

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