

## Convergence and Development of New Media and Traditional Media: Postprint

**Authors:** tension element, Li Siwei

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### Abstract

New media has achieved widespread recognition among audiences in contemporary society. However, while present-day discourse frequently entails comparisons between new media and traditional media, scant attention has been devoted to investigating the integration of multiple communication media to generate a novel communication paradigm designated as “converged media.” This approach inherits the “quality” inherent in traditional media communication while promoting the “quantity” characteristic of rapid and efficient modern dissemination. It not only furnishes audiences with enhanced convenience but also enables media organizations to maximize their core functionalities, most critically by transcending the predicament of traditional media’s rigidity and inefficiency, as well as new media’s “short shelf-life” communication. This paper proposes a developmental approach predicated on innovation and convergence between traditional and new media, contending that the formation of converged media—characterized by rapid dissemination, robust content interactivity, extensive reach, and low cost—will constitute an inevitable trajectory for the evolution of multimedia communication.

### Full Text

#### Abstract

New media has gained widespread acceptance among audiences in real life. However, while many people today compare new media with traditional media, few have studied the integration of multiple communication media to create a new form called “converged media.” This approach inherits the “quality” of traditional media communication while promoting the “quantity” of fast and efficient new media dissemination. It provides convenience to audiences while enabling media to maximize their core functions, most importantly overcoming the awkward situation of traditional media being rigid and inefficient while new media

suffers from “short shelf-life” content. This paper proposes development methods for the innovation and integration of traditional and new media, arguing that forming a “converged media” characterized by fast dissemination, strong content interactivity, broad reach, and low cost will become the inevitable path for multi-media communication development.

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**By** Zhang Liyuan and Li Siwei

In China, new media has undergone more than 20 years of development—a period marking China’s gradual transition from the periphery to the mainstream of internet development. Today, the term “new media” is no longer unfamiliar to us. Wang Bin, Secretary-General of the New Media Industry Alliance, once stated: “New media is fundamentally based on digital information technology, excels in interactive communication, and possesses unique forms. In short, it encompasses individual-to-individual, individual-to-group, and group-to-group communication.”

## 1. Characteristics of New Media Communication

Self-media, in simple terms, is a medium that primarily relies on individual dissemination using electronic and contemporary means to transmit information to unspecified majorities or specific individuals. Everyone has a channel to speak and everyone can be a communicator. This medium’s foundation—its inherent interactive and free nature—enhances the degree of communication autonomy. It represents a personal-centered communication mode.

So-called new media includes self-media and other new communication models. Compared with traditional media, it has greater communication volume, global coverage, stronger interactivity, and increased openness and flexibility. However, as new media remains in a continuous stage of development and renewal, many deficiencies and drawbacks still exist, such as insufficient regulation and low credibility of content. Specific communication characteristics include the following:

**Short-video orientation:** Today, audiences’ interest in traditional television is waning. The popularization of mobile terminals and the development of 4G networks have facilitated the growth of online video. Short videos are not merely a new means of new media communication but a new lever changing the media landscape.

**Socialization:** The widespread adoption of WeChat, Weibo, and similar platforms has made interpersonal interaction the focus of network construction. The

increasing popularity of social media platforms has transformed new media from mass cultural exchange to personal cultural exchange. New media development now even encompasses online shopping, online learning, online transactions, and online medical services, making the internet a true “living space” under the impetus of social services and removing the “virtualization” label from online communication.

**Mobilization:** Mobile internet represents one of the important pathways for new media communication, though it remains less mature compared to the previous two characteristics. From the audience’s perspective, client-side applications are not necessarily the ideal model—they must integrate with social media platforms to better achieve information guidance. The benefits of mobilization are multifaceted, including the utilization of fragmented time and new thinking about personalization and customization, enabling audiences to selectively receive external information during scattered leisure time according to their preferences and needs.

## 2. Comparative Analysis of New Media and Traditional Media

New media possesses unique advantages such as resource superiority, timeliness advantage, and scope advantage. However, we must acknowledge that everything has two sides. Major portal websites basically update 24 hours non-stop, with Weibo hot searches updating every 10 minutes—something traditional media cannot achieve. Behind this astonishing volume of published content lies the hard work of team personnel. To improve timeliness, work intensity inevitably increases, and under long-term high pressure, it is inevitable that inferior content slips through. After all, current new media relies on brevity and novelty to attract public attention, leading to an overflow of “clickbait” headlines and content plagiarism incidents. For traditional media, communication cost consumption becomes an important factor affecting media dissemination speed. Moreover, traditional media makes it inconvenient to search past resources and has low information utilization efficiency. Combined with the rapid growth of new media, this indeed poses a significant challenge to traditional media.

## 3. New Media’s “New Methods”

Among new media’s many characteristics, its core feature is audience interactivity. New media development has spawned specialized terms such as “citizen journalist” and “citizen journalism.” Simply put, audiences can report news events they encounter accidentally through electronic media at any time. Besides on-site reporting, they can also participate in events through interaction with professional media. We can even search for videos and images from multiple angles through channels like Weibo to obtain timely information, while major media outlets disseminate information by reposting citizens’ Weibo content. Additionally, netizens can express personal opinions through comments,

forwarding, and likes. It is precisely these popular topics, rolling news, information retrieval, message comments, online live broadcasting, and video images that constitute weak links for traditional media. As the saying goes, “Many hands make light work”—high public participation increases information volume and makes new media communication faster and more content-rich.

With the popularization of smartphones, new media has broken the limitations of traditional media, enabling audiences to understand new things anytime and anywhere. Through big data analysis, audiences can also precisely obtain information of interest. The emergence of self-media platforms such as Douyin and Toutiao has transformed audiences from receivers to participants, allowing media interactivity to be better realized. Compared with traditional media, new media has a broader communication scope and more convenient information search, better meeting the needs of modern people’s cultural life. Information transmitted by traditional media is almost always mass-oriented, whereas new media can segment audiences, making communication objectives more explicit and improving communication effectiveness. It breaks the regional limitations of traditional media, relying on scientific and technology to make communication unrestricted by distance, achieving information openness and resource sharing. While people enthusiastically pursue new media, its influence on people’s values is also subtle, originating from public discussions online. Every public-focused event and highly discussed topic generates intense debate and opinion collision. In major events, audiences influence the progress of events to a certain extent while simultaneously experiencing conceptual impact and transformation.

#### 4. Transformation of New Media Professionals

The rapid development of new media is certainly attributable to communicators. Due to factors such as new media’s “short shelf-life,” fast dissemination speed, and gradually expanding audience demands, the work intensity of new media practitioners has greatly increased. While sympathizing with their hardships, we should consider how new media professionals can transform to meet the requirements of the “all-media era.”

First is group analysis. Today, 91.87% of new media workers are under 35 years old, 38.5% work more than 8 hours daily, and 44.3% earn less than 3,000 RMB monthly. The youthfulness of the group indicates that contemporary youth have high recognition of new media while adding vitality to organizations. However, high work intensity and low income also reflect the excessive survival pressure on young new media practitioners, leading to high industry turnover with an average employment duration of 2.43 years. Most noteworthy is the educational level of practitioners: 64.4% hold bachelor’s degrees or higher, indicating they generally possess certain media professional qualities. However, they still exhibit relatively weak political awareness and lack of identity. To address this, we can establish an online media practitioner qualification certification mechanism and training system, leverage the role of party and league organizations to enhance political literacy, and establish practitioner associations to build communication

platforms.

Second, online editing is an emerging profession. Problems such as “clickbait” and “exploiting curiosity-seeking psychology” have followed. We should identify and supervise the correction of media workers who manipulate curiosity and other psychological factors, ignore the relationship between titles and content, and solely seek “attention” through sensationalist headlines. We should also improve and perfect regulations and rules for online communication information and ensure sustained long-term mechanisms. Each website should formulate strict systems, clarify strict control over operational processes, and focus on the cultivation and restraint of frontline practitioners. For example, regarding proper headline usage, information must be complete and accurate when published, with no arbitrary alteration. When selecting a sentence from the original text as a title, we must consider whether it can fully express the article’s original meaning, without distorting the theme, quoting out of context, or presenting a partial view as the whole.

## 5. Maintaining Efficient Communication While Deepening Connotation

To facilitate the early arrival of the “all-media era,” media practitioners should actively transform while maintaining a sense of urgency. First, they must emancipate their minds and break with tradition. Some traditional media seem unable to break free from inherent patterns. In fact, during periods when new media is extremely popular, traditional media should more actively explore innovation, transform concepts, and broaden thinking. Second, for new media, the principle of “content is supreme” must be observed. In this era of multi-information explosion, winning through content remains the source of value in the media industry. Excessive pursuit of efficiency while neglecting content leads to the “short shelf-life” problem, making it difficult to establish classic images.

Most importantly, we must promote integration and create new paths. The guiding role of technology in the all-media era is undeniable. However, traditional media possesses reporting depth and thickness. To achieve integrated development, media must fully utilize the advantages of both sides and innovate communication forms. Based on current development conditions, we can combine the credibility of traditional media’s content production with the speed and broad reach of new media information release. Through processing and re-organization, communication content can transform from singular to diverse, meeting more audience needs.

The integration and development of traditional and new-era media is a challenge that all media-related practitioners and the entire media industry must face. New media professionals must grasp the new trend of convergence, act according to the times, and follow the trend. They should use convergence concepts and innovative methods to make the development path of media inte-

gration smoother and faster, welcoming the arrival of “converged media.”

New media has become the mainstream of the era, but traditional media remains irreplaceable. With social development and technological progress, people’s demands for communication media will become increasingly higher, and the demand volume will also grow. The “short shelf-life” phenomenon will inevitably be eliminated. Overall, these elements complement each other. Freshness, efficiency, convenience, and credibility are necessary requirements for future media. Moreover, with the rapid pace of technological development and the proliferation of new media, multiple media must integrate and innovate to achieve long-term sustainable development. While continuously recognizing and improving their own problems, they must seek development prospects that suit their characteristics. They cannot blindly imitate or suppress each other. Each medium needs to find its own strengths and advantages, promote each other, and jointly build a new media era—this is the “all-media era” mentioned in this paper. Similarly, as media professionals, we must become trendsetters, not followers. Besides innovating in content supervision, communication models, and technological means, many other areas can be innovated. As long as we dare to think and act, we can certainly achieve a new era of “all-media” coverage.

We believe that in the near future, the integration of our traditional and new media will enter a mature stage, and “converged media” will become the main trend in media development.

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(Author’s affiliation: Northeast Normal University)

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