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## Postprint: Hunan Broadcasting System' s Path of Media Convergence Development

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### Abstract

The media convergence development of Hunan Broadcasting and Television follows a path of independently constructing emerging internet media that responds to the times and creates greater value through new technologies, new mechanisms, new models, and new business forms, using this as the core and breakthrough to build an integrated communication system; its objective is to promote qualitative ecological transformation through media convergence, fostering an authoritative, open, and leading Mango all-media ecosystem within the communication pattern of the new era; its fundamental task is to occupy the propaganda high ground through the application of all-media strategies and innovative all-media expressions, fully fulfilling the mission and responsibility of Party media, and forming a self-directed, opinion-guiding all-media mainstream communication matrix.

### Full Text

#### Preamble

#### Hunan Broadcasting' s Path of Media Convergence Development

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**Abstract:** Hunan Broadcasting' s media convergence development involves independently building valuable internet-based emerging media that adapts to the times through new technologies, mechanisms, models, and business formats, using this as the core and breakthrough point to create an integrated communication system. Its goal is to promote ecological qualitative change through media convergence, establishing an authoritative, open, and leading Mango omnimedia ecosystem within the communication landscape of the new era. The fundamental task is to occupy the high ground of propaganda, fully fulfill the mission and responsibility of party media, and form a mainstream communica-

tion matrix led by ourselves and guiding public opinion through the application of omnimedia strategies and innovative omnimedia expression.

**Keywords:** Hunan Broadcasting; media convergence; omnimedia; communication

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## 1. Media Convergence as an Inevitable Trend

In June 2018, Disney was dethroned from its position as the “world’s largest media empire,” replaced by streaming giant Netflix. In March 2019, Disney’s acquisition of 21st Century Fox officially took effect. Beyond Fox’s film studios and television stations, the most astute observers recognized that the core asset in this \$50 billion deal was the streaming platform Hulu. With internet-centered communication technology developing rapidly, the new internet media landscape of “one person, one media; everyone to everyone” and “everything can be media” has captured an absolute majority of the audience. Wherever people are, the market is there; wherever people are, the public opinion arena is there. Without question, the internet represents the largest market and the most significant public opinion field.

Although media convergence represents the general direction, it lacks established precedents globally due to differences in national conditions, regions, systems, mechanisms, and economic-technical levels. Media convergence worldwide remains in an exploratory stage. In China, successful cases include China Media Group and the “converged media” reforms underway at county-level broadcasting organizations in some provinces, which have achieved remarkable results. This converged media reform can be summarized as integrating broadcast, television, newspaper, website, and client media—different media forms under the same fiscal level and organizational system with common ground and complementary strengths—through comprehensive integration in human resources, propaganda, media assets, operations, and channels to create a new media form featuring “resource convergence, content compatibility, mutual propaganda integration, and shared interests,” namely “converged media.”

Narrowly defined, media convergence refers to the qualitative transformation that occurs when different media forms merge to create entirely new media forms, such as newspapers plus web becoming e-newspapers. Broadly defined, media convergence encompasses not only the integration of media forms but also the comprehensive aggregation and integration of all media-related elements, including institutional personnel, operational models, resource channels, technical systems, and product IP, across all levels to create new systematic and ecological configurations. Driven by market demand and global trends, media

convergence is the optimal choice for promoting the transformation and development of traditional media—a strategic action that traditional media must adopt for survival and development in the internet era. The future communication landscape will undoubtedly be one based on internet technology, dominated by emerging media, and characterized by multimedia integrated communication. This landscape represents the absolute mainstream.

Human lifestyles have been transformed by the internet, and as a crucial factor and fundamental element of social life, the degree and speed of impact on media have been staggering. In just over a decade, the iterative development speed of emerging internet media and its degree of association with audiences have surpassed peaks achieved by traditional media over centuries. From the initial emergence of multimedia technology to later cross-media cooperation and today's trend of media convergence, traditional media have barely adapted to the role transition of changing rulers before being compelled to become part of media convergence due to the reality of narrowed means, weakened channels, and aging ecosystems. Convergence is necessary for survival and development.

## 2. Mango's Strategic Choice for Convergence Path

Established in 2004, Golden Eagle Network ([www.hunantv.com](http://www.hunantv.com)) marked Hunan Broadcasting's initial foray into the internet as the core online platform for Hunan Satellite TV. On April 20, 2014, Mango TV, a professional video network platform born from Golden Eagle Network, made its debut with an innovative converged media posture. Lü Huanbin, the leader of Hunan Broadcasting, proposed the development philosophy of “convergence development, self-dominant, building the Mango ecosystem.” From this point, Hunan Broadcasting's media convergence development path fully unfolded with the formal establishment of its new media platform Mango TV. In August 2014, the fourth meeting of the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform reviewed and approved the “Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Convergence Development of Traditional and Emerging Media.” At this meeting, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized the need to cultivate a batch of new mainstream media with diverse forms, advanced means, and strong competitiveness, and to build several new media groups with powerful communication, credibility, and influence, forming a modern communication system that is three-dimensionally diverse and integratively developed. The central government's spirit regarding media convergence further clarified the direction and standards for Hunan Broadcasting, shaping its relatively complete and clear development approach: an overall framework of “self-dominant, integrated development; one cloud, multiple screens, ecological development; and conceptual breakthrough, driving development.”

The first pillar is **self-dominant, integrated development**. For mainstream media to transform and upgrade, going online and integrating with the internet is the direction, and new media is the key to achieving convergence. To maintain mainstream status, traditional media must grasp the initiative and control in integrating with new media; only then will mainstream discourse power in the

public opinion arena not be lost. Therefore, Hunan Broadcasting built its own autonomous and controllable internet new media platform as the primary convergence partner and transaction counterpart for its traditional media, making it the main force and lever for promoting group media convergence. Simultaneously, Hunan Broadcasting adopted all necessary means and paid all necessary costs to support its rapid growth, expansion, and establishment as a domestic industry leader to obtain matching market position and discourse power. The unconditional granting of new media exclusive broadcasting rights for Hunan Satellite TV programs to Mango TV represented copyright value worth tens of billions. On the surface, Hunan Broadcasting's approach of "not making wedding dresses for others and cutting off its own retreat" appeared somewhat "avoiding the easy and taking the hard" and unconventional within China's current convergence trends. In reality, however, leveraging the content brand, talent team, and capital advantages accumulated by the television powerhouse, Hunan Broadcasting's self-built new media not only carried the quality genes of the television army but also independently and fully participated in internet industry competition during its growth, gaining deep understanding and firsthand experience of new media's iterative upgrades on mobile terminals. This "integrated symbiosis" approach, which uses its own new media as a bridge and link for convergence with traditional media within the system, differs from the "heterogeneous symbiosis" model of general traditional media converging with external leading new media. Within the framework of integrated development, Hunan Broadcasting broke through system barriers, smoothed relationships, and eliminated obstacles related to ownership, copyright, and production-review-release processes in media convergence reform.

The second pillar is **one cloud, multiple screens, ecological development**. "One cloud" refers to the content cloud, while "multiple screens" refers to television, mobile phones, outdoor streaming media, and other large and small screens. This strategy involves leveraging the content creation advantages of traditional media and the channel advantages of new media such as websites, IPTV, and OTT to form a one-cloud, multiple-screens communication matrix. Simultaneously, it uses content IP as a traffic entrance to establish an IP-based ecosystem for user interaction with new media, extending the market value chain of converged products and providing an ecological content IP foundation for the innovative integration of media industry and new technology.

The third pillar is **conceptual breakthrough, driving development**. Media convergence is not a simple translation from traditional to new media but a disruptive innovation of the overall model. Using internet thinking and user thinking for communication, and following communication and market laws, it implements genetic recombination and process reengineering within the communication system's production and operations, follows the commercial logic of new communication, reconstructs value evaluation standards with new business models, and breaks old interest structures. Only by breaking through concepts and continuously updating them in sync with development trends can media convergence truly achieve height.

In December 2016, Hunan Broadcasting formally established its “one body, two wings, dual-core drive” media convergence development strategy. This strategy can be interpreted as the television army taking off on dual wings of television media (Hunan Satellite TV) and new media (Mango TV) as the main force and primary driving unit for building new mainstream media. Hunan Satellite TV has over 270 million viewers under age 35, a demographic that highly overlaps with new media, particularly mobile new media users. Under the “one body” framework, the audiences and users of these two core platforms can be smoothly converted, providing a naturally compatible foundation for strong convergence. From the perspective of convergence progress, Hunan Broadcasting’s media convergence development advanced from building new media to using new media. Consequently, the traditional media cluster centered on Hunan Satellite TV and the new media ecological cluster centered on Mango TV, as the “two wings” and “dual cores” of Hunan Broadcasting’s media convergence, entered a true integrated state. The “one body, two wings, dual-core drive” strategy was clearly defined as both the mission statement and roadmap for Hunan Broadcasting’s media convergence.

In implementing new media construction, Hunan Broadcasting adopted the “mainstream media standard” —the high standards of traditional mainstream media in orientation, taste, and quality also apply to new media construction. The principle of “the main force seizing the main position” means that only by building new media according to main position requirements can the goal of “integrating into one, merging into one” with mainstream traditional media be truly achieved. This approach allows Mango TV to widely attract talent, capital, and resources as a market entity, while leveraging Hunan Broadcasting’s content production teams and core competitive advantages in self-production and copyright ownership to launch an assault on becoming a first-class domestic and globally renowned new media platform. Currently, Mango TV ranks firmly among China’s top four video platforms. As the only state-owned, party-managed, and party-controlled mainstream video network platform among domestic industry leaders, Mango TV has undoubtedly played a pioneering, benchmark, and accelerator role in media convergence across China’s internet and broadcasting industries.

In June 2018, Mango TV, along with Mango Interactive Entertainment, Tianyu Media, Mango Film & Television, and Mango Entertainment, was injected into “Happy Shopping” as a complete package, officially becoming China’s first state-controlled video platform listed on the A-share market. In July, “Happy Shopping” was officially renamed “Mango Super Media,” opening a new capital path for Hunan Broadcasting’s media convergence. Mango TV also became the first to upgrade from new media to omnimedia. With “ecological dual main business, satellite TV core system, and super media central system,” Mango Super Media’s establishment ushered in a new node on the convergence path toward an omnimedia ecosystem.

### 3. Mango Super Media's Iterative Evolution Through Convergence

Omnimedia represents both an overall model and strategy for business operations and the result of deep integration and qualitative transformation among various media under information, communication, and network technology conditions—the most innovative communication form in the great media transformation. Omnimedia meets audience segmentation needs by providing multiple methods and levels of communication forms, enabling audiences to obtain more timely, multi-angle, multi-sensory, and even tactile media experiences.

The establishment of Mango Super Media was an important decision made by Hunan Broadcasting after media convergence reached a certain stage. This decision marked both the emergence of convergence achievements and a touchstone for creating an omnimedia ecosystem. Undoubtedly, in the omnimedia process, Mango Super Media, with its dual gene resources, serves as the main force for the group's media convergence and will play an engine and demonstration role in the group's advance toward an omnimedia ecosystem.

#### 3.1 Ecological Matrix Upgrade

After its establishment, Mango Super Media integrated Mango Entertainment and Mango Film & Television's production capabilities, Mango Interactive Entertainment's gaming and e-sports, Tianyu Media's artist management, and Happy Shopping's e-commerce around Mango TV's audio-visual content core. This integration connected upstream and downstream industrial chains, establishing an ecological matrix with networked connections and multi-point linkages. This matrix provides Mango Super Members (users) with diversified, differentiated, and refined services including news and lifestyle information, film and television dramas, entertainment, and e-commerce under the omnimedia ecosystem.

#### 3.3 Content Integration Upgrade

In 2018, Mango TV's online variety show output accounted for only 10% of the entire network's total, yet it occupied five of the top ten most-watched online variety shows. In 2019, supported by the omnimedia ecosystem, Mango TV's "self-produced + exclusive broadcast" content was fully upgraded, with cultural variety shows and film and television drama production reaching a staggering 40 programs, creating historical records.

#### 3.4 Technological Innovation Upgrade

Mango Super Media established an "Innovation Research Institute" to conduct forward-looking layout for 5G, AI, VR, and other technology applications under the omnimedia ecosystem, striving to enhance the communication speed, precision, and commercial efficiency of the ecological matrix through technological

innovation. In just one year since its establishment, Mango Super Media's omnimedia construction achievements have gradually become apparent. Mango Super Media's omnimedia product ecosystem is a dual-circle ecosystem centered on Malansan Mountain. The inner circle involves integration and collaboration with all high-quality content IPs and team resources from Mango TV, while the outer circle builds a "content cooperation circle of friends" through strategic investments to achieve mutual value-added.

In mainstream propaganda, the integration of station and network has been unprecedentedly strengthened. Mango TV has fully released its innate red genes, working closely with Hunan Satellite TV and local channels to continuously produce high-quality news convergence products and themed blockbusters through "online-first, television-later" strategies. A news convergence production and broadcasting mechanism based on PC, mobile, OTT, and IPTV has been formed. On the other hand, Mango Super Media's six major subsidiaries leverage their aggregation advantages to create a series of youth-positive online film and television drama works. Additionally, Mango TV's operator TV business has exceeded 147 million users. On the mobile side, Mango TV's APP has surpassed 620 million downloads and installations with over 500 million monthly active users. Mango TV's overseas users have covered 195 countries and regions worldwide, totaling over 16.2 million. The "Hunan Satellite TV Mango TV Official Channel" has become the largest Chinese-language channel on YouTube through an MCN model. The independent operation of Mango TV's international APP has also accelerated. Meanwhile, Mango Super Media uses mainstream high-quality content to focus on overseas business layout along the "Belt and Road" countries and regions, achieving a transformation from cultural "stepping out" to cultural "selling out." New business formats around the omnimedia layout, including "Mango Literature," "Mango Claw Machine," "Mango Audiobooks," and "Mango Games," have completed project incubation, while "Mango Flash Shopping," "Mango Classroom," finance, sports, and other new business formats are expanding. The diversified industrial chain allows Mango Super Media's IP and brand to spread and derive across multiple fields, enabling multiple empowerment for its omnimedia ecosystem.

As a pioneer in evolving from traditional media to internet enterprises, Mango Super Media has established a sustainable and high-growth "Mango Talent Pool" covering content, technology, creativity, hardware, investment, and finance, providing talent reserves for Hunan Broadcasting's omnimedia group operation. Using group reform as an opportunity, Mango Super Media implements gear-type allocation of traditional television and internet talents. In the omnimedia ecosystem, professional internet talent teams, video content production teams, VR laboratories, and other new technology teams, along with e-commerce customer service teams that were originally unrelated, are undergoing cross-border integration and collaborative 攻关.

#### 4. Hunan Broadcasting' s Party Media Path in the Omnimedia Era

Omnimedia is an open media ecosystem that continuously integrates, qualitatively transforms, and iterates. For the system to evolve, it must continuously supplement new elements, seeking variables through increments and promoting qualitative change through quantitative change. If the “one body, dual wings, dual-core drive” of Mango Super Media and Hunan Satellite TV represents the main line of the group' s media convergence, then other television media, radio media, and industrial sectors under Hunan Broadcasting are neither passive observers nor marginalized followers outside the dual cores of satellite TV and Mango Super Media. In fact, these sectors even play leading roles in some areas of media convergence, achieving multi-point breakthroughs in new business formats, business models, and converged product exploration, providing valuable references, trial-and-error cases, and beneficial supplements for the omnimedia reform of the core main board.

Hunan Economic TV has cultivated local community vertical fields through public accounts and official subscriptions, achieving a full-media circle communication pattern from large screens to the internet, with online and offline content distribution and multi-point reach. Hunan Entertainment Channel has used online short videos as a breakthrough point, transitioning from PGC to MCN to achieve adjustments and upgrades in content monetization models, operational models, and economic creation structures. The Radio Media Center has used artificial intelligence technology as a lever to create AI-based Chinese speech-to-text intelligent editing systems and virtual hosts, initially forming a “radio + video websites, audio websites, television, WeChat/Weibo, H5” content IP model, providing converged product cases for offline penetration and lifestyle scenario-based operations of radio IP. The “Mango Cloud” APP, as a news client extending Hunan Broadcasting' s news brand to mobile terminals, focuses on building the “Hunan Official News and Government Affairs Client” from three aspects: information, live streaming, and short videos. The Malanshan Video Cultural Creative Industrial Park, which builds a full industrial chain cluster centered on digital video content, creativity as the leader, and high-tech support, is creating an internationally competitive, China' s best video base— “China V Valley” —with an industry-leading pattern benchmarked against Zhongguancun.

Hunan Broadcasting' s multi-point, three-dimensional, multi-format, and full-ecology media convergence has laid a solid foundation for achieving a full-group omnimedia communication pattern. In summary, attacking one point while neglecting others is not mainstream; to make the mainstream more mainstream, omnimedia must truly become full-process media, holographic media, full-staff media, and full-effect media.

Since 2013, when convergence planning began, to the initial formation of the pattern in 2019, from initially launching “television into the network” and independently building new media, to “user transition to the network, operations

on the network” during the media convergence process—transforming traditional media audiences into proprietary new media users and releasing communication value—to now demanding traffic from IP and “content is king, guiding the entire network,” Hunan Broadcasting under dual-platform leadership is building its unique omnimedia ecosystem with high positioning, high standards, and high speed by referencing the “four omni” standards, centering on content production core, and creating multi-form, full-terminal, strong-communication mainstream omnimedia products. From nothing to something, from addition to integration, from initiation to in-depth development, Hunan Broadcasting’ s practice in building new mainstream media has been steadfast and accurately predictive, demonstrating boldness and decisiveness.

Some scholars have noted that “a modern communication system centered on mainstream media’ s autonomous and controllable internet communication platforms will become a new platform for governance in the new era.” As a state-owned new mainstream media group, Hunan Broadcasting is laying out its omnimedia ecosystem through forward-looking steps and rigorous, pragmatic style by mastering new algorithms and facing the future. This intelligent media ecosystem will undoubtedly provide powerful content and technical support and broad future prospects for Hunan Broadcasting’ s omnimedia expression. The measures and achievements in building this omnimedia ecosystem demonstrate loyalty to the cause and a high sense of responsibility. Thus, Hunan Broadcasting’ s media convergence development path represents a practical journey of strengthening the “Four Consciousnesses,” firming up the “Four Confidences,” following the “Four Omni” standards, and enhancing the “Four Forces” of news and public opinion. It is a party media development path that uses an advanced omnimedia communication matrix to seize the high ground of public opinion, build consensus, promote mainstream values, disseminate positive energy, and strengthen mainstream propaganda.

When the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee held its 12th collective study session on the omnimedia era and media convergence development, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized: “With the continuous development of omnimedia, full-process media, holographic media, full-staff media, and full-effect media have emerged. Information is everywhere, reaches everything, and is used by everyone, leading to profound changes in the public opinion ecology, media landscape, and communication methods, and posing new challenges to news and public opinion work.” This important statement profoundly reveals the essential connotation of media development, requiring us to adapt to changes, act according to circumstances, and follow trends to accelerate media convergence development. Full-process media means following reports from beginning to end; holographic media means employing advanced and diverse media means for three-dimensional content presentation; full-staff media means audience participation in communication and interaction with equal expression of opinions; full-effect media means precise audience targeting and effective information distribution. The “Four Omni” media standard represents the practical achievement of China’ s media convergence at the current stage and the necessary path for

continuously advancing the media convergence strategy in depth. Following the “Four Omni” standard, Hunan Broadcasting is laying out its omnimedia ecosystem as a new mainstream media through forward-looking steps and rigorous, pragmatic style in comprehensive research of new media communication cases, in the creation of multi-screen content products and development of IP peripherals, in the comprehensive integration of channel networks and model functions, and in the application of mobile internet technology, IoT technology, 4K, 5G, AI, VR, and AR technologies.

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

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