

Research on Digital Transformation of Traditional Media in the Convergence Era

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Abstract: The development of Internet technology and intelligent terminals has promoted the process of media convergence, and has had a huge impact on traditional media. Faced with challenges, traditional media must keep up with the trend of the times, accelerate the digital transformation, and especially pay special attention to its content advantages. This article makes an in-depth analysis of how traditional media can play its content advantages in the process of digital transformation, and gives suggestions for further development.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the rise of new media has brought great impact to traditional media. The number of new media users is huge, and the foundation is getting better and better, which has not only changed the means and channels of public access to news, changed the reading habits and ways of readers, but also constantly eroded the reader market of newspaper media, bringing more and more challenges to traditional media.

In order to meet the rapid development of the times, traditional media are also undergoing a positive transformation, integrating with new media and carrying out digital transformation. In this process, efforts should be made not only to broaden channels and establish technical systems, but also to give up the content advantages of traditional media itself. Only by grasping the essence of “content is king” can traditional media achieve successful transformation and win a place in the era of media integration.

2. Literature Review

In the context of media convergence, many experts and scholars have conducted relevant research on the digital transformation of traditional media. Chugh R and Ruhi U. put forward: “The trend of new media towards integration and experience has become irresistible”. [1] After new digital technologies are widely used in media practice, a mature new media era will truly come. [2-4] Media integration is not simply the exchange and sharing of product content between different media forms [5], but the reengineering of product production process, integrating the organic relationship between different media forms [6], so as to achieve a more comprehensive mining of products [7].

At present, the problem that traditional media need to solve is not to integrate manually, but how to develop and utilize the inherent technical advantages of the Internet, a new integrated media, according to its own characteristics and advantages. [8] Specifically, newspapers should be run like newspapers, return to the elite [9], take the road of “depth”, deeply investigate and present the truth of the event, deeply interpret and explore the cause of the event, and deeply comment on and solve the essence of the event [10]. Broadcasting should be run like broadcast, subdivide the audience, clarify the needs, and “short and smooth” is still the way for radio stations to survive [11]. TV should be run like TV, in addition to news, more entertainment programs should be run that are popular with the masses, and the production of high-quality programs should be further strengthened [12].

Traditional media should use Internet thinking to transform their own media governance concept, and form a new governance concept in the media era, that is, user centered, product and service oriented, content, channel, platform, operation and management integrated, mobile, social and video. [13] At the same time, it is based on big data and cloud computing technology, but only relying on the reform of organizational structure and mechanism system can ensure the success of media integration [14-15].

By studying the development trend of traditional media in the process of media integration, scholars have come to the conclusion that traditional media must give full play to their inherent advantages in content, and at the same time make full use of the dividends brought by technological progress to better promote their own development and successfully complete the transformation under the impact of new media.

3. Digital Transformation of Traditional Media

The digital transformation of traditional media in the process of media integration can be focused on the following three aspects: broadening channels, focusing on content, and establishing systems.

3.1. Broaden Channels

The four traditional media generally refer to newspapers, magazines, radio and television. From the perspective of channels, traditional media has a relatively single communication channel, while new media has a strong channel advantage. Therefore, the first step of traditional media reform is to broaden channels and make full use of digital platforms like new media.

Many paper media are accelerating the development and improvement of their websites, mobile clients, mobile newspapers, WeChat, and microblog official account. For example, the Beijing Times has launched an app called “Jinghua Cloud Photography”, which is aimed at pictures loaded with cloud technology to take photos, and the user will experience relevant videos, pictures and more text reports of the news. In the past, print media always had a congenital defect in pictures and videos. However, transferring it from paper media to digital platforms has made up for this shortcoming, and has greatly improved the convenience of news acquisition and attracted more audiences.

The power on rate of TV sets in China is declining year by year, and the platform for people to watch programs is gradually transferred to the network, which has brought about considerable impact to radio and television enterprises. However, radio and television enterprises are not willing to lag behind and actively seek ways to make TV have the advantage of Internet video. In the process of TV digitalization, Hunan Radio and Television has played a pioneering role, its Mango Internet TV has transformed traditional TV into a new business form that can be watched by mobile phones, computers and televisions. This is the new achievement of Hunan Radio and Television under the impact of Internet video, which makes the traditional Hunan Radio and Television shift to the digital platform of mobile Internet, and provides users with the first test of smart home life solutions.

3.2. Content is the King

“Content is the king” is one of the most important business concepts in the traditional media industry. The cornerstone of media enterprises must and absolutely must be content, and content is everything. Therefore, traditional media have always attached great importance to their own content, especially the original information they provide. With the accumulation of talents, equipment and methods for many years, traditional media has special advantages in content.

Although the rise of new media has squeezed the market of traditional media, a large number of original initial reports still come from traditional media. According to the Digital Consumer Report 2012 by Nielsen, the analysis of millions of blogs and social media sites shows that 80% of the links are American traditional media companies, 67% of the popular news sites in the site content come from traditional media, 13% of the site staff are collection administrators, specializing in collecting news from traditional media. Research from many universities also shows that even the best new media in the United States has limited capacity to produce content and relies on traditional media.

In the early stage of industrial development, channel advantages may be very important, but when an industry matures, the value of content becomes particularly important. The development of new media has indeed broadened the channels, but the demand for content has accordingly increased. In fact, the cost of original information is quite huge, which requires a lot of manpower and material resources. At present, new media can not copy the content production of traditional media, let alone replace traditional media.

3.3. System Establishment

The integration of traditional media and emerging media needs to build a technology system based on big data, cloud computing, multi-platform and multi-channel distribution, which is the most important element of all media integration and media transformation. This requires traditional media to put technology construction and content construction in the same important position.

Traditional media attach importance to content, which is the advantage of traditional media and also a correct direction. However, technology construction is the weakness of all traditional media, far behind the Internet. The trend of Internet development is mobile, social and video. Especially mobile internet, one of the biggest characteristics of mobile internet is its accurate propagation in the scene, which requires cloud computing and big data.

With the continuous development of media convergence, services will play a key role. Either online or offline is a service for customers. To enlarge it, the Internet of things or intelligent media in intelligent society is an inevitable trend. The development trend of intelligent media in the future has been very clear, that is, user data is the core, multiple products are the basis, multiple terminals are the platforms, and in-depth services are the extension. This is the system that needs to be established to integrate media digitalization.

4. How to Strengthen the Content Advantage of Traditional Media

In the process of digital transformation of traditional media, both channel expansion and the establishment of technical system have clear paths, but there is no final conclusion on how to strengthen the content advantage.

Aiming at the problem of how to strengthen the content advantage of traditional media in the process of digital transformation, this article analyzes and summarizes as follows: Firstly, strengthen the depth and breadth of the content to attract audiences. Secondly, keep the original content advantage. Thirdly, win people’s love with authority and credibility.

4.1. Strengthen the Depth and Breadth of Communication Content

In the previous content production mode of traditional media, the concept of “exclusive” and “first” is very important. However, new media broke the monopoly of traditional media with its rapid propagation speed and breadth, making “exclusive news” and “early release” no longer so valuable on the digital platform. Therefore, in terms of timeliness, new media has more advantages than traditional media. As soon as any important news comes out, we can immediately find it on microblog, Twitter or Facebook. But it is precisely because the new media pursues this fast, so it must sacrifice the depth and breadth of content, and the information and content it sends out are more fragmented. This makes people unable to fully understand things, but can simply know that this has happened. If you want to further understand, you still need to let the traditional media to meet people’s needs.

For fast-food reports, the amount of reading is only temporary, and the articles that play a greater influence are those that are deeply excavated. Only deeper and broader works can attract people. Compared with the new media, the accumulation of the traditional media over the years has enabled it to invest considerable time and energy in more adequate interviews and research, so as to make more comprehensive and profound news reports. It can be said that the traditional media has the advantage of backwardness that the new media cannot match in providing “post news” such as investigative news reports and explanatory news reports. What we need is to strengthen this advantage and not compete with new media in the “speed of information” that we are not good at. Rather than compete with the “timeliness” of information in the areas where new media are good at, it is better to make greater efforts in the depth and breadth that new media lacks.

4.2. Keep Content Original

New media rely more on the original content production of traditional media, while it rarely produces original content itself. Therefore, the originality of content is a major content advantage of traditional media. However, it should be noted that the current new media reproduced the opinions, comments and articles of the traditional media on the digital platform at will, and encroached on the market of the traditional media by virtue of its timeliness. For traditional media, it is “the sheep of new media raised by the grass of traditional media”.

In the China’s Regulations on the Protection of the Right of Information Network Communication, the situation that news works of traditional media are reproduced on websites at will has been stipulated, and the content and tort liability of the “right of information network communication” have been clarified. However, it is not enough to have relevant protection. What is more important is that traditional media should have this awareness of copyright protection. They should learn to grasp their own copyright and not allow websites to arbitrarily seize their own labor achievements that cost a lot of human and material resources. In addition, traditional media also have unique news product styles, including processing standards, processing methods, processing means, and ways of expression. The beauty of these styles is difficult for network media to reproduce and reproduce, which also constitutes one of the advantages of traditional media. Only by protecting copyright and encouraging original content, and strengthening the parallel style of news products, can we strengthen the original advantage of such content and compete equally with new media.

4.3. Highlight Authority and Credibility

The rapidity of new media has enabled the development of We Media. Everyone has the right to speak and can freely express their views, which increases the number of false content and useless information. For example, we can often see a lot of false information or libel and biased views about someone or a place on microblog. Even if the law has fully restricted it, rumor and slander have been

repeatedly prohibited on these new media platforms. And people are often faced with the situation that in the face of the information explosion of new media, they do not know what to believe or what to know more deeply. This reflects the content advantages of traditional media.

Traditional media has been in practice for a long time. Both the control mechanism for news quality and the screening mechanism for false information are much better than new media, and the problem of invalid information flooding in new media will not occur. In people's mind, traditional media is undoubtedly more authoritative. When encountering major events, people will certainly choose more authoritative traditional media rather than new media that are prone to mistakes to obtain knowledge and information. Moreover, the purpose of online We Media is only to express their own views, even if this view is biased and extreme, negative energy may even have a negative impact on society. The positioning of traditional media is to establish mainstream values, which is more responsible for the whole society. If traditional media can insist on their own fairness, accuracy and authority in information, then it is obvious that they can gain advantages in content competition with new media.

5. Conclusions and Outlook

Compared with new media, traditional media has obvious content advantages, such as depth, breadth, originality, accuracy and credibility of content. In the era of media integration, after the digital transformation of traditional media, it can also achieve faster communication speed, wider communication range and higher click rate.

(1) Work summary

In view of the digital transformation of traditional media under the background of media convergence, this paper first summarized the relevant literature, and combined with the actual background of media convergence, reached the conclusion that traditional media must give play to its inherent advantages in content, and at the same time make full use of the dividends brought by technological advances to achieve a successful transformation.

Then, it puts forward three key directions for the specific implementation of digital transformation. Finally, if traditional media want to continue to compete with new media in the future, they must maintain their core competitiveness in content, strengthen their original content advantages, and give relevant suggestions.

(2) Outlook for future work

In the era of media convergence, traditional media embracing new technologies and new ideas is the key to maintain its vigorous development. At the same time, there are many areas worthy of research in consolidating the content advantage. For example, the content authority of traditional media is challenged by new media, and its timeliness is weaker than that of new media. How to use technology to overcome these weaknesses and make traditional media glow with new vitality requires further research.

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