

Research on the Characteristics and Communication Strategies of Microdocumentaries in Short Video Background

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Abstract: With the rise of the Internet and new media, the production of media cultural content has entered the era of short videos; Fast paced and fragmented short videos have stronger dissemination effectiveness and are more likely to be favored by fans. In this context, the problems of small audience size, low marketization level, and lack of innovation in content and form of traditional documentaries are becoming increasingly prominent. This paper analyzes the current development status and problems of traditional documentaries, explores the diverse user production content and expression methods presented by micro documentaries, and proposes specific communication strategies such as vertical content segmentation, meeting user needs, and utilizing the advantages of new media. The purpose is to provide guidance for the dissemination and practice of micro documentaries, which not only enriches academic achievements in related fields, but also has certain practical significance.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of short videos has provided a new direction for the creation of micro documentaries. Combining the current entertainment methods and viewing characteristics of people, micro documentaries have emerged in a new form of short and concise content in front of the public. Compared to traditional documentaries, their production and dissemination methods have undergone innovative changes, demonstrating extremely strong communication power. Microdocumentaries not only carry cultural content and humanistic care, but also have good promotion benefits and commercial value, and have a vast development space.

2. The Development Status and Problems of Traditional Documentaries

2.1. Small Audience Size and Low Degree of Marketization

Traditional documentaries have a long production cycle, strong knowledge and professionalism, and generally do not have fluctuating storylines. In addition, documentaries place too much emphasis on viewpoint output and neglect deep connection with the audience, resulting in a relatively small audience size and a relatively small share in the film and television market. The audience consumption frequency is relatively low. In addition, traditional documentaries often value

public welfare and artistry, and their commercial attributes are far inferior to other types of films. The degree of marketization is low, which is also one of the reasons for their weak dissemination power.

2.2. Lack of Innovation in Documentary Content and Format

Traditional documentaries have a slow narrative pace, lack of undulating plots, and a longer interpretation time, which is already incompatible with the reading habits and lifestyles of people in today's society. They cannot meet the audience's viewing needs, and lack changes and breakthroughs in content and form, leading to the phenomenon of homogenization of works to some extent. For example, the documentary *A Bite of China* was once extremely popular, driving the number of food documentaries to skyrocket like mushrooms after rain. The frequent and repetitive appearance of similar films inevitably led to aesthetic fatigue among the audience. Nowadays, advanced technologies such as virtual reality, 4D, and big data are widely used in short video creation, and various commercial films present high-end audio-visual effects to the audience with realistic special effects and stunning scenes. Traditional documentaries should draw experience from it and promote innovation in their content and form.

3. Characteristics of Microdocumentaries in Short Video Background

3.1. UGC Model

In the context of short videos, the production cost and threshold of micro documentaries are relatively low. The filming and post production of micro documentaries in non professional fields have a tendency towards personalization and flexibility. Self media creators can even use a mobile phone to complete the entire process of writing micro documentary scripts, capturing images, post production, and publishing videos. This type of creator often maintains high-frequency interaction with the audience, and often considers the audience's wishes in selecting topics, content, and emotional expression of micro documentaries. It can be seen that in the era of the Internet and new media, audiences are no longer passively accepting information transmission. Instead, they can actively screen information and provide feedback through various platforms such as forwarding, commenting, interacting, and rewarding. Their position in information dissemination is becoming increasingly high, and their emotional demands have also been highly valued by the micro documentary market. Currently, not only are self media creations catering to audience tastes, but professional micro documentary production teams are also exploring the "UGC" model, which is a user generated content creation model, committed to enhancing audience participation and promoting multi-level communication. For example, the foreign documentary *Life in A Day* was created by renowned directors Ridley Scott and Tony Scott on YouTube, the world's largest video sharing website, inviting netizens from all over the world to shoot and record their daily lives on July 24, 2010. Eventually, it received nearly 4,500 hours of videos from over 190 countries and regions, which were conceived and processed by a professional production team. These materials have been combined to create a highly entertaining and influential classic documentary. [1]

3.2. Diversified Expression Methods

The textual expression and visual presentation of micro documentaries are more in line with the narrative environment of new media and the narrative structure of short videos. This is an innovative change in documentary creation strategy and approach, mainly reflected in the following aspects. Firstly, micro documentaries have opened up a wider field of communication through the

use of short video editing techniques and operational techniques. For example, cutting and publishing key paragraphs that have impact and infectivity in the complete film separately on the platform is a common short video editing technique. Although it cannot replace the complete documentary, it caters to the preferences of the audience on the short video platform, arousing a sense of expectation from the audience, thereby increasing the viewing volume and ratings of the documentary; Secondly, some micro documentaries have innovatively introduced live streaming mode. For example, in the second season of *The Great Shokunin*, the production unit collaborated with the Youku video platform to interview documentary characters in the Youku live broadcast room, and broadcasted the filming process to the public, showcasing the protagonist's life state and the work situation of the shooting team. At the same time, the social function of the live broadcast platform was also used to interact with the audience in real-time, effectively mobilizing the audience's sense of participation and enthusiasm. Although the limited influence of Youku's live streaming room, low user activity, time-consuming and labor-intensive live streaming shooting, and insufficient team live streaming experience have not caused a huge response to the performance of this direct recording mixed documentary, it is undeniable that this is an innovative attempt, worthy of experience summary and in-depth research. [2]

3.3. Wide Communication Channels

Firstly, the phenomenon of cross media dissemination of micro documentaries is widespread, and short video new media platforms have become the main channel and battlefield for the dissemination of micro documentaries. Micro documentaries can be presented to audiences in various forms of dissemination on different platforms simultaneously. For example, text narration is carried out through webcast, variety shows, Tiktok videos, WeChat official account and other channels, while micro culture forms such as microblog, WeChat, and WeChat videos are used to meet people's demand for fragmented reading. The trend of information content appearing in the form of short videos has brought convenience to people's fast-paced lives, and also brought new opportunities for the dissemination speed and effectiveness of micro documentaries. Secondly, in the context of media integration, the dissemination of micro documentaries tends to exhibit a trend of online and platform cooperation and interaction. At present, in addition to the mainstream TV platform headed by CCTV, the mainstream film and television websites represented by Youku, iQiyi, and Tencent, the main communication subjects of micro documentaries also include the We Media platform represented by "Tiktok, Kwai" and the vast number of UGC users. The latter has played a positive role in promoting the production and dissemination of micro documentaries, and has begun to feed back the TV media by building an all media matrix communication network. The dissemination effectiveness of micro documentaries can be greatly improved. [3]

4. The Communication Strategy of Microdocumentaries in the Context of Short Video

4.1. To Pay Attention to Vertical Segmentation of Information Needs in Terms of Content

In the context of short videos, the vertical segmentation of micro documentary content is conducive to meeting the diverse and personalized needs of users of different age groups, and can also increase the stickiness of platform audiences and fans. It plays an important role in improving video playback and influence. Therefore, market segmentation should be carried out for the content of micro documentaries. For example, the "Bilibili" bullet screen video website is mainly composed of users aged 18-35, and the proportion of those with a bachelor's degree or above is about 10 percentage points higher than the average of the entire network. The audience of micro documentaries on "Bilibili" is mostly well-educated, and they tend to choose videos with strong

knowledge, professionalism, and innovation in content selection. Users have a high acceptance of high-quality long videos with longer duration and in-depth explanations, and the platform atmosphere shows a young, enthusiastic, and positive trend. Therefore, the creation content of the "B Station" micro documentary should first ensure quality, pay attention to details, and broaden the depth and breadth of the film content; In terms of theme selection, it is necessary to be close to the daily lives of young students and "office workers" and the social hot topics they are concerned about. It is best to start from a small story, be good at exploring the materials around you, focus on the lives of ordinary people, and through artistic processing, resonate with young people today. [4]

4.2. Formally, To Meet the Fragmented Reading Needs of the Audience

Firstly, the duration of micro documentaries in the context of short videos should be adapted to the fragmented reading characteristics of the audience. In modern society, the pace of life for most people is fast and stressful, and fast food culture is particularly prevalent among young people. People can start or end watching videos at anytime, anywhere. Therefore, a micro documentary with strong dissemination power should absorb the advantages of short videos being short and concise, committed to attracting audiences in a short period of time, clarifying the theme directly, and allowing users to obtain substantive information in the shortest possible time; Secondly, the content presentation of micro videos in the context of short videos should meet the fragmented reading needs of the audience. In order to improve the dissemination efficiency of micro documentaries, innovation is needed in the presentation of content. By utilizing the high frequency of switching short video shots, aerial shots, delayed cameras, and mobile shots can bring a strong visual impact to the audience, eliminating the use of fixed templates and routines in the presentation of video operations and transitions, making the connection between shots and content more free; Finally, the narrative logic of micro documentaries in the context of short videos should also meet the fragmented reading needs of the audience. Taking the well-known domestic micro documentary publishing platform "Ergeng Video Platform" website as an example, most excellent micro documentaries on the "Ergeng" website have a unified narrative structure and logic, which can be summarized into three parts: telling stories, analyzing emotions, and sublimating themes. Clarifying the narrative logic and simplifying the narrative structure can make the theme of micro documentaries more prominent, and the narratives of characters, emotions, things, and principles clearer. This not only facilitates the creation of micro documentaries, but also brings a smooth viewing experience to the audience. [5]

4.3. To Utilize the Advantages of New Media Platforms for Dissemination

The arrival of the Internet and new media era has changed people's viewing methods and habits. Compared to traditional fixed screens such as televisions and cinemas, people prefer mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. Therefore, in the context of short videos, micro documentaries should actively open up diversified communication channels, utilize the advantages of new media that are not limited by time and space, and have strong interactivity, to build emotional communication bridges and broader interactive spaces between micro documentary works and audiences. For example, the micro documentary *Every Treasure Tells a Story* utilizes new media and major social media platforms for promotion, opens an official account on Tiktok, and launches a themed activity "To Give Me Five Minutes, Showcase a New National Treasure, and Greet the World". It encourages audiences and fans to release "secondary creation" video works under the terms of this activity, which has been widely praised, and has obvious dissemination effectiveness.

5. Conclusion

Since 2016, short videos have shown a rapid development trend, attracting countless viewers with various types of short videos. At the same time, micro documentaries that share similarities with short videos have also ushered in a development trend. Faced with complex and fierce market competition, opportunities and challenges coexist. In this context, how to improve the dissemination effectiveness of micro documentaries has become an urgent industry challenge that needs to be addressed. This paper proposes that only by firmly grasping the audience's psychology, adapting to the media communication environment, following the trend of the times, continuously innovating and summarizing experiences, can the dissemination of micro documentaries explore an effective and sustainable path for travel.

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