

# *The Dissemination Characteristics and Impact of Short Videos in the New Media Era*

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**Abstract:** Against the backdrop of rapid changes in the new media environment, short videos, as an emerging form of communication, have brought significant changes to information dissemination through their unique integration of visual and auditory features, innovative storytelling methods, and widespread user-generated content participation. Short videos have not only promoted the diversity of cultural communication and the formation of social opinions, but have also reshaped traditional marketing models in the economic field, promoting the commercial value of individuals and businesses. However, the impact of short videos is not entirely positive. Their influence on individual psychology and behavior is increasingly attracting attention, especially the cognitive decline, social anxiety, and health risks faced by adolescents in short video consumption, which urgently need to be addressed. Therefore, this study aims to explore in depth the dissemination characteristics of short videos and their comprehensive impact on socio-culture, economy, and individual psychology, providing theoretical support for research and practice in related fields. At the same time, it proposes suggestions such as strengthening content review, encouraging creative diversity, and emphasizing mental health education, with a view to promoting the healthy development of short videos and creating favorable conditions for cultural inheritance and economic growth.

## **1. Introduction**

In this new era of rapid advancement in new media technologies, short-form video, as a novel form of information dissemination, has profoundly reshaped how people communicate and access information [1]. With the proliferation of mobile internet and the widespread use of smartphones, short-form video has rapidly gained favor with a vast user base due to its intuitive content, interactivity, and ease of dissemination. According to statistics, the number of short-form video users has surpassed one billion, becoming a new hallmark of social media interaction and demonstrating significant market potential and social influence [2].

This study aims to comprehensively explore the characteristics and impact of short-form video dissemination in the new media age, encompassing various dimensions such as socio-culture, economics, and individual psychology and behavior. Firstly, short-form video, with its unique visual and auditory appeal, exhibits a marked fragmented nature in information delivery, prompting users to absorb large amounts of information in a short period. Simultaneously, due to the innovation and

diversity of its content, short-form video excels in enhancing user engagement and dissemination efficiency. Secondly, the impact of short-form video on socio-culture is increasingly significant. User-generated content (UGC) promotes the formation of public opinion, and short-form video platforms have become a new medium for cultural dissemination. Furthermore, the rise of short-form video as a marketing tool has reshaped traditional business models, providing new development paths for brand marketing. However, the widespread adoption of short-form video has also triggered psychological issues such as addiction, information overload, and social identity anxiety, sparking widespread social discussion.

Therefore, an in-depth analysis of the dissemination characteristics and impact of short-form video not only provides theoretical support for academic research in related fields but also offers important references for corporate marketing strategies and social policy formulation. Through a systematic study of this phenomenon, we hope to reveal the social changes and challenges brought about by short-form video in the new media era, thereby promoting a more comprehensive understanding of the value of short-form video among academics and industry professionals.

## **2. The Concept and Development Status of Short Videos in the New Media Environment**

### **2.1 Definition of Short Videos**

Short videos refer to video content with a relatively short duration, typically ranging from a few seconds to a few minutes. Their unique length and presentation style give short videos distinct advantages in information dissemination. Compared to traditional videos, short videos can convey core information in a shorter amount of time, adapting to the demands of modern, fast-paced lifestyles[3]. Short videos encompass various types of content, such as entertainment, education, news, and lifestyle, and are widely enjoyed by users due to their striking visual impact and narrative style. This concise-yet-comprehensive characteristic gives short videos a stronger appeal in the competition for user attention.

### **2.2 New Media Technology Background**

The formation and development of the new media environment is the foundation for the rise of short videos. The rapid development of mobile internet and social media has propelled the production and consumption of short video content. High-speed, high-bandwidth network environments enable short videos to be uploaded, downloaded, and shared conveniently and quickly, significantly lowering the barrier to entry for user creation. Simultaneously, the prevalence of advanced camera technology, editing software, and special effects tools allows ordinary users to easily produce high-quality short video content. Furthermore, the algorithmic recommendation mechanisms of social media platforms provide strong support for the promotion of short video content, enabling high-quality content to quickly attract user attention and generate widespread dissemination.

### **2.3 The Rise of Short Video Platforms**

With the booming demand for short video content, multiple short video platforms have emerged. Platforms represented by TikTok, Kuaishou, and YouTube Shorts not only provide users with a wide range of content choices but also create an environment for interaction and exchange. These platforms establish community effects through user likes, comments, and shares, attracting a large number of users to participate. At the same time, each platform continuously innovates functions and algorithms to enhance user stickiness and activity. For example, TikTok utilizes short, frequent

scrolling to encourage users to consume information quickly, creating an "immersive" viewing experience.

The rise of short video platforms has also promoted the professionalization and commercialization of content creators. Self-media and KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders) have leveraged short video platforms to expand their personal brands and influence, giving rise to a group of successful short video creators. These creators not only produce diverse content but also explore various monetization models, such as brand collaborations, tips, and advertising revenue, realizing the commercialization of content creation. At the same time, short videos have also become a new marketing tool for brands and enterprises. Many companies use short videos for brand promotion, product display, and user interaction, enhancing their market competitiveness.

### **3. Characteristics of Short Video Dissemination**

#### **3.1 Integration of Visual and Auditory Elements**

Short videos possess a unique integration of visual and auditory features, enabling them to effectively convey information through images, sounds, and dynamic effects within a short period. This combination of multi-sensory stimuli enhances the appeal and persuasiveness of short videos in information dissemination. The visual presentation, through vibrant colors, rich imagery, and creative editing, quickly captures the viewer's attention, encouraging continued viewing. Simultaneously, short videos can leverage auditory elements such as music, narration, and sound effects to further amplify emotional resonance. By skillfully combining visual and auditory elements, short videos achieve a qualitative leap in the effectiveness and entertainment value of information delivery[4].

This dissemination characteristic makes short videos more likely to evoke emotional resonance and engagement from viewers. On social media platforms, users are not merely recipients of video content but also active participants. Short videos, by providing interactive features such as commenting, liking, and sharing, allow viewers' emotional feedback to be reflected in a short timeframe, thereby promoting interaction and dissemination among users. This two-way interaction not only enhances the user's viewing experience but also strengthens the effectiveness of short video dissemination. When users share short videos they enjoy, they are, in effect, sharing personal emotional expressions and social perspectives, forming an extensive social network.

#### **3.2 Innovation in Narrative Approach**

The narrative approach of short videos exhibits significant innovation compared to traditional long-form videos. Short videos typically employ a non-linear narrative structure, breaking the temporal sequence of traditional storytelling through rapid editing and jump cuts. The rapid switching of information within a short timeframe allows viewers to quickly grasp the main points of the content, improving information reception efficiency. This structural innovation caters to the fragmented demands of modern viewers, making the content more aligned with contemporary lifestyles. Furthermore, short videos often adopt a storytelling style, enhancing viewer engagement through plot development and character establishment. Conveying information through vivid and engaging stories in a short period can more effectively stimulate users' emotional responses. This narrative model is not only suitable for entertainment content but also widely applicable to education and public awareness campaigns. Through the power of storytelling and emotional drive, short videos can profoundly reveal social issues or convey brand messages, thereby sparking viewer reflection and discussion[5].

### 3.3 User-Generated Content (UGC)

User-generated content (UGC) is another major characteristic of short video dissemination. This model provides ordinary users with the opportunity to create and share content. Unlike the one-way communication model of traditional media, short video platforms encourage user participation in content creation, forming a vast creative ecosystem. Users can not only be the consumers of content but also transform into content producers. This role transformation greatly enriches the content types and forms of expression in short videos.

The rise of UGC acts as a catalyst in the dissemination of short videos. Through individual perspectives and innovative expressions, users provide diversified content, forming strong personalized characteristics. This diversity not only enhances the attractiveness of short video platforms but also satisfies the audience's desire for novelty and personalized content. In this environment, any user has the potential to gain attention and recognition through creation, thereby stimulating more creative inspiration and forming a positive content production cycle.

However, UGC also brings issues such as uneven content quality and copyright. In the open environment of short video platforms, balancing content quality with creative freedom is a significant challenge. Platforms need to establish effective content review mechanisms to guide users to create high-quality short videos and improve overall dissemination effectiveness.

### 3.4 Fragmented Nature of Short Videos

Short videos exhibit a distinct fragmented nature, reflected in the rapid transmission of information and the fleeting attention spans of users. In the age of information overload, users' attention is increasingly scattered. Short videos address this challenge through their concise content format. Each short video typically ranges from 15 seconds to 3 minutes. This time setting allows users to acquire information in a short period, maximizing viewing efficiency. The media characteristics of short videos align with users' consumption habits, greatly enhancing the convenience of viewing and dissemination.

This fragmented nature also influences users' information processing methods. Viewers are accustomed to quickly receiving information in a short amount of time, and this habit, in turn, shapes the content production model of short videos. When creating short videos, creators pay more attention to the directness and impact of information, striving to convey the most important messages in the shortest amount of time. While this content format meets the needs of modern audiences, it also leads to the problem of superficial information consumption, resulting in a lack of in-depth thinking and sustained attention.

## 4. Impact Studies of Short Videos

### 4.1 Impact on Sociocultural Aspects

The impact of short videos on sociocultural aspects is multifaceted, manifested in the transformation of cultural communication patterns and the formation of social opinions. From the perspective of cultural communication, the immediacy and broad reach of short videos enable various cultural phenomena to be disseminated at a faster rate and on a larger scale. Elements of traditional culture have gained new vitality through short videos, and many local snacks, folk arts, and traditional festivals have become more widely known and disseminated. Take Chinese "New Year Flavor" short videos as an example. During the Spring Festival, many users shared local Spring Festival customs, delicacies, and celebrations through short videos. These contents vividly showcased the diversity of Chinese culture, prompting many young people to inherit and spread

traditional culture in their lives, and this sense of cultural identity has been reborn in the Internet era. In a short period, the widespread dissemination of such short videos has stimulated the younger generation's interest and emphasis on traditional culture, promoting broader cultural exchange[6].

Short videos also play an important role in promoting social opinions. Especially in major social events, short videos often become the primary medium for information dissemination. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in 2020, a large amount of information and personal stories about epidemic prevention and control emerged on short video platforms worldwide. This content not only provided timely information updates but also brought people closer together. Users shared their own epidemic prevention experiences, home life, and psychological states, creating an atmosphere of "fighting the epidemic together." In this way, short videos played an important role in enhancing the public's sense of social responsibility and solidarity.

However, the sociocultural impact of short videos is also accompanied by some negative effects, such as cyberbullying and the spread of misinformation, which have aroused widespread concern. On short video platforms, user comments and feedback are often public. Some users may be subjected to malicious comments or even personal attacks due to different opinions, which affects the harmonious atmosphere of the community. In the process of rapid information dissemination, low-quality videos and misinformation may also be rapidly spread, bringing misleading effects to society. These issues remind us that while enjoying the convenience brought by short videos, we also need to strengthen the review of content quality and the necessity of platform supervision.

## 4.2 Economic Impact

Short videos are not only a crucial tool for cultural dissemination but also profoundly impact economic structures due to their immense commercial potential. They propel the development of the digital economy, particularly in the e-commerce sector, where short videos have become a significant marketing method. Brands and businesses utilize short videos for product promotion, enabling them to showcase product features more intuitively and enhance consumers' purchasing desire through personal stories and emotional appeals. For example, an e-commerce brand launched a challenge event on TikTok themed "XX Changes Lives," inviting users to share their genuine experiences after using the brand's products. This highly interactive short video marketing strategy attracted considerable user participation, creating a self-propagating effect. The new content generated by users during their participation further attracted other viewers, allowing the brand to gain widespread exposure and influence in a very short time.

The business model of short video platforms themselves is also rapidly evolving, with paid subscriptions, advertising revenue, and diversified business collaborations with brands gradually becoming their primary sources of profit. Take TikTok as an example; by providing precise advertising placement for brands, the platform effectively connects user data with advertisers, successfully monetizing traffic. This demonstrates that short videos not only provide users with a platform for showcasing content but also offer businesses new commercial opportunities, promoting the rise of the entire digital economy.

Accompanying the development of the short video economy model, related industrial chains are also continuously improving. For instance, the professionalization and vocationalization of short video production are gradually emerging, with many individual creators transitioning into professional short video streamers, becoming a vital force in product sales. This change not only promotes the development of the individual economy but also lays the foundation for the large-scale development of the short video industry. Emerging creative teams and short video production companies are springing up like mushrooms after rain, driving the professional level of content creation and market diversity. However, the development of the short video economy also faces



numerous challenges. Content homogenization and intensified competition require brands and creators to constantly innovate to maintain user attention. Simultaneously, the phenomena of addiction and immersion in short videos have sparked reflection on the relationship between producers and consumers. How to protect users' well-being while promoting economic development has become a focal point of social discussion[7].

### 4.3 Impact on Individual Psychology and Behavior

Research on the impact of short-form videos on individual psychology and behavior has gradually garnered attention from the academic community. The rapid consumption and intense impact of short-form videos lead to users' attention spans becoming fragmented and their information processing abilities diminishing, thereby affecting their capacity for in-depth thinking and reflection. Prolonged immersion in the fast-paced content of short-form videos may result in attention deficits and cognitive fatigue for users, impacting their efficiency in learning and work.

For adolescents, the influence of short-form videos is particularly pronounced. Many young users are exposed to a large quantity of short-form video content within a short period, developing a form of dependency, and their social interactions are gradually shifting towards more virtualized communication. While the social networks generated around short-form videos help them gain identity and a sense of belonging, they can also lead to increased feelings of loneliness and social anxiety. The academic performance, social aptitude, and time management abilities of some adolescents have been negatively affected by short-form video consumption habits, resulting in poorer grades and inadequate time management skills. The impact of short-form videos on the physical and mental health of young people should not be underestimated. Excessive viewing of short-form videos can lead to health problems such as vision impairment and obesity; fatigue and anxiety are also becoming increasingly apparent in short-form video viewing. Some users may even develop social anxiety as a result, feeling insecure and depressed due to comparisons with others. The exaggerated portrayal of an ideal life may cause young people to form unrealistic values and distort their perceptions of reality. Short-form video platforms need to place greater emphasis on disseminating positive energy in their content creation and guiding users' mental well-being.

The impact of short-form videos on individual psychology has been confirmed in numerous studies. A typical example is the "challenge videos" on TikTok, which often require users to participate in specific challenges, enhancing users' sense of social participation on the one hand, but potentially leading to higher psychological stress on the other. For example, some dance challenges, despite attracting a large number of participants, may trigger social anxiety and a decline in self-esteem for users who fail to keep up with the trend or perform poorly. Research shows that these types of videos often reinforce young people's external validation, leading them to link their self-worth to their online performance, creating a continuous psychological burden.

Furthermore, the content characteristics of short-form videos can also lead to internet addiction. Data indicates that users who are addicted to short-form videos have poorer time management skills and greater psychological stress in their daily lives and studies. This phenomenon is particularly evident in adolescents, for example, teenagers neglect their studies and social activities due to prolonged viewing of content, further exacerbating difficulties in interpersonal communication. In the United States, local schools are also beginning to pay attention to this phenomenon, actively promoting "digital literacy courses" to help students establish healthy short-form video consumption habits, with the aim of alleviating the psychological distress caused by short-form videos. These cases illustrate that while enjoying the convenience and enjoyment brought by short-form videos, users themselves also need to pay attention to their own mental health, prompting society to pay attention to the regulation and education of the impact of short-form

videos.

## 5. Conclusion

As an important form of communication in the new media environment, short videos have had a profound impact on social culture, economic development, and individual psychological behavior. Its unique communication characteristics, such as the integration of visual and auditory elements, innovative narrative methods, broad participation of user-generated content, and fragmented information transmission, provide new opportunities for content dissemination. At the socio-cultural level, short videos have contributed to the dissemination of traditional culture and the formation of social opinion, but have also triggered challenges such as cyber violence and the spread of misinformation. At the economic level, short videos have supported the rise of new marketing models, promoting the maximization of commercial value for individuals and businesses. However, its impact on individual psychology is complex; the rapid consumption of short videos may affect attention and cognitive abilities, especially among adolescents, which requires special attention. Based on the above research results, the following recommendations are proposed for the future development of short videos: platforms should strengthen content review, maintain a healthy communication environment, and curb the spread of low-quality content and false information; creators should focus on content innovation and diversity to enhance the user viewing experience; at the same time, educators and parents should pay attention to the psychological health education of adolescents in short video consumption, helping them to reasonably arrange viewing time and avoid addictive behavior. These measures will create conditions for the healthy development of short videos, while also supporting the inheritance of social culture and sustainable economic development.

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