

The Impact of the Evolution and Integration of Traditional Media and New Media on Communication and Society

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Abstract: At present, media is the main channel for disseminating information. With the development of the Internet, new media has gained more and more popularity among the public. Compared with traditional media, new media has different advantages in communication channels and carriers, content production, communication effect, commercial effect and social culture. This study explores the transition from traditional media to new media, examining the motivations behind their development and analyzing their social impact and technological integration. It highlights the significant differences between the two, noting that traditional media is characterized by authoritative content and limited audience interaction, while new media is defined by diverse, flexible content and high levels of audience participation. The integration of both media forms has led to the creation of new business models, improving communication efficiency and market competitiveness. However, the study also acknowledges several limitations, such as regional and socioeconomic disparities in media accessibility, and suggests that future research should explore how the convergence of these media affects these issues.

Keywords: Traditional media, New media, Technological integration, Media convergence, Communication evolution

1. Introduction

Traditional media (such as newspapers, radio and television) have long been responsible for disseminating information, providing educational resources and entertainment content, but their dissemination capabilities are limited by time and space [1]. Multimedia technology began to rise in the 1980s and 1990s with the advancement of computer technology [2]. In particular, the popularization of personal computers, the development of graphical user interfaces, and the improvement of storage and processing capabilities have laid the foundation for the widespread application of multimedia technology [2]. Multimedia technology has broken through the limitations of traditional media to a certain extent by organically integrating sound, images and animation, providing people with a richer content experience. However, with the rapid development of digitalization and network technology, new media has built interactive and comprehensive platforms for people, such as online media, mobile media and mobile Internet. These technologies have not only expanded the timeliness and coverage of communication, but also completely reshaped the way of information acquisition and interpersonal communication, making it more efficient and personalized [3]. This study will investigate the evolution from traditional media to new media, study

the motivations behind their development, and use comparative research analysis methods to explore the social impact and technological integration between traditional media and new media.

2. Contrasting Media in Production, Transmission, and Business Models

2.1. Contrasting Media Transmission Modes

Traditional media has three main types of traditional media: paper media, radio media and outdoor media. In contrast, the main communication channels of new media rely on Internet communication, which will spread more widely and in a more convenient way than traditional media [2]. There are some limitations in the communication characteristics of traditional media, which are mainly reflected in their dependence on physical distribution and radio signals and the fixed nature of channels. Newspapers and magazines, as traditional paper media, are highly dependent on physical distribution networks. Newspapers need to be printed in bulk by the printing plant, and then distributed by the publisher to the hands of newspaper kiosks, bookstores and subscribers around the country.

This process involves intricate logistics and multiple distribution steps, which lead to high costs and vulnerabilities to external factors like transportation delays and weather. These challenges reduce the efficiency and timeliness of delivery, making coverage in remote areas difficult to ensure. Similarly, magazines rely on a well-established distribution system for accurate delivery to specific audience groups, which can also be affected by these logistical constraints [2]. If issues arise in the distribution process, such as publication delays or lower-than-expected circulation, they can directly impact both the timeliness and the reach of the information being disseminated. Moreover, the distribution scope of paper media is basically limited to the region that can be reached by its distribution network. It is difficult to break through the limitation of geographical space to achieve global instant communication. Radio media, such as radio and television, rely on specific radio signal transmission technologies and supporting infrastructure. Radio stations transmit waves through transmitter towers, but the coverage is limited and prone to interference from obstacles like terrain, buildings, and signal attenuation. These barriers can cause poor reception or signal loss in certain areas, making it difficult for listeners in weak-signal zones to hear programs clearly, ultimately diminishing transmission quality. Although TV stations can expand their coverage through satellite transmission and other means, they are also limited by signal transmission technology and receiving equipment, and users need to be equipped with special TV signal receiving devices. In some remote mountainous areas or areas not covered by signals, the audience cannot normally watch TV programs, and the broadcast time of TV programs is fixed. The audience can only choose limited program content in a specific time period and a specific channel, and lacks the flexibility of independent selection. The fixed nature of such channels greatly limits the convenience and freedom of information transmission [4].

In contrast, with the support of the Internet, new media content can be shared both synchronously and asynchronously across diverse platforms. These include social media platforms (e.g., WeChat, Instagram, TikTok), news aggregation platforms (e.g., BBC), video-sharing platforms (e.g., Tencent Video, YouTube), and specialized websites or apps. This means that once a piece of information, an article, a video and other content is generated, it can be rapidly spread through these diversified platforms. This approach overcomes the limitations of traditional media, which relies on a single distribution channel. By enabling the diversification and integration of communication channels, new media ensures that users across different platforms can access the same content. This significantly broadens the reach and impact of content dissemination.

2.2. Different models of content production

There are key differences between traditional media and new media in content production mode. Traditional media is produced by professional organizations with clear organizational structures and a clear division of labor among employees. The production process involves multiple complex links such as topic selection, planning, interviewing, editing, review, and publishing, which takes a long time, but can guarantee the authority and quality of the content [2]. However, the content form is subject to the media, and the presentation form is relatively simple and unified. Traditional media emphasizes an objective and serious tone, and the content is often linked to the publishing or broadcasting cycle, so the production cycle is long.

Conversely, the production bodies of new media are highly diversified. For instance, in addition to professional institutions, independent content creators and everyday users also participate widely, showing the characteristics of decentralization. Moreover, the production process is simple and flexible, often omit part of the link, high efficiency but different quality. In terms of content, the form of content integrates various elements, rich and diverse. Additionally, the style is personalized and colloquial, placing a strong emphasis on interaction with the audience. Furthermore, its update speed is fast, it can be adjusted according to the hot spot immediately, and the production cycle is short. Ultimately, the two have their own advantages and play a role in different scenarios and audience needs, and the current trend of media convergence also encourages them to learn from each other and develop together to better adapt to the new requirements of information dissemination.

2.3. The difference in communication effect

There are also differences between traditional media and new media in the effect of communication. Using McDonald's as an example, traditional media like TV advertising, with its broad reach and strong credibility, can effectively communicate McDonald's brand image and new product information to a wide audience, fostering consistent and large-scale brand recognition. McDonald's classic advertisements are broadcast in prime time, attracting a large number of family audiences. So that they can leave an impression on McDonald's products and happy atmosphere, and promote consumption in the store [5]. However, this mode of communication lacks accuracy and interaction, and the audience is in a passive state of receiving information, and it is difficult to give immediate feedback.

New media operates in a markedly different way. For instance, through social media platforms like Weibo, WeChat, and TikTok, McDonald's shares creative short videos, interactive topics, and online promotional activities to precisely target audiences such as young people and parent-child families. This approach encourages active user participation and sharing, generating a strong word-of-mouth communication effect. In 2023, the topic of "McDonald's forever" was set off on Douyin to attract a large number of young users to participate in and spread, and the scope of dissemination rapidly expanded. At the same time, new media channels such as online ordering and takeout platforms establish direct contact with consumers, realize personalized recommendation based on consumer data, and enhance consumer stickiness and consumption frequency [6]. Moreover, consumers' evaluation and feedback on the platform can also be seen by other users, further influencing brand image and potential consumers' decision-making. New media make McDonald's more accurate, interactive and efficient in communication, and improve the communication effect and brand influence in an all-round way.

2.4. Different business models

There are obvious differences between traditional media and new media business models. Traditional media business models, such as The Times, are relatively simple, and they relied mainly on newspaper

circulation and advertising revenue. It invests a lot of money in the construction of the editorial team, printing equipment and distribution network, and maintains its operation by selling newspapers and advertising space. Circulation revenue is limited by circulation, and advertising business is also more traditional, mainly attracting advertisers based on layout and circulation.

The new media business model is more diversified and flexible. Take YouTube as an example, its advertising profit model is rich and diverse, including pre-roll advertising, pause advertising, and information flow advertising, among others [7]. Additionally, YouTube launched its Premium membership service, which offers users the privilege of ad-free viewing and offline playback, attracting a significant number of subscribers willing to pay for these benefits. In terms of content creation, through cooperation with creators, creators are divided according to the amount of video playback, encouraging quality content output, and using platform big data to match creators and brand owners, carry out precision marketing cooperation, and further expand profit channels. Its cost is mainly in the aspects of technology research and development and platform operation. With the increase of users, the marginal cost gradually decreases, and the scale effect is significant. Such innovation and flexibility make its advantages prominent in the media market competition, and promote the reform and development of the industry.

2.5. The influence of traditional media and new media on social culture

Traditional media and new media have many influences on culture. In terms of the scope and speed of communication, traditional media such as books, newspapers and periodicals, television broadcasting, often operate at a slower pace with a more limited reach. In contrast, new media, powered by the internet, enables instantaneous, global dissemination of information. This rapid spread allows minority cultures to gain visibility and reach broader audiences, fostering cultural exchange and diversity on a global scale. In terms of cultural inheritance and innovation, traditional media is an important carrier of cultural inheritance, but the pace of innovation is slow, while new media stimulates the enthusiasm of the people to create, promotes continuous cultural innovation in many aspects, and also gives new vitality to traditional culture.

From the perspective of cultural consumption and audience participation, traditional media cultural consumption is one-way, the audience is passive, and new media realizes interaction and individuation, blurring the boundary between production and consumption. In terms of cultural value orientation and aesthetic shaping, traditional media follow orthodox concepts and aesthetic standards with strong authority, while new media have diversified cultural values and aesthetic values. Although new media meets the diversified needs of users, it may have negative effects due to the lack of censorship mechanisms on many new media platforms.

In general, traditional media and new media have their own advantages and disadvantages in the cultural field. In the current era, the two types need to complement each other's advantages and jointly create a healthy, prosperous and diverse cultural environment. At the same time, traditional and new media should play an important role in promoting the sustainable development of the cultural industry, improving the cultural literacy and aesthetic level of the people, and better inheriting and developing excellent culture.

3. The trend and strategy of the integration of traditional media and new media

The integration and development of traditional media and new media is the trend of The Times. In terms of content, the deep and high-quality content of traditional media is combined with the rapid dissemination and diversified forms of new media, and the dissemination breadth of traditional media content is expanded with the help of new media platforms, and the audience is guided to read deeply through the interactive form of new media, so as to enhance the influence of content. In terms of

channels, the distribution channels of traditional media are integrated with new media platforms. For example, when TV programs are broadcast on their own channels, short video platforms are used for distribution to attract more audiences and expand coverage. At the technical level, new media's big data, artificial intelligence and other technologies are used by traditional media, big data helps the topic selection and planning precision, artificial intelligence optimizes the editing process, improves efficiency, and enables journalists to focus on in-depth reporting. This integration of content, channels, and technology allows traditional and new media to complement each other, fostering the continuous evolution of the media industry to better meet audience demands and adapt to emerging trends.

However, traditional media faces challenges, such as limited reach in remote or rural areas due to inefficient or non-existent distribution channels. In contrast, new media platforms, particularly the internet and mobile phone media, can reach audiences globally without the physical constraints that traditional media face. With internet-based communication, information dissemination occurs almost instantaneously and can reach a much broader and diverse audience. Furthermore, new media also provides a level of interactivity that traditional media lacks. Users of digital platforms can engage with content through likes, shares, comments, and even direct creation of content. This contrasts with traditional media, where the audience's role is largely passive, and the interaction is limited to consuming content. Another significant difference is in the integration of media forms in new media. While traditional media mainly operates through one medium (i.e., radio for sound, television for both sound and visuals, and print for text and images), new media platforms like websites, social media, and apps integrate text, images, video, and interactive elements into one seamless experience. This has not only expanded the range of content that can be presented but also significantly improved the accessibility and appeal of information for a wider audience. While traditional media remains influential and relevant in certain contexts, particularly in areas where access to digital technology is limited or where there is a preference for more established forms of media consumption, new media is becoming increasingly dominant. The flexibility, reach, and interactivity of new media are reshaping how information is communicated, consumed, and produced globally.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, there are significant differences between traditional media and new media. Traditional media has the characteristics of strict and authoritative content, fixed communication channels and weak audience interaction. New media is characterized by diversified and flexible content, instant and accurate communication, and high audience participation. After the integration of the two, they have realized complementary advantages, and spawned new media forms and business models, such as integrating media news, cross-platform communication, etc., which has improved the communication efficiency and market competitiveness. With the advancement of science and technology, the media industry will develop in the direction of intelligence, personalization, and integration, continuously expand the boundaries of communication, provide audiences with higher-quality, more accurate, and immersive information services, and usher in a new era of media development.

While this analysis highlights the differences and convergence between traditional and new media, there are several limitations that warrant further exploration. The discussion lacks a comprehensive assessment of regional and socioeconomic differences in media accessibility. Traditional media remain influential in areas with limited digital infrastructure, while new media rely heavily on internet penetration and technology adoption, which vary widely across regions. Future research could investigate how the convergence of traditional and new media addresses or exacerbates these differences.

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