

Journalism and Communication in Digital World

Xiao Han^{1,*}

¹*Faculty of Design Science, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia*
 *hx8617@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

With the development of culture and technology, digital media platforms have a strikingly effect on journalism. This article analyses the achievements of journalism and communication in digital world ranging from the horizontal application of digital technology in economic development to social stability and cultural diversity. At the same time, it promotes the transformation and upgrading in various industries. Digitalized society has progressed into the national strategy in some countries. By analysing the positive and negative effects of digital media, the article concludes: In the future, while monitoring online news, we also need to support legacy media and focus on management and improvement in digital media. At the same time, it also encourages people to consider if relevant practitioners continue to ignore the deluge of digital media application, whether we can afford the consequences in the future.

Keywords: *Journalism, Digital media, Communication, News*

1. INTRODUCTION

Have you ever noticed how you get news information every day? Have you ever counted how many times you click digital news Apps every day? In today's highly developed digital media platforms, we seem to have abandoned the habit of reading news in print. The transition from traditional media to digital media has also profoundly affected all aspects of news development.

News is the dissemination of information through newspapers, radio, television, and other media channels. It is a style of recording social affairs, exchanging information, and recording the features of the ages. Early humans needed to understand changes in the outside world to satisfy common labor's essential survival and growth. Natural disasters and wars between primitive tribes threatened the survival of primitive humans at any time. To obtain food, avoid scourges, and deal with tribal conflicts, they had to learn about changes in the outside world as soon as possible [1]. News can be divided into general and specific meanings. In general, except for comments and feature articles published in newspapers, radio, the Internet, and TV, other common texts are classified as news, such as communications, features, and sketches. However, in a specific industry, news refers to using a particular description method with simple and easily understanding words to quickly report the recent event,

so that the audience can get the information at the first time [2].

At the early time of the 21st century, with the widespread use of computers and smartphones, the Internet has become a part of our lives. Since then, traditional news media have gradually been replaced by digital news media.

The advantages of digital news make life easier and faster. However, as people become addicted to and dependent on the Internet, more and more people find the shortcomings of digital news, such as low credibility, complex and overlapping channels, unprotected privacy, and over commercialization. This article will analyze the advantages and disadvantages of digital news compared with traditional news in detail.

2. THE STATE OF DIGITAL MEDIA NEWS

In the last decade, digital media journalism has developed dramatically. In daily life, it is rare to see young people getting information by reading books or newspapers. Instead, they discover news on social media. In 2017, the Reuters Digital News survey indicated that social media platforms had become the primary news source for 33% of people under 25 in most developed countries, and 53% of young people reported reading news on social media in the previous week. The more important feature is 'sharing news', a more

effective form than producing original news. For example, the 2014 Pew Research Centre State of the News Media report notes that half of (50%) the US social network users have shared or reposted news content, and 46% of users have commented on the news, while only 12% post videos of newsworthy events that they have created, and only 11% of online news consumers on news websites or blogs have submitted original content such as photos or stories. Overall, 24% of the Reuters' 2016 world survey participants said they share news regularly on social media [3].

Until June 2020, the number of Internet users in China has reached 940 million, and the Internet penetration rate has reached 67.0% [4]. Big data has been applied widely due to the development of information technologies such as algorithms and automation. Digital journalism is a new method of news production and presentation with the development of big data, which uses visual techniques to report and present news to the public more intuitively. Primarily during COVID -19 period, both the legacy news media and self-media organizations have used data to show the trend, science, and other related news vividly, and explain profound theories in simple words. For example, during COVID -19 outbreak, the Xinhua News Agency displayed a virus model in the 3D interactive form to shape and stimulate the spread of the novel coronavirus and let readers learn about it in an interactive game. In addition, self-media organizations have also contributed to the popularization of the virus knowledge during that time. The most typical one is the video news 'All about the COVID - 19', which is interspersed with many 3D images produced by the 'paperclip team'. The model introduction visually displays the shape and spread of the virus in a dynamic manner. Some WeChat platform media also made a considerable contribution, such as Dr. DingXiang, whose team explained the epidemic from a doctor's perspective and answered readers' questions online. This type of content is compelling because of its professionalism and authority. To some extent, the success of the fight against COVID-19 is inextricably linked to the successful development of digital news.

In another side, social media and mobile applications have penetrated mass communication. More people have been attracted by reporters with more diversified reporting methods and information propaganda. At the same time, information explosion mixes with fake news which lead to the credibility of the media institution is suspected, and the role of professional information publishers that journalists have struggled with also has been challenged.

3. THE POSITIVE ROLE OF DIGITAL MEDIA

3.1. News Content

3.1.1. Richer and Better Content

As the primary genre, news is composed of six factors, namely people, time, place, event, cause, and process. It is explained as someone achieving a result somewhere at some time for some reason. News reports, especially legacy news or official message generally contains structure-based content. Reading the six elements can clearly grasp the primary information and improve the reading volume [6]. However, the fixed structure also limits the dissemination of news, such as delayed spread and clichés, which also increases the sense of distance between the news and the public.

With the advent of the online news era, news content is also changing imperceptibly. Online news content mainly has the following characteristics:

3.1.1.1. Eye-catching title

The title is usually regarded as the outline of the article. According to a survey, news with an attractive headline can directly attract readers' attention and get higher clicks. Even though the same article with different titles will have different results - some get as much as 75% hits, while others get only 20% to 25% hits [7]. The key to creating a bright headline is to capture some news features and then present those features in a compelling way. In addition, online news' headlines are not limited to character restrictions. Generally, because of layout requirements, it is impossible to include many words in the title. For example, in China, newspaper titles typically do not exceed ten characters, while online media headlines can be extended to 24 characters. Therefore, an obvious advantage of online news is that it is less restrictive and more informative, and readers can judge their interest in reading for the first time.

3.1.1.2. Vivid Manifestations

Unlike traditional news, digital news includes multiple forms, such as video, audio, pictures, and text. More importantly, it can insert hyperlinks. This feature results in news reports providing readers with unlimited information. In traditional media, news information is limited to a certain extent due to page restrictions. However, for digital platforms, it can be expanded infinitely. Various forms of expression combined with hyperlinks greatly enhance the readability of news and make the information provided by news expand infinitely to ensure readers have a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of news content.

3.1.2. Reader Drives Content

3.1.2.1. Reader is Reporter

On digital media platforms, everyone can have an account, which means everyone can broadcast news. It plays a vital role in events with high public participation and timeliness. For example, in August 2021, a flood occurred in Zhengzhou, China. The public reported it in time to provide first-hand and reliable information to the outside, which also aroused public attention to the flood. Compared with traditional media's complicated and strict process, news broadcasting on digital media platforms is more time-sensitive and forward-looking to some extent.

3.1.2.2. Comments' Power

One of the advantages of online news is that readers can comment on it, maximizing interaction with readers. Sociology divides social relations into 'strong relations' and 'weak relations'. 'Comments' reflect the relationship between news and readers on digital platforms. In a strong relationship, readers need interaction and strong expression to comment on news and express their opinions. It not only increases user participation but also brings new information, generate news or guide news trend. When the interactive needs of readers are weak, they can use 'like' or 'share' functions. Reposting, likes, and comments are critical indicators to measure the popularity of news. Compared with the weak relationship of legacy media, where readers only pay attention to the content and passively receive information. The commentary function on digital media platforms provides unlimited possibilities for the expansion of journalism.

3.2. Economy

3.2.1. Tools of marketing

With the continuous development of digital media, especially for social media, the interactive function of media in enterprises is becoming increasingly important. The development of social media has made it possible for enterprises where Weibo or Facebook is seen as a media relationship management tool to communicate with customers directly. Social media can be applied to manage the relationship with customers or public media in companies. To handle the crisis in an emergency, continue to refine customers, and maintain the loyal supporters of the brand, it not only needs to provide interesting and innovative content, such as enterprises news, and maintain regular and cordial communication, and more importantly, provide valuable information.

3.2.2. Paywall

Because of the emergence of paid knowledge, in 2011, the New York Times launched its metered paywall. In recent years, Chinese digital media platforms are trying to transfer this concept to journalism on a digital platform. For example, on Weibo, fans need to pay or give rewards to access celebrities' news. Paywalls are a good option for sites with a pre-existing audience who are willing to pay for their content, such as The New York Times or Slate, an online-only publication with great success with premium content service.

3.2.3. Creating More Job Opportunities

More online news operators are required in recent years, since almost every enterprise is equipped with a new media operator to manage its brand through online news. Not only that, but on February 25, 2020, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, the State Administration of Market Supervision, and the National Bureau of Statistics in China jointly announced 16 new occupations, one of which is 'New Media Operator'. Job demands drive the need for talent training. In recent years, various universities have set up the majors of Internet and New Media, which clearly shows the status of new media in the employment environment.

4. DEFECTS OF THE ADVANCED

4.1. Low-quality Content

4.1.1. Clickbait

Clickbait refers to people who create exaggerated, distorted, exciting titles or make something out of nothing. To grab the attention of the audience ultimately, clickbait exhausts their abilities, making tricks become endless.

With roughly 60 percent of U.S. adults admitting to only reading headlines when reading news on social media, it is no surprise that even reputable online news sites have had to get creative to get page views. Clickbait may contaminate the news media landscape, but it will worsen as technology advances and the number of media consumers who get their news digitally increases.

4.1.1.1. Wrong reader, Wrong relationship

When developing a brand, especially for a journalism brand, it is essential to protect brand loyalty that people genuinely enjoy the content and interact with content, which will increase readers' stickiness. Clickbait, based on vague adjectives and overblown promises, does not do any of that. Its viral potential attracts mostly first-time audiences. That is because clickbait turns reading into a psychological game, forcing viewers to guess the content

and tricking them into saying the correct answer. In the end, it will lead to a negative relationship: disappointment leads to backlash, which leads to poor engagement and an inevitable loss of trust in your content [8].

4.1.1.2. Trigger Conflicts

Sensationalized news, or yellow journalism, existed long before the internet entered the equation. In its heyday at the end of the 19th century, its negative influence has caused significant damage. For example, following an explosion of the battleship USS Maine in February 1898, Hearst and Pulitzer newspapers publishers erroneously blamed the catastrophe on Spanish forces. Their yellow journalism and warmongering resulted in enthusiastic public support for the war; thus, this brought about a conflict between the U.S and Spain within four months [9].

4.1.2. Hard to Distinguish the Authenticity

Fact-based news reports do not produce facts. In legacy journalism, which is published in paper form, the content is not easy to change, and the publishers are usually very concerned and cautious. However, when it comes to online news, due to the low threshold, no cost, and little supervision, digital platforms have become a refuge for many lawbreakers to publish fake news, and even use news to spread rumors, gossip on others' privacy and carry out personal attacks on others. The typical features of fake news are ill-sourced information and inaccurate content exaggerated by publishers, including improper advertising and marketing, distorted opposition, and mischievous. Based on the competition, news practitioners not just satisfy the needs of the news industry itself, but also cater to the market. Currently, in the complex online news market, the requirement for news authenticity needs to be improved; otherwise, they will be misled.

4.2. The destruction to the news industry

New media has impacted the legacy news industry, but the hot spots of public opinion are still inseparable from the participation of professional news organizations. What is truly devastating to traditional journalism is that government agencies and social organizations organize their propaganda and public relations teams and establish their discourse channels. Journalism is not decentralized, but from its origins as an industrial community to an information separatist. For example, the government has its website and app, and many exclusive manuscripts are only published on its platform. To avoid discrepancies in news reports, or to have complete control over the form of discourse, media have been unable to obtain first-hand information in the first time. Also, a group of industry insiders have started

building professional websites and communities, using professional discourse to completely exclude non-professionals from the platform, such as the WeChat platform of Doctor Ding Xiang. The public relations teams of enterprises such as private hospitals and Internet companies have attracted many senior journalism professionals to participate in it because of their lighter workload and higher salary. Major of journalism in university cannot attract promising students, and industry remuneration cannot attract talented graduates, which is a devastating to the news industry.

5. CONCLUSION

Admittedly, online news has brought us a lot of conveniences indeed. The information at the fingertips makes life and work more convenient and efficient. With the continuous improvement of the social system, governments are also introducing relevant laws and regulations to regulate digital platforms. However, due to the lack of professional journalism knowledge of self-media producers, the blind pursuit of high click-through rates, and the establishment of digital media operation departments by governments and enterprises, the news industry has fallen into a passive situation. In the future, while monitoring online news, we also need to support traditional media and focus on investing in professionals to ensure the healthy development of the entire industry.

REFERENCES

- [1] Gan, X., 2021. Journalism Dictionary. 1st ed. Henan People's Publishing.
- [2] Baidu Encyclopedia. 2021. Baidu Encyclopedia. [online] Available at: <<https://baike.baidu.com/item/新闻/289002>>
- [3] Martin. and Sanghera-Warren., 2019. Sharing News Online. Springer International Publishing.pp2
- [4] 2020. Current Status, Problems and Trends of China's Digital Media Research. [online] Available at: <<http://www.cnmzppw.com/tv/20201231092130.html>>
- [5] <https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/326448747> Y. Yorozu, M. Hirano, K. Oka, and Y. Tagawa, "Electron spectroscopy studies on magneto-optical media and plastic substrate interface," IEEE Transl. J. Magn. Japan, vol. 2, pp. 740-741, August 1987 [Digests 9th Annual Conf. Magnetics Japan, p. 301, 1982].
- [6] Baidu Encyclopedia. 2015. Six Elements of News. [online] Available at: <[https://baike.baidu.com/item/six elements of news /3267733](https://baike.baidu.com/item/six%20elements%20of%20news/3267733)>

- [7] Guo Ming, ZH., 2015. Analysis on the Characteristics of Internet News Writing. *Journal of News Research*, [online] 6(22), p.209. Available at:
<<https://www.jinyueya.com/magazine/39412883.htm>>
- [8] Wolff, A., 2021. 5 Reasons Clickbait Is The Worst (And How It Will Negatively Impact Your Business). [online] BenchmarkONE. Available at:
<<https://www.benchmarkone.com/blog/5-reasons-clickbait-negatively-impacts-business/>>
- [9] Hillhouse, E., 2018. Clickbait: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly - Platform Magazine. [online] Platform Magazine. Available at:
<<https://platformmagazine.org/2018/11/20/clickbait-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/>>