

The Transition and Countermeasures of Traditional Media After Being Impacted by the Advent of Digital Media

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ABSTRACT

Reading news in print media has gradually been eliminated, and most of the audience switched to consuming news from digital media. This contributed to the transition of traditional media.

This paper referred to previous research papers and investigated cases associated with the successful transition of traditional media and analysed some traditional media that failed to transform. Results from previous research are used to compare the difference between different cases of the transformation of traditional media. By analysing previous literature, previous research examined challenges associated with the transformation of traditional media and strategies relating to the pathway of development for traditional media in the future. The majority of traditional media can adapt to the digital media age successfully, but some management supervisions of traditional media companies are still wondering about the development of their companies in the future. In this essay, detailed countermeasures are provided for management supervisors to know which action they can take that can be beneficial for the transition of traditional media.

Keywords: *Traditional media, Digital media, Industrial Transformation, Strategies, iteration*

1. INTRODUCTION

Because of the increasing use of different tools of digital media, the number of audiences using traditional media declines. Obtaining information from reading the newspaper and listening to information on television has become a thing that audiences would favor in the past. Nowadays, there is a trend to promote the use of digital media platforms, while the existence of traditional media is under threat.

The increasing use of digital media platforms changes the way that media organizations get access to acquire information. In the past, the content of their news stories mainly came from traditional print media such as newspapers. Journalists wrote news stories in traditional ways. In the present, the development of digital media technologies enables media workers to collect information from diverse digital media platforms and tell news stories in digital ways.

1.1. Traditional Media

Traditional media can be defined as traditional devices that are used to disseminate information to people from different locations, which is in the category of mass media. It is characterised by less technology and is slow-natured. The concept of traditional media involves print media and broadcast media. Print media includes newspapers, magazines, books, and other documented formats of information dissemination. Meanwhile, Broadcast media consists of radio and television [1]. Around the early 1950s, the traditional television system started to develop. In the early 1980s, several newspapers and magazines companies, television, and radio stations started entering the media industry gradually. Around the 1990s, the advent of digital technology put traditional media under threat [2].

1.2. Digital Media

Digital media refers to any form of information dissemination that uses digital technology, which is different from the traditional method of communication.

The platforms of digital media are diverse, consisting of the Internet, mobile phones, and other social media applications [3]. The emergence of these digital media platforms changes people's lives. In the late 1990s, the number of people using the internet increased dramatically. In the later part of the twentieth century, the majority of people prefer to acquire information or interact with other people through different platforms of digital media.

In the current digital age, the new style of using digital media to obtain information has influenced the use of traditional media, which brings challenges for the development of traditional media [4]. The impact of the advent of digital media differs in developed countries and developing countries. In some developing countries like Malaysia, the arrival of digital media has little effect on the existence of traditional media [5]. Most people still prefer to obtain information from traditional media such as print newspapers. In developed countries like US, the majority of people would favor the internet as the source of gaining information.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Overseas Research

Overseas research in this field of traditional media transformation started quite earlier than domestic research. Most researchers in this field focused on the impact of digital media technologies on the ways of communication.

Rafael Mesquita (2017) and Amelia H. Arsenault & Manuel Castells (2008) argued that the development of digital media technologies offers a new communication space for the publication of information [6,7]. This leads to a new form of communication. There are multiple points for entering into the communication network, which makes the communication mode becoming wireless.

2.2. Domestic Research

Compared with overseas research, a domestic study in this field started later since the development of the internet was far behind Europe and America. In this decade, the scale of the internet industry has expanded rapidly. There is an increasing number of research focused on the transition of traditional media. Meanwhile, scholars created derivational concepts regarding this transition such as convergence media, streaming media.

Through analyzing domestic scholars' work, their research suggested that the development of traditional media should converge with digital media in the current digital age.

Nan Wei Dong (2020) and Zhao Jing Rong (2021) argued that traditional media should maintain their

original advantages [8,9]. Based on their original advantages, traditional media can ensure the information disseminated on different platforms of digital media is accurate, professional, and formal. As people can access different digital media applications easily, it is convenient and efficient for them to acquire the most updated information. Since digital media can spread information efficiently, more and more traditional media set up their social media accounts on different digital media platforms [10].

From analysing academic research of overseas and China, overseas research mainly focuses on the development of digital media technologies, whereas domestic research focuses on media convergence. There are some similarities between overseas research and domestic research. Some overseas researchers' works are also mainly about media convergence.

According to the current research status, the convergence of traditional media and digital media would be an appropriate choice for the transition of traditional media in the current digital age [11]. In this paper, I will analyze successful and failing cases of traditional media transition to give some plans and strategies for those traditional companies which lack experience and have no idea about how to transit.

Around 2014, there was a sharply increasing number of internet users [12]. People reply on diverse platforms of digital media to obtain information that they want instead of choosing traditional media. At this point, traditional media cannot dominate the communication industry. Because of the strong online power, the traditional media industry experienced a recession [13]. To maintain their existence, they began to cooperate with the internet.

In this article, two successful cases of traditional media transformation will be analyzed. One case of traditional media failing to transit will also be analyzed. From analyzing these different cases, we can see reasons why some traditional media companies can transit successfully, but some of them cannot.

3. CASE 1 THE PAPER

Although there are many traditional print media companies experiencing transition, The Paper has been one of the successful cases of transition. In the communication industry, The Paper has some great achievements and is in a strong position of this industry.

The Paper was founded in 2014, which was a new media project of Oriental Morning Post. The Paper Oriental Morning Post was a traditional print media company. Around 2014, nearly twenty traditional print media companies were closed. Oriental Morning Post faced challenges. Eventually, Oriental Morning Post transferred to The Paper in 2017. When The Paper

software launched, the mobile application downloads ranked second in the category of journalism apps. The number of downloads exceeded sixty million. There were around five hundred daily active users of The Paper mobile application. Meanwhile, The Paper launched a new project called Sixth Tone in 2016[14]. The main aim of developing this new project was to disseminate Chinese news to users from abroad. In the future, The Paper will develop an English mobile application of Sixth Tone.

The transition of The Paper was successful. Nowadays, with widespread WiFi, the development of streaming media platforms speeds up. Audiences switch from reading news from print newspapers to consuming news from videos. To fit this trend, The Paper created video news and put it on different media platforms, including MicroBlog, Tik Tok, and WeChat official accounts. Although the topic of video news on these different platforms is the same, videos could be different for diverse platforms to attract audiences.

The Paper had spent a large amount of time doing technological developments. It developed its own mobile app and tiny programs. Some staff from The Paper also experienced the transition to becoming almighty. For example, press photographers transformed to do a live telecast. Besides, The Paper did some changes to the content to fit the current trend. The Paper will also combine the newest digital media technology and the content to improve the user experience.

The corporate structure of The Paper experienced changes, which changed from traditional state-owned media company to internet company. There were six state-own companies becoming shareholders of The Paper.

According to the Media original content spread influence data report of 2018, The Paper ranked the first in categories of the total transmission power and the total influence.

4. CASE 2 MANGO TV

Because of the threat coming from diverse digital media platforms, the age of traditional television goes to an end gradually. More and more traditional television experienced the process of transition. Among that traditional television, Mango TV has become an example of traditional television that transits successfully.

Mango TV was transited from Hunan tv which was founded in 2004. The rapid rise of Mango TV began in 2014 when the majority of traditional media were shocked by digital media. The transformation of Mango TV was successful. Since 2014, Mango TV started the strategy of exclusive broadcast. All the programs made by Hunan tv can only be presented by the Mango TV platform. This could help Mango TV to develop its video platform.

Through the process of transition, Mango TV focused on its content. The content presented on Mango TV was more attractive and influential than other digital media platforms. Mango TV developed its entertainment programs to attract audiences from different age groups. Entertainment programs were also modified to adapt to different platforms of Mango TV. Different platforms of Mango offered opportunities for audiences to communicate with each other. For instance, they can send out live subtitles to share their thoughts when watching these entertainment programs.

As Mango TV needed a large number of assets to build an internet platform, Mango TV experienced two rounds of financing in 2015[15]. It attracted more than forty state-owned funds companies and raised around two billion funds. Based on these funds, Mango TV developed different versions of its web platforms.

The transition of Mango TV had great achievements in the field of content, technology, product, and service. The average daily active users of Mango TV exceeded forty-seven million. Daily video clicks exceeded 2.2 hundred million. PC video playback month coverage reached 2.38 hundred million. Mobile application downloads exceeded five hundred million. The number of Internet terminal activation users reached 59 million. Around 2016, Mango TV's revenue exceeded 135 hundred million. According to Top 100 Chinese Internet Companies, Mango TV ranked fifty-five, which was just behind iQIYI and Tencent.

5. CASE 3 READERS

In the internet age, audiences would prefer to read articles with the hot topic instead of reading traditional prose and Chicken Soup for the Soul. This has put these traditional magazines in danger. Therefore, the majority of traditional magazines conduct a transformation. Readers is an example of a case that was failed in the process of transition.

Readers was transformed from Gansu people's publishing house in 2006. During the transition of Readers, Readers experienced challenges. These challenges led to the failure of this transition.

In the digital age, audiences' reading preference has changed. Traditional texts and pictures were abandoned by current audiences. Instead, they prefer interesting and popular topics. Previous topics of Readers were old-fashioned, and audiences felt bored when reading them. Compared with other magazines, articles of Readers lacked timeliness and failed to catch up with the hot news. Audiences especially young people would not be attracted by reading old-fashioned articles. They would prefer articles having a hot spot and diversified opinions.

Through the process of transition, Readers tried to develop its digital media platform to fit the trend. Around

2012, the mobile application of Readers launched. However, the monthly average circulation of Readers decreased dramatically [16]. This was because less audience preferred consuming information from Readers.

Readers did some investment in the field of film and television. Readers spent eighty million investing films and television, but it only had around thirteen million investments back. Besides, Readers opened a relevant café, but the business wasn't good.

6. DISCUSSION

In the digital age, some traditional media companies can transit successfully, but some of them fail to transform. Exploring the reasons behind this circumstance, this is because these traditional media companies did proper research about which content would be favored by readers, what kind of topic they would be interested in. Based on this research, they focused on changing their content to fit the current trend. However, some traditional media companies which did not research properly would fail to transform.

Facing the threat of the digital media age, it is important for management supervisors of traditional media companies to find the most appropriate way of transition and implement appropriate strategies. Every traditional media has different features and is in a different circumstance. Owners of traditional media companies should analyze their actual situation carefully. In comparison to digital media, traditional media disseminates information and creates new information quite slowly. Meanwhile, traditional media companies do not spend time paying attention to audiences and content users. However, digital media companies always spend a large amount of time focusing on their digital platforms and audiences. When they develop new digital media platforms and create new content, they always take into account the preferences of a wide range of audiences so that their content would be favored by most audiences.

In terms of ways of communication, most traditional media companies still use the traditional mode of disseminating information. The content they communicated is not updated and is quite old-fashioned. The preferences of audiences cannot be satisfied by consuming this traditional content. Digital media companies take advantage of advanced digital technologies. Before they disseminate information online, they did proper edit for texts and videos. As a result, the information they communicated would be updated and effective.

Media convergence can become a long-term development strategy for most traditional media companies which are trying to transform. Through media convergence, allows the combination of traditional media and the emergence of advanced digital media technologies. After the transition, these traditional media

companies can maintain their original advantages and benefit from advanced digital media technologies. Media staff working at traditional companies should be trained to acquire the skills needed for the proper use of digital media sites.

Through the use of diverse digital media platforms, media workers can create content from a wide range of sources online. With digital media technologies, media workers can use advanced search tools to find sources with the hot topic. They tell news stories in digital ways instead of writing traditional news stories. Audiences can share their thoughts about stories posted on different platforms. This enables audiences to discuss content posted online with other audiences across the world. Besides, media workers can set up a database with audiences' reading habits and preferences with the help of advanced digital technologies.

7. CONCLUSION

To summarize, this essay analyzed previous research works from domestic and overseas scholars in the media field and provided feasible countermeasures for those traditional media companies which attempt to transit. Choosing the most appropriate way to start the process of transition is important. This essay listed cases of traditional media companies transforming successfully and examples of traditional media companies failing to transform. Reasons why they can transit successfully and some of them fail to transit are analyzed in this essay.

For most traditional media companies in transition, these companies should merge with the digital media industry to transit successfully. The traditional media can still maintain their existence in the digital age as they can take advantage of their strengths. The emergence of advanced digital media technologies plays a key role in the communication industry. Digital media technologies offer new opportunities for the development of media organizations. The way media workers do their works has been changed. With the help of digital media tools, media workers can acquire new content and news sources through the advanced searching engine. Meanwhile, traditional media can play a role to check the accuracy of the sources acquired and content created. Readers are free to share their opinion and have discussions about the content posted online on different devices. This provides opportunities for readers to comment on the most updated events. Information can be shared rapidly and effectively through the use of digital media platforms. Through this process, media staff can find readers' preferences to help them create content that is favored by audiences.

In the era of digital media, there are many decisions to be made by media companies. Diverse digital media platforms have become well-developed systems. Media workers need to decide what kind of digital tools they

should use to create their content and what kind of digital media platform would be suitable for them to distribute information. Besides, audiences also face decisions since they need to choose media content that they are interested in. As digital media platforms are diverse, they need to decide where they should acquire information from.

Through the process of transition, traditional media companies may encounter some challenges. Traditional media companies should focus on creating their key content based on the preference of their audiences with the help of advanced digital media technologies to achieve the success of the transition. Under the threat of the digital age, the era of traditional media does not come to the end as the emergency of digital media can bring them to the digital age if traditional media companies take appropriate approaches during their transition. Most traditional media can adapt to the digital age successfully.

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