

Research on the Communication Strategies of Short Video News in the Context of Converged Media

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Abstract: Yin Yue's proposition that "it is essential to innovate communication methods and discourse styles, enabling the Party's innovative theories to reach ordinary households" has provided a clear direction for online communication in the new era. Converged media organically integrates diverse media resources and communication methods, achieving complementary strengths and facilitating the dissemination of theoretical knowledge to the "last mile," ensuring that innovative theories are widely disseminated across all social strata. In the context of converged media, short video news has gradually replaced traditional text-based news as the dominant medium, becoming the primary source of news for mainstream audiences. Based on this, this paper will explore the communication strategies of short video news within the converged media environment, aiming to promote further development and innovation of short video news in the new era.

Keywords: Converged media; Short video; News communication

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1. Introduction

The Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China explicitly stated that mainstream media must fully embrace new media and achieve the reconstruction of an omni-media ecosystem. Meanwhile, the "Opinions of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council on Accelerating the Development and Utilization of Public Data Resources" further released policy dividends, promoting data sharing and intelligent collaboration, and providing unprecedented support for innovation in news communication. Short video news, with its concise and interactive characteristics, perfectly meets the fragmented and mobile needs of contemporary audiences, breaking through the limitations of traditional news communication in terms of timeliness and interactivity. This innovative format not only enhances the efficiency and precision of news communication but also injects a continuous stream of vitality into the digital transformation of traditional media. Short video news is propelling the news industry into an unprecedented era of interaction and symbiosis with an unstoppable momentum.

2. The concept and characteristics of converged media

Converged media is a product of the “new era” in modern communication, deeply integrating traditional media such as radio, television, and newspapers with emerging media like the internet and mobile applications. This integration has formed a brand-new communication landscape characterized by shared resources, blended content, interactive promotion, and mutually beneficial outcomes. As of December 2024, the number of short video users in China has reached 1.04 billion, with a usage rate as high as 93.8%. For six consecutive years, short videos have ranked first in the specific field of online audio-visual applications, providing a vast potential pool for the dissemination of short video news.

The “electric” multimedia convergence allows converged media to break free from the monotony of traditional communication methods. The alternating use of various forms, such as graphics, videos, and audio, in converged media enables content to be presented most appealingly. From in-depth reports that combine text and images to instant news that utilizes both audio and visual elements, converged media offers viewers a richer information experience^[1]. Meanwhile, unlike traditional “one-way output,” converged media emphasizes audience participation and interaction. Features like comments, likes, and shares facilitate deep interactions between viewers and content, spreading information to a wider audience through communities, discussions, and secondary dissemination, thus forming a truly “collaborative” communication ecosystem.

Furthermore, the “customized for each individual” recommendation mechanism enables converged media to achieve precise targeting in content dissemination. Leveraging big data and artificial intelligence technologies, platforms make personalized recommendations based on audience interests, needs, and preferences, ensuring that each viewer receives tailored content. Precise recommendations further enhance the viewing experience for audiences, making information dissemination more efficient and accurate while avoiding issues of “information overload” and “generalization.”

3. The essence and advantages of short video news dissemination

Short video news is one of the “highlights” in the era of converged media, reshaping the “new landscape” of news dissemination with its minimalist, rapid, and intuitive characteristics. Short videos present news information in a “fragmented” format, allowing audiences to quickly receive key information within a short period, meeting the demands of fast-paced modern life. The essence of short video news lies in its dissemination characteristics of being “fast, concise, and substantive.” Short video news condenses complex events into brief clips, swiftly delivering crucial information to viewers. Within each brief span of a few minutes, audiences can instantly grasp the essence of the news without the need for prolonged waiting or reading lengthy articles, thereby catering to the demands of fragmented time^[2].

“A picture is worth a thousand words.” Through the combination of visuals and sound, short videos transform abstract information into something tangible and perceivable. Compared to traditional text-based news, short videos can present events more vividly and impactfully using elements such as imagery, background music, and dynamic camera work, fostering deeper emotional resonance and enhancing dissemination effectiveness. As the saying goes, “He who controls information controls the discourse.” The dissemination speed of short videos far surpasses that of traditional news methods, enabling rapid forwarding, sharing, and commenting by viewers, thereby achieving viral spread. Among the “Top 100 News Influencers” on short video platforms, 61% of leading influencers boast over 1 million followers, with 12% exceeding 5 million. Mainstream media institutions’ accounts account for half of the total, wielding significant influence.

4. Analysis of the current state of short video news dissemination in the context of converged media

4.1. Content innovation and dissemination methods of short video news

In this information age, short video news has rapidly occupied the mass era, akin to “fast-food” news dissemination. Its

simplicity, directness, and timeliness have made it one of the primary means for people to obtain information. With a playback time of just 1–3 minutes, users can swiftly acquire key information about events without prolonged immersion, simply by “swiping.” This dissemination method, characterized by its “brief, straightforward, and rapid” nature, meets the demand for quick information acquisition and response.

Nowadays, everyone is a “reporter,” with smartphones serving as the tool for news dissemination in everyone’s hands. During unexpected events, the first on-site videos often become the most authoritative news sources. On-site spectators quickly uploaded news to various platforms by taking photos or videos, breaking the traditional media’s monopoly on “on-the-ground” coverage. Audiences can now access firsthand information about events without waiting for professional journalists. Everything unfolds at the speed of “second-level dissemination,” with timeliness being a significant advantage of short video news.

Moreover, short video news adopts a “minimalist” style, with videos typically lasting between 1–3 minutes. Information is conveyed directly, avoiding lengthy background introductions and complex analytical content. “One minute, straight to the point,” directly presenting the core of the event for viewers to grasp at a glance. For instance, CCTV News’ science popularization short video titled “What If Organs Had a ‘Group Chat’...” on the Bilibili platform featured a lighthearted yet scientifically sound theme design. It systematically popularized knowledge about bodily functions and health concepts, ranking on the “Xiangwu Index” monthly list of science popularization short videos. Interactive data showed that the content received 113,000 likes and was bookmarked by over 35,000 users, highlighting the unique value of science popularization short videos in knowledge dissemination ^[3].

4.2. Challenges and issues faced by short video news

The low barrier to entry for short video news, where “almost anyone can be a journalist,” makes it difficult to guarantee the quality of news content. From the perspective of content creation, many short video news pieces are produced by non-professionals. While videos shot by the public can provide a sense of on-the-ground presence, they often lack sufficient news depth and objectivity. Some self-media workers even exaggerate originally simple news events through secondary creation and editing, leading to information distortion and misinformation. Meanwhile, copyright disputes over short video news are a “hot potato.” Original videos shot by the public are often re-shared without authorization from copyright holders, exposing creators to the risk of copyright infringement. Some platforms, in their pursuit of traffic, often overlook the rights of original creators, leading to frequent copyright disputes that even impact the healthy development of the entire short video news industry.

Although short-form video news is rich in content, its narrative styles and forms of expression tend to be uniformly similar. Most short-form video news adopts a “fixed template,” such as starting with a brand logo, followed by the presentation of news content, guiding audience emotions through linear narratives, and concluding with concise visuals. This format and style are repeatedly used across numerous platforms, gradually diminishing the uniqueness and individuality of short-form video news. Despite the interactive features provided by short-form video platforms, such as likes, comments, and shares, many platforms and creators have not fully utilized these functions to engage deeply with their audiences. Audience participation in short-form video news often remains superficial, with viewers merely clicking buttons to participate in dissemination, significantly reducing audience engagement.

Additionally, most short-form video news platforms rely on traditional advertising revenue, making their profit models appear singular and unstable. While some platforms boast large user bases, they lack effective commercialization paths, resulting in unsatisfactory profitability for content creators and platforms. Short-form video platforms and creators urgently need to explore more diverse profit models, such as through content subscriptions and brand collaborations, to achieve a virtuous cycle and sustainable development of the short-form video news industry ^[4].

5. Short-form video news dissemination strategies in the context of media convergence

5.1. Content production strategies for short-form video news

In the era of media convergence, the production of short-form video news is no longer merely about news reporting but represents a shift towards “content as a product.” The core of content production lies in breaking the traditional news framework through innovative forms and expressions imbued with a “productization mindset,” making news “viewable, playable, listenable, and usable.” The “productization mindset” of short-form video news requires adopting an audience-centric perspective, abandoning the traditional “rote recitation” narrative style, and reshaping theoretical expression. For instance, to truly make innovative theories accessible to the general public, they must be disseminated through formats such as “series of theoretical short-form videos,” “interactive games,” and “knowledge-based animation,” breaking away from traditional theoretical dissemination methods and transforming complex theories into everyday experiences. The integration of formats such as “golden quote posters, situational skits, and audiobooks” has made these profound ideological systems more concrete and entertaining, significantly lowering the threshold for theoretical understanding and stimulating audience engagement and identification.

Additionally, the content of short video news should emphasize “audience-specific expression.” For instance, when targeting young audiences, incorporating “internet slang” and anime elements can better align with their viewing habits. Conversely, when addressing grassroots communities, expressions using dialects and local stories can achieve “precision delivery.” By resonating emotionally with the audience, such content motivates them to actively engage with the news, enhancing the dissemination power of information ^[5]. For example, the Chongqing Daily Press Group has launched over 40 short video special sections and columns, such as “10 Seconds to View the Two Sessions” and “60 Seconds to View the Two Sessions,” across its media and platforms, publishing nearly 5,000 original multimedia and integrated media works, including over 1,200 short video pieces. The total playback duration of video reports on the Two Sessions reached 130 hours, with nearly 200 videos achieving over a million views, 23 columns and works surpassing ten million views, and two works exceeding one billion views, accumulating over 500 million views across the internet.

The innovation of short video news content should not only be rooted in “productization” but also leverage “storytelling narratives” and “visual presentations” to enhance audience engagement. For instance, the “China in a Minute” series launched by People’s Daily tells Chinese stories through three chapters, using the themes of “instant diversity, incremental progress, and shared beauty” to convey China’s culture and philosophy, making complex social phenomena more accessible to the audience.

5.2. Strategies for selecting short video news platforms and dissemination paths

The dissemination paths for short video news are not static; successful dissemination relies on precise platform selection and the integration of diverse dissemination paths. The choice of short video news platforms should fully consider the alignment between platform characteristics and audience demographics. For example, platforms like Douyin and Kuaishou primarily attract young audiences, with content that tends to be entertaining and fragmented, making them suitable for light-hearted and engaging news dissemination. In contrast, Bilibili focuses on in-depth content and dissemination in professional fields, making it suitable for in-depth reporting such as political analysis and social hot topics. Social platforms like Weibo and WeChat Channels boast strong social attributes, making them ideal for on-the-scene event reporting. They can rapidly attract significant attention, especially in the dissemination of breaking news.

Meanwhile, the dissemination path of short video news should emphasize multi-platform collaboration and precise delivery. Recommendation algorithms within platforms have become the core engine for information flow dissemination. Media platforms should actively study the distribution logic of these platforms, employing methods such as precise tagging and keyword optimization to enhance the exposure of news content. Cross-platform collaboration among short video platforms, synchronizing content across multiple social platforms, can create a broader dissemination matrix, enhancing both the depth and breadth of dissemination.

For remote areas or grassroots communities, short video news dissemination requires “channel decentralization,”

strengthening the integration of county-level converged media centers with online and offline dissemination methods. This approach brings news content to the grassroots level, promoting the popularization of theory and news. Forms such as “online live streaming + offline presentations” enable news to take root in fields and streets, enhancing the interactivity between news content and audiences, and making news dissemination more effective.

5.3. Audience interaction and participation strategies for short video news

The most prominent feature of short video news is “audience participation,” with interactivity being the core to enhancing the dissemination effectiveness of short video news. Short video platforms offer users interactive features such as likes, comments, shares, and bullet-screen comments, all of which facilitate two-way interaction between audiences and content. However, true interaction goes beyond mere formal participation; it lies in how to enhance audience engagement through real-time Q&A, interactive comments, live streaming collaborations, and other means. For instance, interactive segments can be incorporated into news reporting, inviting audiences to participate in question-and-answer sessions and discussions on hot topics, thereby stimulating deep thinking about news content among the audience.

Additionally, short video platforms should enhance interactivity through user-generated content (UGC), soliciting original short videos from users and encouraging audiences to engage in secondary creations centered around social hotspots and news events, disseminating them through the platform’s recommendation system. This approach allows viewers to deepen their understanding and memory of news events through participation.

Meanwhile, the strengthening of “social interaction” on the platform should not be limited to interactions within the platform itself but should also integrate with offline activities to enhance the social and widespread nature of news. For instance, organizing offline discussion sessions, lectures, and other events enables audiences to interact face-to-face with news creators in real life, further enhancing the dissemination of news.

5.4. Brand building and social responsibility of short video news

In the fiercely competitive landscape of short video news, brand building and the assumption of social responsibility have become core competencies for media platforms to survive and develop in the long term. News platforms need to distinguish themselves in terms of content creation, dissemination formats, and audience experience. Through fixed visual styles, unique narrative approaches, and consistent subtitle designs, audiences can instantly recognize the brand characteristics of the platform upon viewing the news content.

Furthermore, brand building for short video news should also emphasize the value orientation of news content, enhancing brand credibility and influence by conveying positive energy and social responsibility. Platforms should focus on positive guidance, reducing the spread of negative emotions, and avoiding excessive emphasis on tragedy and negativity in reporting sudden social events, maintaining objectivity, rationality, and comprehensiveness. Simultaneously, news platforms must shoulder the responsibility of ensuring the authenticity and objectivity of content, establishing rigorous content review mechanisms to prevent the dissemination of false information, stimulating public social responsibility, and contributing to harmonious social development.

6. Conclusion

As a crucial form of communication in the era of media convergence, short-form video news has profoundly transformed the way news is disseminated and will continue to play a pivotal role in information dissemination. However, the industry still faces multiple challenges, including content quality, copyright protection, and audience engagement. To achieve healthier and more sustainable development, continuous innovation and improvement are imperative. In the future, the dissemination of short-form video news will not only convey information but also spread social responsibility and positive energy, becoming a significant driving force for social progress.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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