

A Research of *West China Metropolitan Daily* Wide Media Integration Development Mode

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Received 25 July 2015; accepted 28 September 2015

Published online 26 November 2015

Abstract

In the Internet era, new media swept in with large amount of information and had huge influences on audiences and traditional media. On the one hand, its appearance makes the issuing channels and content of information diversified and it can satisfy audiences' demands on obtaining information rapidly; on the other hand, when new media are attracting more and more audiences, they have formed unprecedented shock to traditional media, especially paper media. Therefore, some people begin to lose faith in paper media, and speeches of "paper media are dying" arise.

In order to break the ice and realize new development, numerous traditional media also ushered in the coming of wide media through media integration. As the first metropolitan daily in China and the local metropolitan daily in Sichuan Province—*West China Metropolitan Daily* is reforming boldly and resolutely under new normal state. This paper aims to observe and discuss the wide media propagation mode of *West China Metropolitan Daily*.

Key words: New media; *West China Metropolitan Daily*; Wide media integration

Xiao, Y. Q. (2015). A Research of *West China Metropolitan Daily* Wide Media Integration Development Mode. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 11(5), 35-40. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/sll/article/view/7955>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/7955>

INTRODUCTION

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traditional media. On the one hand, its appearance makes the issuing channels and content of information diversified and it can satisfy audiences' demands on obtaining information rapidly. On the other hand, when new media are attracting more and more audiences, they have formed unprecedented shock to traditional media, especially paper media. Therefore, some people begin to lose faith in paper media, and speeches of "paper media are dying" arise.

Currently, media technology is upgrading continuously and propagation modes of news are changing accordingly. According to statistics, compared with 2013, retail amounts of various newspapers in China in 2014 decreased by 30.5%, and metropolitan daily reduced the most greatly. In daily life, we can also find that our demands for newspapers are reducing incessantly and the proportion of obtaining information from cellphones or the Internet is increasing.

Internet's transformation on the media industry is not replacing old communication technology means with new ones; rather, it is the subversion of the entire old media business mode. In order to reply challenges from new media, various traditional media have set about media integration and they have launched their own new media products one after another. On April 16th, 2012, *West China Metropolitan Daily* launched the road of "West China Media Aggregate" Integration Difference development which is newspaper-centered and system transformation and upgrading development. To the beginning of 2013, it has constructed a "West Media Group" integrating paper media, Internet media, mobile media, audio-visual media, community outdoor media and city public service platform, thereby realizing the reform from single print media to three-dimensional transmission platform. On December 18th, 2014, *West China Metropolitan Daily* issued media integration development "i strategy officially," the product framework of which covered i-Media, i-Link, i-EB and i-Finance so that this newspaper developed to a platform with multiple application functions.

This paper chooses *West China Metropolitan Daily* as research object and there are two points of major significance: firstly, as the first metropolitan daily in China, *West China Metropolitan Daily* has started publication for 20 years, owning wide audiences and advertisement client basis and traditional paper media features. Secondly, under integration development, *West China Metropolitan Daily* issued “i strategy”, which has been selected as “Top Ten Cases” of national newspaper innovation in 2014, thereby providing important development ideas and routes for media integration of other traditional media.

1. WIDE MEDIA AGE IS COMING, DILEMMA AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT PAPER MEDIA AND NEW MEDIA FACE

1.1 Definition of Traditional Media, New Media and Wide Media

Organizing definitions of “traditional media”, “new media” and “wide media” is helpful for the following analysis and research.

Traditional media are compared with Internet media which have risen in recent years. Traditional mass communication modes, media that issue information to social public through certain mechanical devices regularly or provide educational and entertainment platforms, mainly include media in traditional significance such as newspaper, outdoor, communication, broadcasting, television and we media outside network.

New media are a concept compared to the space-time concept and they are new media forms developed after newspaper, broadcasting, television and other traditional media. They include network media, cellphone media and digital television and so on. Wang Bin, secretary-general of New Media Industry Alliance, expressed that new media took digital information technology as basic and interactive communication as characteristic and they were media with innovative forms. *Wired*, an American magazine, defined new media as: communication from all people to all people. United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization tried to define new media as: media which is Internet-based for information communication.

Currently, the latest definition is: New media are media forms appeared with the support of new technology, such as digital magazine, digital newspapers, digital broadcasting, short message service, mobile television, Internet, desktop window, digital television, digital movies, touching media and cellphone network and so on. Compared with the four traditional media, which are newspaper, outdoor, broadcasting and television, they are called “the fifth medium” vividly. For example, *Two Wes and One Side* issued by West China

Metropolitan Daily, which are Micro-blog, We-chat and client-side and so on.

Simone Murray, a British Ph.D., pointed out that in the 1990s, Britain began to experience media integration tide. In 1986, in *Communication Technology: New Media in Society* by Rogers, he introduced the use and history of new media in the details as well as problems brought by new media to individuals and social life. While what benefited from new media transition is that in financial crisis in 2007, when newspaper industry in American and the world was under gigantic shock, the well-known financial medium *Wall Street Journal* outshone others and achieved uncommon performances. The reason is that after integrating newspaper net, it checked the loss of newspaper readers and the declining tendency of advertisements by “capturing” audiences and advertisers from the Internet.

Wide media refer to adopt multiple media representation means such as texts, voices, images, cartoons and webpages and different media forms such as broadcasting, television, video, film, publication, newspaper, magazine, and websites and so on and communicate through integrated broadcast television network, telecommunication network and Internet; finally, it realizes that users can finish integration reception of information from multiple terminals such as television, computers, cellphones and so on and realize the fact that anyone can achieve any information he wants anytime, anywhere with any terminal.

1.2 National Newspaper Retail Decreased by 30%, Are Paper Media Really Dying?

According to Shiji Huawen’s continuous monitoring data of newspaper retail terminal (including newsstand, convenience store, supermarket, bookshop and so on) in over 70 cities in China, retail amount of various newspaper in China decreased by 30.5% compared with 2013, and metropolitan daily, financial newspaper and IT newspaper decreased the most. From market tendencies in recent 3 years, they have been decreasing continuously. The overall retail amount of national party newspaper in 2014 kept stable and the sales volume rose by 0.3% slightly, while the overall sales volume of life service type newspaper in 2014 kept the original standard basically. What is worth notice is that under the deteriorating newspaper sales environment, there is a small part of newspaper which not only survives greatly, but also their sales are rising. This type of newspaper is current politics. In 2014, the retail sales volume of national politics newspaper had 17.5% comparative growth on moving base, presenting rising trend.

From this data, we can see that the overall sales volumes of paper media as traditional media are decreasing actually.

However, according to data issued by the general administration of State Administration of Press,

Publication, Radio, Film and Television, until the end of April, 2007, the total amount of periodicals is 9,468; until 2012, there have been 1,918 kinds of newspapers nationwide.

Though *The First*, *Evening Post*, *Zawenbao* and *News Times* announced suspension of publication in succession in 2014, numerous people in China felt sorry for them and began to feel that the death of paper media was coming and speeches of “paper media are dying” arise.

However, according to relative statistics, newspapers and periodicals that stopped publication last year were over 10 kinds. With this speed, paper media that exited the market was only 1/1,000, which means it needs 1,000 years for the complete death of paper media. However, from the current data, in the Internet era, multiple new media products, such as We-chat push and App client-side, the numbers of “death” are several times of paper media.

1.3 Internet Tide Is Both Impact and Opportunity to New and Old Media

A long time ago, there has been the saying that new media hounded traditional media to death. For example, when television media first appeared, a lot of people felt that the traditional medium of broadcast would be soon replaced and die. However, with the popularity of automobiles, vehicle-mounted broadcast became popular and won the market again, which made the advertisement of the current broadcasting industry increase still. However, new media such as Sina, Netease and other web portals, which won everyone’s favor originally, were suffering. When comparing traditional media and new media, we cannot adopt “sweeping approach” and choose extreme cases. For example, we cannot choose the prosperous “Jin Ri Tou Tiao” and the closed paper media *Evening Post* for comparison, which is quite extreme.

If we say the influences of Internet on media are disastrous, they act on traditional media and new media at the same time. To media, what the Internet brings is not only communication technology means; rather, it is major influence on the entire old media business mode.

In the Internet era, “information asymmetry” and “monopoly of distribution channels” that media rely on are decomposed greatly. Just because the distribution channels of information are no longer monopolized by media, everyone can publicize information through “We-chat” and “Micro-blog” rather than waiting for the report from the media.

However, the changing “new media” are not almighty, their strong replicability, miscellaneous information, lack of depth and authority can rarely benefit from Internet where information is almost free. However, traditional media including *West China Metropolitan Daily* can keep their authority and depth of information through their own resources.

Obviously, new media are advantageous over traditional media in some aspects. However, the inherent

advantages of traditional media cannot be surpassed by new media in short time. Just because the existence of these differences, through mutual integration and complementation of traditional media and new media, audiences can not only feel the convenience of information but also realize the “rebirth” of the media industry.

2. WIDE MEDIA INTEGRATION OF WEST CHINA METROPOLITAN DAILY

2.1 Background of West China Metropolitan Daily Implementing Wide Media Integration

With the rapid development of Internet and continuous innovation of modern science and technology, our ways of obtaining information and news are also changing. From the traditional media such as newspapers, journals, broadcast and television, to scanning Micro-blog on cellphones when taking a bus and looking at the APPs, or watching Tencent push or web portals every day in front of computer, we can achieve various news and information.

According to *Statistical Report of the 34th Chinese Internet Development Status* issued by CNNIC, the proportion of Chinese netizens using cellphones to surf the Internet has exceeded that of traditional PC (only including desktop computer and laptops, not including tablet PC and other newly-developing personal terminal equipment), the status of cellphone as the first surfing-Internet terminal equipment is more solid. Until the end of July, 2014, there have been 632 million netizens in China and 527 million netizens choose to surf the Internet through cellphones.

“The age of reform has come.” Ever since the birth of Internet, scholars at home and abroad have realized this point. McLuhan, a medium theory expert, has said that medium is the extension of human. This viewpoint has been becoming reality with the popularity of computers and cellphones, and development of media technology is also changing ecology of communication strongly. Cellphone has become an important extension of human organs. Similarly, Yang Mingrong, a well-known Sichuan journalist, expressed that the media would not disappear, but they will change.

“New media” have satisfied requirements of audiences with its rapidness and convenience. Communication speed of traditional paper media cannot compare that of new media, which leads to the backwardness of timeliness, and they cannot compare with the direct presentation of videos. Therefore, paper media are facing unprecedented pressure. With the closing down of multiple newspapers, more people began to worry about paper media, especially the survival or death of the metropolitan daily.

Li Peng, proprietor of *West China Metropolitan Daily*, said that, “under the new normal state, the development

mode of metropolitan daily in the past 20 years cannot continue any more, and it is not enough to support the newspaper to walk further. If we still rely on the traditional mode, we can do nothing but wait for death.”

Modern history of human society is actually a science and technology development history. Each time of scientific and technical revolution is pushing human society onto a new stage, and things that stick to tradition would always be eliminated. For example, because of defending traditional film market tenaciously, Kodak was eliminated by digital age; when smart phones first appear, the “king” of cellphone Nokia did not catch opportunities of smart age and was eliminated by the age. The fall of these world “magnates” is enough to warn metropolitan daily that in the new media age, we cannot stick to traditions; rather, we should embrace new opportunities.

Based on this, when mobile Internet is quite prevailing, *West China Metropolitan Daily* adopts active “attacks”. It relies on opportunities brought by new media, implements integration of new and old media, conforms to the times and development rules of news media. What should be noticed is that the integration of *West China Metropolitan Daily* is not simple integration of newspaper and Internet; rather, it expands the business to platforms such as consultation, social contact and e-commerce, thereby forming West Media Group and newspaper is only a part of the group.

Through this reform, *West China Metropolitan Daily* attracts new audiences through electronic edition and APP on Internet and cellphone media and its brand influences are promoted. In the meantime, it attracts advertisement clients who like the Internet so that they put their advertisement onto Internet platform.

2.2 Process of Wide Media Integration of *West China Metropolitan Daily*

After wide media integration of *West China Metropolitan Daily*, the following paper media are formed: WMG integrating *West China Metropolitan Daily*, *West China City Reading*, *West China Community Newspaper*; network media: West China metropolis network 8 hour shopping net; mobile media; *West China Metropolitan Daily* “Two Wes and One Side”, hand Sichuan “Two Wes and One Side” and so on; audio-visual media: FM90.0 broadcast frequency Tianfu Travel television program; urban public service platform; West China media call center 96111 and so on.

After 2011, *West China Community Newspaper* registered Micro-blog, We-chat and client-side preemptively and West China metropolitan net went online and operation. Currently, the number of fans for official Micro-blog has reached 2.37 million.

On April 16th, 2012, after 20 years of wind and rain, the first metropolitan newspaper in China, *West China Community* took a new round of content innovation and

revision as symbols and launched newspaper-centered “WMG” integration different development and system transition upgrading development. The daily circulation of the newspaper is over 1 million.

At the beginning of 2013, *West China Community* set about creating “WMG” and adhered to the strategic direction of cluster development, thereby constructing a “WMG” integrating paper media, Internet media, mobile media, audio-visual media, community outdoor media and urban public service platform and realizing the transformation of traditional media from single print media to three-dimensional communication platform.

On December 18th, 2014, *West China Community* drew a thick a heavy print for wide media integration. It launched “i strategy” of WMG for the first time in China. It includes four types of products as i-Media, i-Link, i-EB and i-Finance, altogether over 50 vertical product platforms.

In this framework, media are no longer an information carrier; rather, it becomes comprehensive platform of information and service.

2.3 Analysis of Effects of *West China Community* Wide Media Integration Measures

2.3.1 Overall Arrangement: Our Types of Products Forging Comprehensive Platform

“i strategy” issued by *West China Community* includes three core products, i.e., *West China Community* Two Wes and One Side and hand Sichuan Two Wes and One Side and Baidu news West China channel. At present, the download amount of *West China Community* Two Wes APP has reached 500,000 times, and the number of We-chat public account has reached 100,000. “Sichuan on your hand” that it cooperated with China Mobile Reading base takes creating the first web portals of Sichuan life as target, and it is predicted that it will realize 1 million installed capacity in 2015. As to social contact, West China also issued 3 types of social contact products aiming at different groups, which are consumption consultation sharing platform “Classic Chengdu”, blind date platform “Chengdu Matchmaker” and “Square Dance” client-side. In the meantime, West China also relies on its own “8 Hour Shopping Website” to develop e-commerce.

2.3.2 Trans-Boundary: Constructing Southwest E-Commerce Base With Ali

Newspaper not only possesses properties of media but also can provide multiple types of service to enterprises.

In August 2014, *West China Metropolitan Daily* started strategic cooperation with e-commerce Alibaba, and cooperated to create Southwest e-commerce base, thereby providing professional service to traditional enterprise e-commerce in Sichuan. Xia Ji, director of Marketing Department of Alibaba Taobao, expressed that during “Double 11” in 2014, Sichuan netizens contributed 2.68 billion Yuan, ranking the 9th in national

Alipay payment amount. Through cooperation with *West China Metropolitan Daily*, it will promote development of Sichuan e-commerce effectively.

Therefore, we can see that the trans-boundary cooperation with *West China Metropolitan Daily* can not only make it benefit from cooperation with e-commerce, but also improve its influence in consumption areas further relying on the platform of Alibaba.

2.3.3 Integration: The Only Medium That Entering Baidu Media

In December 2014, *West China Metropolitan Daily* became the only traditional medium that entered Baidu media platform. The cooperation between *West China Metropolitan Daily* and Baidu media has broken the rumor of disharmony between traditional media and Internet.

About this, Yu Wanzhen, senior director of Baidu VIP Account Department and lecturer of Baidu Research Institute, expressed that influences of report from *West China Metropolitan Daily* and other traditional media on network name search behaviors were out of many people's expectations; through efficient propagation, the reports would influence trend of Baidu index directly. In the meantime, she believed that this cooperation would increase the advertisement gold content of *West China Metropolitan Daily* greatly.

It is a great move for *West China Metropolitan Daily* to choose Baidu Media, which is subordinate to the largest search engine Baidu in China. Under the Internet environment, when *West China Metropolitan Daily* is putting in paper media, the reports are also propagated on the Internet, which have won flow on the Internet and possess high additional value.

2.3.4 Reform: Cooperating and Developing Ecosphere That Increases at Exponential Order

At the beginning of 2015, WMG issued precise interactive marketing system based on characteristics of new media, users' features and millions of users' data bank—jettison system of precise advertisement. The fifth “i” that igniting West China wide media integration “i strategy”—increase at exponential order co-constructs ecological sphere at exponential order with cooperative partners.

Through its resource advantages of its subordinate regional media, *West China Metropolitan Daily* has solved development of large-scale Internet enterprise in local regions so as to construct closer cooperation with business partners on multiple cooperation points.

3. DISADVANTAGES AND SUGGESTIONS TO WEST CHINA METROPOLITAN DAILY

3.1 Disadvantages of Wide Media Integration of *West China Metropolitan Daily*

After wide media integration of *West China Metropolitan Daily*, information and service comprehensive platform

integrating paper media, network media, mobile media, audio-visual media and municipal public service platform has formed. Though it has been at the top of metropolitan daily wide media, there are still problems of insufficient coordination of media.

Substantial changes have not happened in inner structure, management mode and operating mechanism. For example, paper media journalists mainly rely on manuscript points of newspaper, and new media platforms mainly forward newspaper and so on. Barriers among departments have not been broken yet. If relation and cooperation among different departments have not been strengthened, such integration is merely a form and real wide media broadcasting has not been realized.

3.2 Suggestions to *West China Metropolitan Daily* Wide Media Integration

3.2.1 Strengthening Interactivity Between New Media Products and Audiences

In Internet era, psychology that audiences obtain information is not as simple as unilateral acceptance. What audiences want more is that when they are accepting information, they can interact with publishers, express their own opinions or problems and obtain responses. Therefore, attention on interactivity of information is beneficial for the improvement of readers' attention and enthusiasm of participation. About this point, the author believes that he can have some reference from “Pengpai News”.

Pengpai News creates the precedent of politics media and they have set two functions of “Tracing News” and “Tracking News” on the website and client. On its client-side, users can slide to the right and enter a special hot asking website, on which they can both scan excellent questions and answers and ask and wait for answers; while the function of tracking news can be realized through the button of tracking; users click on the tracking button and mark certain event or topics; when there is new progress, the system can post the new report through labels and key words to the tracking center, which can avoid fast-food information reading and strengthen users viscosity.

Besides, “Hui Yi Zhuan Yong Xiao Ma Jia”, one of the big Vs whose number of fans of Micro-blog new media has reached 10 million cannot only public articles and pictures according to netizens' habits, but also interact with netizens with humorous languages so as to win a large number of loyal fans.

3.2.2 Improving Content Quality of News

When new media are improving, it is certain that most of them will be eliminated by the market. Only by improving their own content and making high quality news with thoughts and watching focuses can they capture attention from readers.

When *West China Metropolitan Daily* is publishing large amount of information, they should exert advantages

of authoritative explanation and deep report, explore new resources and issue advantageous content. In wide media age, advantages of new news content production cannot be neglected, and news content production is still the core of media. At present, diverse and fragment information cannot satisfy readers' curiosity and pursuit for high quality news. Therefore, *West China Metropolitan Daily* need to increase content and page of report; it should rely on new media technology to develop content productivity; when it satisfies readers' reading demands for large amount of information, it can also realize digital regression of high quality news.

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