**key elements of media convergence - Technology, ecology, and norms**

Source: Academic Frontiers, February 2019

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Editor: Zheng Shaowu

2019-04-04

https://www.rmlt.com.cn/2019/0404/543834.shtml

[Abstract] Media convergence has become the theme of the development of my country's media industry, which has had a huge impact on traditional media management concepts and methods. The development of digital technology has driven the evolution of the media ecology. From the integration of media forms, the interaction between media and social life to the integration of media ecology, the breadth and depth of integration have been continuously strengthened. This article grasps the current situation and trend of my country's media convergence development from the aspects of technology drive, ecological impact, market, and normative optimization, and thinks from a strategic level about how to provide effective support for the development of media convergence at the policy level, so that the development of media convergence can play a more positive and effective role in the process of my country's economic and social construction.

【Key words】Technology drives ecological integration and norms guide the development of media integration

【Chinese Library Classification Number】G21 【Document Identification Code】A

【DOI】10.16619/j.cnki.rmltxsqy.2019.03.003

In his speech at the fourth meeting of the Central Leading Group for Deepening Comprehensive Reform, General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed: “We should strive to build a group of new mainstream media with diverse forms, advanced means and competitiveness, establish several new media groups with strong strength, communication power, credibility and influence, and form a three-dimensional, diverse and integrated modern communication system. We should focus on integration and management to ensure that integrated development is promoted in the right direction.”[1] The meeting reviewed and approved the “Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Integrated Development of Traditional and New Media”, which became a landmark event in my country’s promotion of media integration. After several years of development, my country’s media integration is deepening and has a greater impact on society. Both traditional and new media are facing a new competitive environment. Traditional media management and operation concepts can no longer adapt to the development trends and requirements of the media industry. Driven by multiple factors such as technology and capital, the development of media integration has seen the problem of “wild growth” in many fields. Because media integration has a wide impact on social development, if it cannot be effectively controlled and guided, it will have many negative effects.

**Technology: the driving force but not the determining factor of media convergence**

The report of the 19th CPC National Congress pointed out: "We should attach great importance to the construction and innovation of communication means, and improve the communication, guidance, influence and credibility of news and public opinion. Communication technology is becoming more and more important as the driving force of media development, and is widely valued by media organizations." [2] The development of the media industry is based on technological progress. The emergence of each new communication form is due to the emergence of new communication technology or new ways of using communication technology. The reason why various independently developed media forms can be integrated is that technological development has given rise to a unified media digital information platform, breaking the traditional media technology division. For traditional media, the channel and form monopoly formed based on technology has lost its original competitiveness in the current media ecology; many emerging media have made great progress with the advantages of technology and operation models, and are changing the information dissemination model in the form of integrated communication. Therefore, it can be said that driven by communication technology, all media forms will return to "integrated forms". Faced with the huge impact of technological progress on the development of media convergence, many media people have changed their thinking patterns and media operation concepts and actively embraced new technologies. This article analyzes the driving role of technological factors in the development of media convergence from three aspects: media production process reconstruction, channel expansion, and industrial structure transformation, and briefly analyzes and reflects on them.

Technology drives the innovation and reconstruction of media production processes. Content production is the core link of media convergence development. Media technology promotes fundamental changes in the isolated and linear production processes of traditional media, creating basic conditions for the integration and development of other links. The content production process, especially the change of the content production process of traditional media, is carried out under the joint action of many factors. In addition to technical factors, policies, media strategies, organizational structures, and personal will of managers can all play a greater role in it. The unstoppable trend of technological development and the requirements of integrated development have broken the last bit of "inertia" in media content production. In order to avoid being eliminated by the times, competent departments and media units at all levels have actively promoted the exploration of innovation and reconstruction of media production processes in recent years. This is particularly evident in the operational innovation of traditional media. In addition, because the degree of Internetization of emerging media is relatively high, the content production process of emerging media is very different from the linear traditional media content production from the beginning of its construction. Moreover, with the development of technology, the content production process of emerging media has also been continuously optimized, such as the application and development of content production based on intelligent technology in companies such as Tencent and Toutiao.

Whether it is traditional media or emerging media, they are faced with the law of integrated media development and the ever-changing requirements for media content production. In many links, there is no traditional experience to learn from. Only by constantly making forward-looking layouts and adjustments based on the understanding and grasp of media technology and the market. There are many representative cases of innovation and reconstruction of content production processes. For example, in recent years, media units at all levels are actively exploring and promoting the central kitchen. With the central kitchen as the core, they actively change the traditional news content production process, realize the gathering of high-quality content resources and the integration of distribution, dissemination and interaction. People's Daily, CCTV and other media have explored a relatively efficient "central kitchen", which has become a benchmark for the reengineering of many domestic media content processes. The "central kitchen" based on advanced digital technology promotes the reengineering of the content production process of traditional media, and also provides an opportunity for the optimization of operation mechanisms, organizational structures and other aspects.

Technology drives the expansion and integration of media channels. The expansion of channels is an external manifestation of the development of media convergence, and is also an internal requirement for the continuous advancement of media convergence. The mode, form, and degree of development of media channel expansion and integration have become important criteria for judging the level of media convergence development to a certain extent. The obvious impact of technological progress on the development of media convergence is precisely the expansion of emerging channels. Unified and platform-based digital technology has created conditions for breaking through the barriers between different industries, different media forms, and different information scenarios. In the process of media convergence development, many successful cases of cross-border operations and overtaking have emerged. Among the many driving factors for the expansion and integration of communication channels, the development of technology is directly related to communication channels. The form of technology can determine the form of communication channels, and the development of technology can promote the evolution of the form of communication channel integration. For example, the development of mobile communication technology has enabled the evolution of communication channels to continuously progress in the direction of mobility and intelligence. This is clearly reflected in many aspects of channel integration, such as "platforms based on VR (virtual reality technology) will soon become the next generation of news portals. Faced with the possibility of rapid replacement of portals driven by technology, how the media responds is an issue worthy of further attention" [3].

Throughout the history of media development, the distance between communication channels and social production and life has become closer and closer. The expansion and integration of channels can provide greater convenience for the audience. Driven by technological factors, the integration and development of communication channels will continue to deepen, and the degree of involvement in social production and life will become deeper and deeper. The diversification of technological forms will also make the forms of communication channels richer and able to adapt to the needs of different information scenarios. For example, the connection between communication channels and people's life scenes, "the boundaries of the home have become easily permeable in an era of media ubiquity. Media devices have become a common element in shaping urban public spaces. The development of new mobile devices has intensified the challenge to the existing boundaries of public and private spaces" [4]. Technological progress has provided great convenience for life. The expansion and integration of communication channels is also an important part of it. The boundaries of life scenes are gradually disappearing due to the expansion of communication channels. As a result, the interaction between technology, social life and communication channels is becoming more and more frequent.

Technology drives the transformation and upgrading of the media industry. "The industrial attributes of the media have been further highlighted in the wave of media convergence. Convergence brings more than just changes in the media form. Behind the content production and channel integration, capital operation, industrial integration and reconstruction have become important themes in the media industry." [5] The transformation and upgrading of the media industry structure reflects the connotation and requirements of integrated development. The "revolutionary" progress of digital technology has created favorable conditions for the transformation and upgrading of the media industry. "The innovation and application of new media technologies such as cloud computing, big data, the Internet of Things, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence have become the internal driving force for the accelerated development of the media industry." [6] The optimization and upgrading of the media industry structure has brought greater space for integrated development and has become a huge boost to the development of media convergence. Technology, industry, capital and other factors have also achieved integration and played a role in the evolution of the media industry. At the same time, it can also achieve mutual verification of the effectiveness of different driving factors. If the application of new technology forms cannot be recognized by the media market and cannot play a positive role in market competition, then the life cycle of media products based on this technology form will not be long.

In addition, the upgrading of the media industry has become an indispensable part of the transformation and adjustment of my country's economic and social structure. Technological progress has provided many new possibilities for strengthening the relationship between the upgrading of the media industry and the optimization of the economic and social structure. Technology has not only made the "Internet of Everything" gradually become a reality, but also made the interconnection between different industries and between the economy and society possible. For example, under the promotion of the "Internet +" strategy, the media industry and traditional industries have achieved deep integration. "Originally isolated traditional industries are connected, and information exchange between industries is completed through big data. New information technologies represented by cloud computing, the Internet of Things, and mobile communication networks provide possibilities for changing the isolation and isolation of information. "Internet +" as an external driving force is conducive to the deep integration of the Internet and traditional industries" [7]. Therefore, driven by "revolutionary" technology, the transformation and upgrading of the media industry structure is not limited to the media market, but has been deeply integrated with different industries. This has posed new challenges to our current media integration development concepts, strategies, and methods.

Analysis and reflection on technology-driven development. The process of different media forms from independence to integration is driven by many factors. Capital, policies, technology, etc. have played an indispensable role in this process. Among all driving factors, technology has the most direct relationship with media forms and communication methods. To a certain extent, the form and development level of technology determine the way of information dissemination and interaction. Therefore, the misunderstanding of "technological determinism" has emerged in the process of media convergence. Although technology plays an irreplaceable and key role in the development of media convergence, if it is positioned as a decisive factor, it will not be conducive to the formation of a scientific media convergence strategy and path. For example, driven by artificial intelligence technology, the era of intelligent communication has arrived, and "artificial intelligence +" has become another driving factor for the development of media convergence. "The technological innovation of artificial intelligence has profoundly affected all aspects of news production. The speed of media convergence is also accelerating, and the depth of media convergence is also increasing. It is developing in a more intelligent direction. The implementation of artificial intelligence technology has led to tremendous changes in the media industry in terms of content creation, content presentation and other aspects." [8] While artificial intelligence provides new models and new paths for the development of media convergence, it also brings various new problems, such as algorithm ethics and intelligent "cocoons". In the face of the positive and negative effects of technological progress on media convergence, it is necessary to make a profound analysis of the "decisive" role of technology-driven factors to lay the foundation for building a scientific communication order.

**Ecological integration is the evolutionary direction of media convergence development**

The development of convergence driven by technology has broken the boundaries and divisions between traditional media, bringing a certain impact on people's understanding of media. Whether it is traditional media or emerging media, media field or non-media field, they are all rethinking the current situation and direction of media convergence development. "Morphological convergence and innovation are only the external manifestations of the trend of media convergence. Behind it is the major changes that the media ecology is undergoing... This subversion is gradually manifested in many aspects, from the reform of the national media management system to the corporatization of specific media units, from the expansion of communication platforms to the attempts of the capital market. The tentacles of convergence have extended to all levels of the media industry, and the reconstruction of the media structure and ecology has begun." [9] Ecological convergence is the evolutionary direction of morphological convergence. The level of ecological convergence also makes it easier for us to understand the problems existing in media morphological convergence and find corresponding countermeasures. Here, according to the logic of media morphological convergence - the integration of media and social life - media ecological convergence, this evolutionary direction is briefly discussed.

Media form convergence. The most direct manifestation of media convergence is form convergence. The evolution from single-form media to all-media form operation and then to convergence reflects the characteristics of the development of the media industry in recent years. "Under the background of convergence, the direct connection between content production and other links is closer, more professional and non-professional forces are involved in the communication process, the boundaries of communication are broken, and the communication pattern is in the process of reconstruction" [10]. Innovation in media form is an important sign of the development and progress of the media industry. The convergence development at this level is relatively mature, and the logic and path of form convergence are relatively clear. After years of "all-media" operation attempts, many media units have begun to think deeply about how to break through the "all" of simple media forms and gradually achieve the aggregation effect of "1+1>2" between different forms.

The integration and development of different media forms need to break through the simple formal "all", which reflects the change of thinking from "all" to "integration" in media forms. "The key to the success or failure of the all-media strategy is no longer the horizontal "all" at the form level, but the vertical "integration" of strategic thinking, operational strategy, communication methods and other levels. The development of all-media in the future communication ecological environment requires the integration and shaping of mainstream communication power, public opinion influence and brand radiation power, which requires both horizontal integration between different media forms and vertical integration between different strategic sectors. It also requires innovative, cross-border and oblique integration in accordance with the new requirements of industry development." [11] The process of achieving media form integration is also, to a large extent, a process of optimizing and upgrading the media industry structure. From this perspective, integration at the media form level is also the main focus of many traditional media in their transformation and development process. This is because traditional media have long been at a disadvantage in terms of media form diversification and channel innovation. The expansion and integration of forms have also achieved the transformation and optimization of traditional media. Emerging media, based on their advantages in technology, market, and operating mechanisms, are also actively promoting the continuous innovation of media forms. New forms such as live broadcast, robot news, smart push, and short videos are constantly emerging. In these links, emerging media continue to be in a leading position, allowing the integration of traditional media and emerging media to form a healthy competitive tension.

Integration of media and social life. The influence of media integration is no longer limited to the media industry. Based on the continuous expansion and optimization of the interaction between media and social life, the trend of integration is also being strengthened between media and social life. Integration with social life will also create more opportunities for the progress of media. "The Internet is no longer a simple media, but a new life platform and living space. Users no longer use content only as audiences, but as members of the space, they build their own digital life and the Internet world. People have replaced content and become the basic unit of the Internet. This basic unit exists in the form of network nodes. Each user, as a node, may exert his own influence on the entire network." [12] With users as nodes, the interactive scenes between media and social life are becoming more and more abundant, making the integration of media and social life more in-depth.

One of the manifestations of the integration of media and social life is cross-border integration. The development of media integration has broken through the boundaries of the media industry and gradually "intervened" in other areas of social life. It has played its own advantages in information dissemination in more social scenarios and provided more services to people through dissemination activities, which can also give rise to more new growth points in the media industry. "Media convergence based on digital communication technology is developing in two directions. One is combined convergence, that is, the integration of different media based on information and communication technology (ICT); the other is embedded convergence, that is, the situation where media based on intelligent and mobile Internet technology acts as an independent intermediary to connect things belonging to different fields. We call this cross-border integration"[13]. Before cross-border integration, media was just a medium in the field of media. However, with the integration of media and social life, media gradually became independent from a single industry form and began to exist as a universal "connection".

The existence of universal "connection" has made it possible for many originally isolated social subjects and life scenes to communicate and interconnect. The media has become a driving factor for the reorganization of social time and space relations and a basic platform for the development of social information life. Cross-border integration is more conveniently achieved based on a unified basic platform. Cross-border integration can enable the most powerful and creative communicators to discover new operating models and development space, thereby enhancing the vitality of the overall media market; it can also enable any subject to obtain convenience on the media platform at low or no cost, so that the media and social life can promote each other in integrated interaction.

Integration of media ecology. The integration of media and social life will further expand and deepen, and its ultimate development direction is the integration of media ecology. "The challenges and opportunities brought by the Internet to traditional media are equally significant. The core of these is the profound changes in the media's living environment and ecological structure. This subversion has reconstructed every aspect of the media ecology. In the future, media may be more than just media." [14] In the future media environment, the objects of media integration will be more diverse, the methods of integration will be more scientific, and the effects of integration will be more humane. The media of the future is not just media in the current sense, but a platform node for the interaction between media ecology and different scenarios. Ecological integration will promote the further upgrading of the concept of media integration development.

Taking the integration of media, technology and urban space as an example, "media convergence should move from the integration of a single media organization and industry to a diversified integration. The integration of media technology and space has opened up a new perspective for us to observe media convergence. The integration of media and urban space has made contemporary cities a 'media-architecture complex' and created a 'media city'"[15]. In this integration process, media gives life to urban space, making the city an ecological space based on media integration. During the research process of the major national social science project "Research on Accelerating the Integration of Traditional Media and Emerging Media", the author found that "competing for entrances and improving the coverage of mobile Internet have become the common strategic goals of many media and enterprises. This is also the process of integrated development of communication channels. E-commerce, social applications, finance and payment, travel, search, communication, online education, games, telemedicine and other life application scenarios have all moved from concepts to reality, and the in-depth combination of media and application scenarios can in turn promote the development of ecological integration."[16]

The integration of media ecology has opened up a greater space for imagination for the media industry. The integration of content, channels, industries and other aspects can achieve breakthroughs. Both traditional media and emerging media can find their own strategic direction, positioning and strategy from the perspective of ecological integration. The trend of media ecological integration is clear, and it has been achieved to varying degrees in certain links and fields. This is a worthy achievement of my country's media industry; but at the same time, we must also be aware that media ecological integration has a great impact on traditional media norms and management, and poses a challenge to my country's media management system and mechanism.

**Norms: Policy recommendations for the development of media convergence in my country**

In the process of technology-driven and ecological transformation, my country's media environment has undergone tremendous changes. Many traditional media management concepts and methods have been unable to adapt to the new demands of the integrated ecology. At the same time, the evolution of the media integration ecology is constantly posing various new problems to managers. In the face of various challenges posed by ecological integration, if the media ecological integration can be scientifically guided and managed, then my country's media integration will play a more positive role in social production and life, and can also promote the transformation and upgrading of the media industry; however, if the development of media integration cannot form scientific and effective norms, but is allowed to "grow wildly", not only will media integration go astray, but it will also have a negative impact on social development. Based on the analysis of the development direction of technology-driven factors and media ecological integration, this paper interprets the outstanding problems in my country's current media integration process, and provides corresponding suggestions on how to scientifically regulate and guide it from the policy aspect.

Based on the analysis of technology-driven factors and the grasp of the development direction of media ecological integration, it can be found that there are still many problems that need to be solved in the normative level of media integration development in my country, which are more prominently reflected in the following two aspects. First, there is a complex game between media integration, media market development, and media system reform. Media integration is developing in exploration, and it will definitely be accompanied by various problems. The starting points of media market and system reform in dealing with these problems are different. The main players in the media market pursue the new growth points and market space that emerge in the process of integration. Faced with the contradiction between social benefits and economic benefits, they instinctively tend to economic benefits; while media industry managers and system reform promoters pay more attention to social benefits, and at the same time have the responsibility to promote the healthy development of the media industry and improve economic benefits. In the context that media integration has become the theme of the current media industry development, the balance between norms and the market has become a core issue that tests managers. How the management system and policies can interact efficiently with the market innovation mechanism is an important goal we pursue.

Second, media convergence still has the problem of "barbaric growth" in some areas. In recent years, driven by advanced technology and market space, a variety of innovative communication forms and methods have achieved "explosive" growth, such as live broadcast, short video, online variety show, online movie, etc., but they all have the characteristics of "barbaric growth" to varying degrees. For example, the rapid rise of short videos is accompanied by the crazy spread of various vulgar content, which has caused serious negative impacts. The spread of vulgar content has brought short-term high-speed growth to individual platforms and software, but this development model fundamentally violates the inherent requirements of media convergence development. It is worth affirming that the competent authorities have taken timely measures to manage and rectify various chaos in the process of media convergence development, and have effectively curbed the "barbaric growth" phenomenon to a certain extent. However, there is still a problem in the standardized behavior of the current competent authorities, that is, there is no basic, systematic, and standardized management mechanism suitable for media ecological integration. If there is no such mechanism as a guarantee for the development of the industry, it is still not enough to meet the future needs of media convergence development by simply relying on the "patch" approach of solving a problem when it occurs.

In the face of the problems in the normative development of media convergence, we must make necessary top-level design and optimization from the media system and policy level, strive to form effective normative guidance for the development of media convergence, and promote the healthy development of my country's media industry. Here, we will start from the following aspects and put forward corresponding strategic suggestions for this issue. First, pay attention to the optimization of the top-level design of the media industry. From the analysis of the above-mentioned problems, it can be seen that different factors such as system, policy, technology, and market are in different dimensions in the process of media convergence development. For example, industry normative policies have strong supervisory characteristics, and technology and market have strong objective characteristics. The needs and functions in the integration process are very different, and it is difficult to regulate them according to unified standards; at the same time, the reform of the media system and policy will promote a chain reaction of factors in many other dimensions, and often have a "domino effect", especially the impact on the media industry level. Therefore, in the process of strengthening and optimizing the top-level design of my country's media industry, on the one hand, we should focus on the scientific nature of media system optimization and policy innovation, so as to effectively avoid the lagging impact of policy changes on the industry and the negative effects caused by subjective dimension characteristics; on the other hand, we should strive to make the media system and policies form a guiding force for the development of the industry, so as to improve the efficiency of integrated development while ensuring directional guidance.

Second, strengthen public opinion guidance with institutional guarantees and enhance the leading role of mainstream media in the integrated ecology. It is true that media integration has a positive effect on promoting the development of public opinion, but the many chaos that have emerged in the integration process have also had a great impact on social public opinion, causing the voice of mainstream media to be drowned in a sea of ​​"noise". "From the perspective of political logic, promoting the integrated development of traditional media and emerging media is not only a strategic requirement for doing a good job in ideological work, but also an urgent task for strengthening mainstream public opinion" [17]. The public opinion guidance of mainstream media should play its due role in the media ecology. This is the inherent meaning of integrated development. "With the transformation of China's political information exchange from political propaganda to political communication, coupled with the profound changes in the media industry environment, effectiveness has gradually become the core of my country's propaganda strategy and the pursuit of political news practice" [18]. While strengthening public opinion guidance, we must also pay attention to the establishment and optimization of indicators such as effectiveness and scientificity. After all, public opinion guidance in the context of media integration is very different from public opinion guidance in the traditional media era.

Third, my country's media integration guidance must have an international vision and height. my country's international influence is gradually increasing, and China's voice also needs to be transmitted to the world through its own communication channels. The development of media integration has created a historic opportunity for this strategic goal. Digital technology provides favorable tools, and the interaction between domestic and foreign media has further enriched the media ecological environment. "In terms of international Internet governance, China is seeking a game-based international integration. That is, driven by a series of domestic and international forces, China's Internet has actually been deeply integrated with the dominant global structure and rules, although this integration process is still full of many unresolved disputes, confrontations and competitions at the political and economic levels." [19] International competition is a complex system project involving many levels such as politics, economy, and culture. At present, the impact of media integration development cannot be ignored. It is necessary to guide the development of my country's media integration from this perspective.

Fourth, the emphasis on and guidance of humanistic norms. "After going through the stages of technological integration, scene integration, industrial integration, cultural integration, and social form integration, media integration is moving towards integration at the subject level - the integration of technology and people... The dual logics of people and technology are intertwined and embedded, becoming the meta-media of the post-human era, reshaping the social system and changing the relationship between people and the world" [20]. The integration of media and social life, and the integration of media ecology have broken too many traditional information dissemination laws, social and cultural dissemination methods, and ways of interaction between people, and have produced a series of cases that have impacted traditional values. For example, intelligent dissemination has brought new media ethics issues. These issues have stimulated in-depth discussions from all walks of life, and different subjects have been thinking about countermeasures from various angles. It is also necessary to form norms at the policy level so that practitioners pay great attention to this issue.

**Conclusion**

"Media integration and development are currently in a period of opportunity with the right time, right place and right people. There is the right time - the central government's decision-making and deployment, and top-level design; there is the right place - local party committees and governments, based on their locational advantages, make overall plans and provide unprecedented support; and there is the right people - the sense of crisis and mission that there will be no media without integration, and the determination and confidence to increase the speed of integration and development have become the most widely recognized consensus among mainstream media"[21]. At present, my country's media integration and development are in a period of opportunity with the right time, right place and right people. The basic conditions such as technology, capital, talents and market are complete. After years of accumulation, we have also initially mastered the laws and directions of media integration and development. We need to have a certain degree of foresight and international vision, and from the perspective of media ecological integration, based on the requirements of my country's economic and social development, examine the current situation and problems of media integration and development, explore scientific normative guidance strategies, and continuously promote the process of media integration and development in my country. “Media convergence is not something that can be achieved overnight. It requires the joint efforts of leaders of media management departments, leaders of media units, and frontline media practitioners to innovate and advance in a down-to-earth manner. On the basis of the existing convergence of media in my country, we should accelerate the in-depth convergence of traditional media and emerging media in China and accelerate the establishment of my country’s modern communication system.”[22] Although there are still many problems in the process of media convergence in my country, we believe that driven by the huge development potential and the continuous optimization of management mechanisms and norms, the evolution from media form convergence, media and social life interaction to media ecological convergence will become more and more in-depth. Because of convergence, the media will play a greater and more positive role in the future economic and social life.

(Liu Feng, a lecturer and PhD student at the School of Publishing, Printing and Art Design, University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, also contributed to this article)

**Notes**

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Editor: Zhao Xinyang

Technology, Ecology and Regulation: Key Factors of Media Integration

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Abstract: Media integration has become the theme of the development of China's media industry, which has had a huge impact on traditional media management concepts and methods. The digital technology drives the evolution of the media ecology. level on how to provide effective support for media integration through policy-making, so that media integration can play a more active and effective role in China's economic and social development.

Keywords: technology-driven, ecological integration, normative guidance, media integration

Yan Sanjiu is the dean, second-level professor, and doctoral supervisor of the School of Journalism and Communication at Shanghai University. His research interests include new media and media convergence, and radio and television news research. His major works include Introduction to Network Communication, Introduction to New Media, Media Operation and Management, and Cultural Industry Creativity and Planning.