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Independent operation Advantage integration Complementary development---An analysis of the relationship between newspapers and websites

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ABSTRACT

The rise of online media has left paper media, especially newspapers, in a very awkward position and there is still a debate on the relationship between newspapers and websites, many people in the industry called the two a relationship of "newspapers and the Internet is father and son", which is a false understanding. This paper holds that in the case of newspapers and networks belonging to the same newspaper office, the two should operate independently, integrate their respective advantages, complement each other, inter-develop, so as to implement a win-win situation for newspapers and websites.

Keywords: Newspaper; Website; Analysis of relationship; Complementary; Win-win

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Since the rise of the network media, the opinion of the death of newspaper has been enduring, which has made most of newspaper offices set up their own websites to reverse the situation. However, in practice, this way often falls into a strange circle of "newspaper and network are father and son". In fact, website and newspaper have their own characteristics, so this artificial "match" is difficult to reverse the plight of newspapers. In fact, for newspapers, to make the website independent from the newspaper and carry out an infiltration competition with other new media with a new attitude is the right way to deal with external competition effectively.

Homogenization of newspaper and network:

A win-win desire is hard to achieve

Of all the "old" media, newspapers have the most to lose from the internet.ⁱ To a considerable extent, the plight of newspapers is caused by the advantage of synchronization and timeliness of the network. The first reason why newspaper offices set up their own websites is to compensate for the weakness of the timeliness of newspapers, and its common practices are either to insert the electronic version of the newspaper directly into the web page, or to input the pictures of the newspaper indirectly into the web page, thus greatly improving the timeliness of the newspaper content.

The result of wishful thinking is likely to backfire: with the help of websites, the readers can read newspaper synchronously, even in advance, which objectively encourages and causes some readers to use Internet instead of reading newspapers, and also makes competitors---the ubiquitous websites, more comfortable in stealing the content of newspaper by various means.

In the information age, what is excessive is information, and what is scarce is the time and attention of the audience. The audience spends

too much time on the website, which naturally takes up the time of reading newspapers. When the audience's habit of keeping in touch with the media is fixed, the trend of shrinking the readership of newspapers will be irreversible. To give an example in China, from 2005 to 2006, most of the contents of Lianyungang News Network, founded by Lianyungang Daily (Jiangsu Province, China), came from Lianyungang Daily, with few other articles of its own. As a result, the Lianyungang Daily has not yet been sent to its readers, almost all the important news and pictures of Lianyungang Daily have been "forwarded" by some local individual or commercial or government websites, even the source of the manuscript has not been marked.

The above situation prevails because the effective Intellectual Property Protection Mechanism has not yet formed. Much newspapers' original news products flowed into the ocean of the network through their own websites and even were copied and disseminated at no cost, thus making newspapers became pure paper in the eyes of more and more readers. In 2008, China's "New Beijing News" took Zhejiang Online to court for illegally reproducing 7706 articles. Wu Xiaolong, director of Zhejiang Online Office, believes that the articles reproduced by Zhejiang Online were all from the Internet, not from the "New Beijing News" newspaper word by word. Thus, it can be seen that it is the New Beijing News Network itself that open the way to reproduce articles of New Beijing News.

Therefore, the Beijing Evening News editor-in-chief Ren Huanyin said: "The Beijing Evening News did not set up its own online media, but if we follow the news site, it will not make sense and can not make profit."ⁱⁱⁱ Leslie Hinton, publisher of The Wall Street Journal, once said that it was "a fatal mistake" ⁱⁱⁱfor print media to put

content online for free. In this regard, if the paper media declines, the "gravedigger" is the paper media themselves.

Advantages of Newspapers:

Having new ways to add value to content

The embarrassing result of the newspaper's website is because it has made a strategic mistake in choosing the route. Both newspapers and websites belong to the newspaper office, which makes it impossible for newspaper office to reap the revenue from the resale of newspaper content. On the contrary, in fact, newspaper-affiliated websites offer newspaper content to a large number of known and potential websites without any profit.

Since self-run websites can not enhance the endogenous power of newspapers, and the content is the real product of newspapers, newspapers should find new ways to add value of content. At present, there are two common forms for newspapers to sell content: one is to sell the electronic version of newspapers, that is, to convert the content of paper media into electronic version (such as PDF format) for sale. For example, Wenzhou Daily Newspaper Group in Zhejiang Province, China, charges either separately or bundled for its online edition of newspaper. **Finance Net** also began to charge for subscribing to the electronic version of the previous issue of **Finance Magazine**. But in such environment of that network news in China is generally free and newspapers are homogeneous and prominent, this profit-making method is relatively simple but more difficult to charge. The other is to sell newspaper articles (such as Word or TXT text format) or pictures. For example, China's **21st Century Economic Report** earns more than 10 million yuan a year in sales of information (half in cash and half in resource replacement). Many websites hope to p-

ublish some in-depth reports of economic analysis, and the **21st Century Economic Report** has many unique ideas, viewpoints and analysis, which is exactly what the website needs. ^{iv} These two modes generally use their own networks or websites as trading media, but in essence, newspapers and websites are independent.

As for the so-called "Interaction of Newspaper-Network", for newspapers, websites are actually used as a means of obtaining and exchanging information, which is not essentially different from telephone interviews and video interviews; for websites, they are actually using the traditional advantages of newspapers to expand their influence and win the market. "Interaction of Newspaper-Network" is a relationship of mutual utilization, and still treats newspapers and websites as independent entities.

Website Independence:

Studying skills of others to deal with others

Newspaper offices set up websites for the purpose of "Studying skills of others to deal with others", that is, to compete with the new form of media such as websites. But there is a general puzzle in the industry: why are the websites run by newspaper offices, especially by local newspaper offices, generally difficult to be bigger and stronger?

That newspaper offices set up websites is generally described as "newspaper sets up websites". This common term confuses the relationship between newspapers and websites. For newspaper office, websites and newspapers are also carriers and forms of expression of content. In a word, websites are independent from newspaper media. They are equal rather than affiliated. The logical starting point and fundamental significance of what newspaper office set up website is not to save the newspaper's plight, but to adjust the media structure and change the

development mode.

For a long time, the awareness of taking newspaper as the principal thing and the website as a supplement determines the vassal status of the newspaper office-owned website. The websites of the newspaper offices are either the carrier of the electronic edition of newspapers or a simple combination of newspaper articles and pictures, without their own personal and independent content. Many newspapers are aware of the importance of the independence of the website, but to treat website with the awareness and concept of the newspaper, thus the result is that the website is still unable to get rid of the shadow of the newspaper. Fan Yijin, dean of the School of Journalism and Communication of JI-NAN University as well as a professor (formerly chairman of the Southern Newspaper Media Group), said: "Now the traditional media-run website hardly make money, in addition to the institutional mechanism problems, there is the concept. they still use the traditional model to make profit, and it is difficult to have a good results"^v. Therefore, "the key to study skills of others" is to restore the independence of the website of the newspaper office.

The reality of this kind of "skill" is nothing more than portal website and professional website. The Wall Street Journal's practice can be used for reference: the professional edition of the website carries out paid reading (\$49 per month), and different payment packages for elite readers are launched through mobile phones, computers and other mobile terminals. It is said that the revenue of digital platforms has accounted for 25% of its total revenue.^{vi}

The portal website is the most common choice of the key mode of "Studying skills of others to deal with others" in newspaper office, Generally speaking, the more economically developed the

situation, the more serious the situation of the media challenged by the new media, and the more attention for the construction of the website the local newspapers office will pay. The author found that the websites of 24 newspaper offices in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces in China have been set up as portals, with seven newspapers in Jiangsu Province of China and three newspapers in Zhejiang Province clearly proposing "the first" or "the mainstream" as the portal. Newspaper offices in Xuzhou, Lianyungang, Suqian and other cities in Jiangsu Province, China, have set up independent operators, and the websites of Xuzhou, Huaian, Lianyungang and other newspaper offices even have obtained audio-visual licenses. In Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, the majority of employees of the municipal website of the newspaper offices sat more than 10 people, of which more than two-thirds exceeded 20 people, thus reserving technology, marketing, public relations, news and other talent for the construction of the portal. The website of the Suqian Daily also implemented a joint-stock system, the management personnel of the newspaper offices and the website hold a certain proportion of the shares, the number of which has exceeded 30. Hangzhou Daily Newspaper Group's website "Hangzhou 19th Floor" is fully corporatized and has been set up for the education of good background, the middle income of the urban white-collar class to provide comprehensive life services media platform.

The turn of the newspaper to build the portal has also achieved considerable economic benefits. Qingdao News Network, which belongs to Qingdao Daily Newspaper Group in Shandong Province of China, extensively carries out online advertising, outdoor media, activity planning and telecommunications value-added business, w-

ith annual revenue exceeding 10 million yuan. The business income of **Hangzhou Nineteenth Floor website** exceeded 60 million yuan in 2010.^{vii}

Restoring the independent identity of the website by newspaper office not only can break the constraints of the development of the website itself, but also benefit the business of newspapers. Almost all of the portals above offer interactive columns such as commentary and submission for newspapers belonging to the same newspaper office, and provide convenient services such as payment inquiry for electronic edition of previous newspapers. The click-through rate of these portals and the actual effect of improving newspaper-running means illustrate the correctness of the above practices.

The widespread misconception that “newspapers are the fathers of websites and websites are the children of newspapers” is not conducive to the development of newspapers, even seriously hampers the development of websites. Newspapers and websites belong to the newspaper office. They should be based on independence and promote the development of newspapers and websites according to different characteristics. They should focus on complementarity, integrate their respective advantages and promote the coordinated progress of newspapers and websites. In short, the rational relationship between newspapers and websites should be divided into two parts, but the premise is to divide them into two parts.

^v ten years of grievances of Paper media and web media: who can laugh behind the abridge

(http://www.cpp114.com/news/newsShow_120996_3.htm)

^{vi} Tai Yue: "The Distress of the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the Authoritative Paper Media Website"

(<http://u.cyzone.cn/blog/159608>)

^{vii} Fan Yijin, Sheng Jiawan: Transformation of newspaper website: Strengthening the concept of "users", China Journalist No. 2 of 2011



ⁱ The Economist ,Aug 26th ,2006

ⁱⁱ Media website experience: How is Beijing Probe and New Vision Network successful?

<http://www.bkjpress.com/Html/Article/20100814/4969.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ Li Wei: "Self-help of The Wall Street Journal", New Century Weekly, 24th issue of 2010 (published on June 14, 2010)

^{iv} Fan Yijin, Sheng Jiawan: Transformation of newspaper website: Strengthening the concept of "users", China Journalist No. 2 of 2011