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The Innovation of Traditional Chinese TV Programs in the Convergent Media Environment: A Case Study of 1818 Huang Jin Yan

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Abstract: The development of science and technology has brought about major changes in the form and content of media, and China's traditional TV programs have now been in the wave of convergent media, constantly integrating and surviving the fittest. This paper summarizes the successful transformation and development of the veteran TV program "1818 GoldenEye" of Zhejiang Minsheng Leisure Channel in the integrated media environment, discusses how traditional Chinese TV programs should adapt to the changes in the current environment, and provides a new paradigm for other traditional Chinese TV programs that need to be changed urgently.

Keywords: Chinese traditional TV programs; financial media environment; 1818 Golden Eye

According to the "2024 China Smart TV Interactive New Trend Report" released by the Prospective Research Institute, since 2016, China's TV boot rate has dropped sharply, from 70% to less than 30% in 2022. In the past two years, in order to promote streamlining and streamlining, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television has successively cancelled more than 130 TV frequencies, and more than 20 TV frequencies will be revoked in 2023 alone. 2024 is the eleventh year for the integrated development of China's media as a national strategy, and General Secretary Xi Jinping once again emphasized in the report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China that it is necessary to "strengthen the construction of an all-media communication system and shape a new pattern of mainstream public opinion". For traditional Chinese TV programs, which have almost failed in channels, the use of new media to expand new channels and complete the integration of media has indeed become an urgent issue. The veteran program "1818 Golden Eye", which was launched in 2004 by Zhejiang Minsheng Leisure Channel, itself belongs to the terrestrial channel and cannot be watched by the national audience, so it should face the problem of channel failure. However, in the past 20 years of media wave, it has bucked the trend and used its high-quality content advantages to rely on new media to make a decisive transformation, and as of January 2024, the fans of "1818 GoldenEye" have exceeded 50 million. This paper analyzes the expansion of "1818 GoldenEye" based on the expansion of new media according to the timeline, and tries to use it as an example to explore the innovation of traditional Chinese TV programs in the environment of convergent media.

Weibo: The first attempt of fragmented communication

With the popularity of Weibo and Twitter in the global market since 2008 and the rise of fragmented communication, China's major web portals have entered the Weibo track. In 2009, Sina launched a microblogging feature, and in 2010 it reached 50 million registered users. In 2011, "1818 GoldenEye" opened an account on Sina Weibo,^[1] at first using pictures and texts to make some simple program previews and audience interactions, and then gradually began to use the form of graphic splicing to fragment the content of each episode, so that Weibo users can quickly browse the news. In 2017, with the development of network bandwidth and streaming media, the form of online short video began to usher in a boom in the Chinese market, and new media platforms such as Zhihu, WeChat Moments, and Xiaohongshu have opened the function of uploading videos, and the official Weibo account of "1818 Golden Eye" also changed the previous form of communication based on graphic communication in this year, and began to edit the total duration of about 50 minutes of programs broadcast on TV into short videos of less than 10 minutes and put them on the Weibo platform.^[2] As of July 2024, the official Weibo account of "1818 GoldenEye" has more than 11.6 million followers, with an average of 15 blogs per day and a cumulative video view of 6.423 billion.

WeChat: From Official Account to Video Account

In August 2012, WeChat launched the function of the public platform, and the Prospective Research Institute believes that 2012 to 2014

is the first half of the WeChat public account bonus period, and “1818 Golden Eye” also released its first article on the WeChat public platform in 2013, which has been updated every day, and the tweets also cover the fragmented short videos and graphic analysis of daily hot news. At the same time, the WeChat public account has also broadened the channels for “1818 Golden Eye” to collect news clues and interact with the audience, and in each issue of the WeChat public account of “1818 Golden Eye” tweets, their 24-hour prize news hotline has been topped, and on the homepage of its official account, there is also a menu bar specially set up “I want to break the news” and “clue collection”, so that the audience can provide news clues at any time. Since WeChat opened the video account and live broadcast function in 2020, “1818 Golden Eye” has also quickly put its vertical short video content into the video account, and rotated its program content on WeChat (“1818 Golden Eye” TV program was broadcast live on WeChat at the beginning). At present, “1818 GoldenEye” has published more than 18, 000 pieces of content on WeChat, the average daily tweet reading of the official account has exceeded 10, 000, and some content with more than 100, 000 likes has gradually appeared on the video account.

Bilibili: Second Creation Space and Interactive Community

At the beginning of its establishment in 2009, Bilibili was only a subcultural platform for AGC (Animation, Comics, Games) content dissemination and sharing, and through a series of commercial exploration and breakthroughs, especially after Bilibili began to launch the creation incentive plan in February 2018, Bilibili has gradually grown into a major secondary innovation platform and a highly concentrated cultural place for Chinese young people. As early as 2014, a news item called “Tiandechi Packet Loss” in “1818 Golden Eye” was spontaneously uploaded to Station B by netizens and recreated, and its playback reached 1.98 million.^[3] In July 2018, “1818 Golden Eye” entered Station B, and edited the original news program into about 5 minutes and moved it to the official account of Station B, which was convenient for netizens on Station B to watch and recreate. It was also in August of the same year that the news of Xiao Wu’s sky-high haircut incident in “1818 Golden Eye” exploded on the whole network, and the popularity of this news was largely due to the “stalking” and secondary creation of this news by netizens at Station B. In 2019, “1818 Golden Eye” directly cooperated with the official station B to produce a micro-documentary program called “bilibili@ Golden Eye” specially placed on station B, with an average duration of about five minutes, up to now, this program tailored for the Internet has more than 55 million views and 380, 000 followers. In addition, “1818 GoldenEye” also uses the live broadcast function of station B to rotate and broadcast the program, and uses the real-time barrage and fan group functions of station B to build an interactive community, so as to enhance its user stickiness.

Douyin: A further exploration of fragmented communication

According to the statistics of Guangming.com, as of June 2023, the number of short video users in China has reached 1.026 billion, which fully shows the popularity of short videos in the Chinese market. Douyin, which was launched in 2016, now has 700 million daily active users in China, making it the hottest short video platform in the Chinese market. “1818 GoldenEye” also cooperated with Douyin in 2019 and began to create accounts and launch short videos on the Douyin platform. In order to better adapt to fragmented communication, “1818 Golden Eye” not only uploads vertical short videos directly on Douyin, but its video duration is also significantly shortened compared with Weibo, most of the videos are about one minute, and some video content is only 20 seconds. At the same time, because “1818 Golden Eye” has gained popularity in new media as a program brand, Zhejiang Sixth Channel, to which it belongs, also used the popularity of “1818 Golden Eye” to create a brand matrix on Douyin, not only creating a number of columns such as “blind date will win”, “Qiantang Old Lady”, but also directly letting the column “Qiantang Old Lady” live broadcast on the Douyin account of “1818 Golden Eye” to attract traffic. In addition, “1818 GoldenEye” also took advantage of its geographical advantages in Zhejiang and Douyin’s fan base of more than 6 million to build a product window and group purchase window on the Douyin platform, using Douyin’s e-commerce function to open up a window for online monetization.

Epilogue

The advent of the convergent media environment has indeed had an impact on many traditional media, but as the CCTV Development Research Center said, media convergence is not the replacement of old media by new media, different media forms have different content biases, and audiences have different needs for information consumption in different use scenarios, so the coexistence of different media forms has become possible and necessary.^[4] “1818 Golden Eye”, a veteran program of traditional media, uses its own content advantages to enter the new media, tailoring different content forms for different new media platforms to adapt to the audiences of each platform, but instead obtains a degree of communication and the number of fans that cannot be achieved on the original traditional media platform, and its success may serve as a reference for other traditional Chinese TV programs in the development of today’s integrated media environment.

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