

# Differences between Traditional TV Media and New Media — Take TikTok as an Example

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**Abstract**—Media are an integral part of society. As a tool to transmit information, media are also influenced by society and technology while changing the society. The traditional media have experienced the development from the era of pictures and texts such as newspapers to the era of radio and television images. Until the emergence of the Internet, the era of media changed from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0. This essay chooses the most popular short video app — TikTok as an example of new media platform in Web 2.0 era and compare it with TV media to find out the difference between new media and traditional media. The content production of traditional TV media production always takes a long time, its production cycle is long, and the cost is high. While TikTok provides users with a platform to make content themselves. In the era of fragmentation, traditional TV media will certainly try to find new opportunities on new media platforms and excavate content themes, what is more suitable for the characteristics of the contemporary consumption era. Also, through cooperation, tv programs gets opportunities to turn the large number of users on TikTok into their audience. New media will also absorb high-quality content resources from traditional TV media. Therefore, traditional media and new media will form a new type of integration status and make progress together.

**Index Terms**—Traditional media, tv, new media, short video, interaction.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Television with radio, newspapers and magazines, belongs to traditional media.

Zhang, X. believed that television is a way of transmitting visuals' signals through electronic technology. In his view, new media are the fourth media represented by the Internet and mobile phones represent the fifth media [1].

New media have experienced the development from Web1.0 to 2.0. The era of Web1.0 appeared in the late 1990s. Its essence is aggregation, union, search [2]. The mode of message dissemination is one-way communication based on the Internet. For most of the users, the website is just a tool for browsing and getting information, and they have no right to edit. Then in 2004, in order to enable the users to give and receive feedback and interact with each other online, social apps like Facebook, twitter, YouTube appeared, entering the era of Web 2.0. In Web 2.0, the role of users is not only to browse information but also to be a content producer and communicator. Internet communication mode has changed from one-way mode to two-way mode. In 2017, short video social media platform represented by the TikTok and the Quick App, having the feature of social interaction, visualization and

fragmentation, breaking out as a new form of media.

This essay is going to compare the form content and communication mechanism of TV media and TikTok platform and then analysis the culture and society factors behind. It provides theoretical support for the development of traditional media and short video new media.

## II. THE DIFFERENCE OF CONTENT FORM BETWEEN TRADITIONAL MEDIA AND SHORT VIDEO

Content on a media platform is dependent on the media, so the change of media will inevitably lead to the change of video content form.

### A. The Form Difference

The programs and videos released by TV media are suitable for the audience to watch in the complete leisure time, and can invest more emotional and aesthetic entertainment enjoyment. However, short video only conveys the information to the audience and tells directly to the audience what kind of emotion they should feedback on this information.

Now the pace of the times is getting faster, and we are gradually stepping into the era of fragmentation. Information fragmentation refers to the presentation of all kinds of fragmented information [3]. Also, Simon thought that rich information distracts people's attention, which needs to be effectively allocated to the excessive information sources to might consume it [4]. Traditional media program's length is long and its time is fixed which cannot meet the needs of today's audience. However, the video on short video platform usually not more than 5 minutes and the picture usually has great visual impact, which can catch people's attention in a short time.

The core of short video is to transmit the most important and effective information [5]. For example, a film on TV may account for 90-120 minutes long, while on TikTok, there are several accounts like “movie commentator” “Sheep movie comments” and so on. These content producers explain the movie in a concise and comprehensive way and cut the important scenes of the movie into 1-3 short videos within 5 minutes, so that other users can get the plot just using 5 minutes, which saves a lot of time watching movies.

### B. Audio-Visual Combination

Short video needs to attract the attention of the audience in a short time. Compared with traditional TV media video, short videos' visuals need to looks more beautiful and exaggerated to be attractive.

### C. Visual

The production of TV content products is a process of high investment. The production process of TV programs is

more formal and complex, with large investment in capital and manpower. Its picture production is long time-consuming using complex hardware facilities, so they are always regular and exquisite. The mode of content on TikTok is "PGC+UGC". Content production participants are not only professional agencies but also users. The capital input is small and operation is simple. So the average level of production on TikTok is lower. In order to attract users, meet the psychology of users, the short video platform makes a function of beautifying user's face to strengthen the visual effect. TikTok's company also developed a software named "Jianying" for cutting and adding visual effect. Content producers can make their photos and videos more beautiful by adding some beautification effect on it. In order to make themselves look more beautiful, some content makers turn on the filter of slimming face and big eyes, and some other exaggerate effects to beautify their online image to attract other users to watch. Although sometimes this makes them look very fake.

#### D. Music

According to Guo, C.'s article [6], in TV shows or some other programs on TV, music mainly plays a supporting role. It helps serve the video theme, characters and plot. Removing the music will not affect the content logic. For example, in the Chinese TV show "Happy Camp", when the host talked about a topic or something funny, the staff will add sound effect of audience's laughter. When talking about an emotional topic, there will cooperate with a sad background music to create a right atmosphere. In contrast, in TikTok, music is a participant in content production. The mainstream content of the TikTok is the close combination of music and narrative, music becomes an organic part of short video content [7]. For example, the popular music named "universal gravitation" has a TikTok version with a sound effect of gun on the rhythm point. Users challenge to gesture when they hear the "gunshot" in music while taking off their clothes. If the music is removed, the video will lose its original intention.

TikTok video is a twice creation based on the music. At the beginning of creation, the creator needs to choose a TikTok background music first. Therefore, the choice of music determines the direction of content expression and creation of short video. This makes lots of videos based on the same kind of music using the same template, which may cause repetition and a large number of imitation behaviors. For instance, recently there is a music template about "green tea make-up", using the music named "The official answer". Green tea is an internet phrase, mostly used for girls who are innocent in appearance but complicated in heart. Users just need to put their own photo into the template. In a short time, there are a large number of videos on the TikTok that imitate the green tea pose and make-up. Also, compared with TV programs, the music on TikTok platform is unique. To increase user stickiness, TikTok cooperates with music companies and creates a series of exclusive music. However, some scholars have a critical attitude on this. Dongxiao thought the music on TikTok was breaking the completeness of music which may lost its original meaning [8].

#### E. The Content Difference

##### 1) Theme

Because the traditional media have the function of ideological propaganda, imparting knowledge and guiding public opinion, behind the interest of TV programs, they also need to consider the value orientation of programs and the impact on society. For example, CCTV's popular program "the reader", this program it to invite celebrities to read poetry. Its deeper meaning is to infect, inspire and educate people through the transmission of culture.

Gong, C.B. and Tian, Y. have said that the images in TV and TV dramas are the narrative images presented to the aesthetic subject after artistic editing and processing, while the images in short videos are produced by the aesthetic subject as the main body of image production and consumption at the same time [9]. They believe that short videos reduce the depth of the distance between life and reality. According to statistics, the UGC of short video released on the TikTok reached 49.1 percent. Without professional skills, users prefer to share interesting things about their daily life. The content topics tend to be daily, such as daily dog keeping and daily love. These themes and contents seem to be ordinary, but they can easily resonate with other users.



Fig.1. TikTok.

##### 2) Narrative difference

Traditional TV tends to do some hidden clues to pave the way at the beginning, and finally solve the contradictions after they appear. Attracting audience's attention is the main purpose of short video, so the content of short video does not need to be reasonable and always leads to unexpected results, which was came up by Fubinbin [5]. In the short video platform, there is no very long cushion on the background of the characters, the introduction of the scene, but straightforward. Compared with traditional TV, the camera movement is usually simple, do not have montage. It usually records what is going on in a simple way. Short video platform pays more attention to take "unreasonable" as the point of view, so as to achieve funny effect to meet the audience's curiosity. For instance, there is a video which has got 60 thousand likes on TikTok, the content is about a dog provokes a chicken through a cage, but when the dog is really put into the chicken cage, it seems to be very scared and want to escape.

#### III. THE COMMUNICATION MECHANISM DIFFERENCE

The different media form will inevitably lead to different communication modes. Traditional TV content producers refer to TV stations or organizations that produce TV

programs in society, such as TV advertising companies, TV culture communication companies, and film and television production companies. While on TikTok, content producer also includes users. Also, users will have more dominating rights and share spontaneity on the TikTok short video platform.

#### A. "Socialize" Communication

The increase of users' right of speech and the desire for social intercourse promote the users' independent communication. All social platforms are interlinked. Short video is not an independent app, video can be shared from TikTok to other social media platform like WeChat and Weibo. An online community has been established under the personal homepage, which all things can be shared here with friends. Also, users can add other TikTok users and interact with each other creating a social network. So TikTok can also be used to create a social network. Compared to TV, TikTok makes people's social interaction more closely. People watch television in a fixed place and time so the communication is always among the small groups of family members or friends. But on TikTok, the audience can connect with people from all over the world including their friends and family members in the comment area below the same video.



Fig. 2. TikTok users.

#### B. One-Way Propagation and Multidirectional Propagation

The traditional media communication is one-way, TV programs and films will go through a long process from the production to the program broadcast, during which period the audience is isolated. The audience need to find new platform if they want give feedback. In this one-way communication mode, it is difficult to get feedback from the audience, their discourse right is deprived to a certain extent [10].

But in the new media short video platform, the communication is multi-directional and open. The traditional television communicates through television channels, the audience must choose program by changing the channel. They can only passively watch according to the program schedule formulated by the television station. The TikTok is based on mobile phones, people are able to watch the videos anytime and anywhere using their phones. Also, with the support of network traffic technology, the short video platform has the characteristic of "immediacy", the publisher can receive the user's feedback on the content in the first time after publishing. Besides the video there is

a button for user to share and an area for commenting which makes communication faster. In the meanwhile, intelligent algorithm is set up in the short video platform to recommend content according to the users' interest. This mechanism is more humanized which increase users' stickiness, as well as enhance users' spontaneous interest in sharing.

### IV. THE REASONS FOR THE DIFFERENCES

#### A. Change of Consumer Concept

In the post-industrial society, consumerism culture is rampant day by day. What consumers pursue is not only material consumption, but also spiritual consumption [11]. Under the consumerism era, facing a news released by the media the audience is more inclined to entertainment than to explore the truth deeply. The media relying on commercial capital also try to cater to the public psychology and create a platform with lifestyle and interest more meet the pursuit of the public.

#### B. Progress in Science and Technology

With the development of the Internet and mobile phone, short video platform gets the support of technology, the development of 5G mobile network and the decrease of the mobile communication tariff reduces the consumption cost of streaming media content.

#### C. Culture Is More Inclusive

In the new era, culture is becoming more diversified and social inclusiveness is becoming stronger. The concept of "people-oriented" is deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, and the audience also has more discourse power.

### V. THE IMPACT ON THE MEDIA INNOVATION

#### A. Content Become Superficial

Restricted by technology and policy, the content of traditional radio and television is well planned and edited, and the content is complete and professional. From the media market, most of the traditional radio and television are state-owned enterprises. Every TV program has a professional creative team to brainstorm, so as to achieve entertainment effect, but at the same time it also has the deep meaning and value.

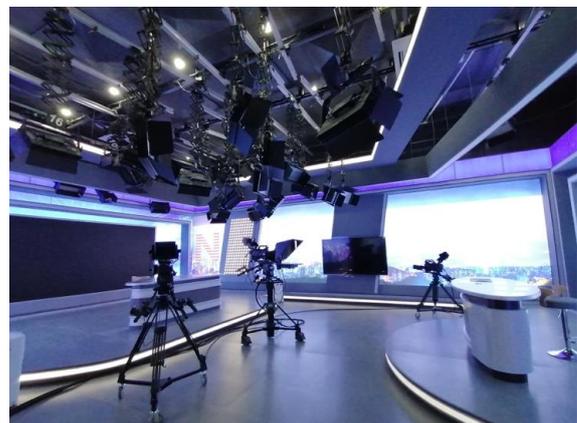


Fig. 3. TV station studio are full of high-quality equipment.

However, the content of short video is open and easy to operate. Users like to follow the trend, what may lead to the phenomenon of imitation and homogenization of content. These contents are only to satisfy the producers' desire for expression and the curiosity of the viewers. They pay more attention to the visual and audio effects of the screen, and lack the deep-seated connotation.



Fig. 4. Short video uses a phone to shoot.

### B. Information Cocoon

The intelligent algorithm on TikTok may form "information cocoon". Once the network information cocoon house is generated, surrounded by familiar information, people are unable to access new information, and also the communication between members and the external world will be reduced significantly. Also, people are easy to have similar views and lost their own opinion. This also can cause the loss of social stickiness.



Fig. 5. Information cocoons.

### C. Content Needs to Be Professional

"Lack of high-quality content and insufficient supply is the biggest challenge of mobile short video" said by Wang, X.H. and Ren, X.Y [12]. Traditional TV is created by high-quality media practitioners, which has better social credibility than new media. UGC accounts for the majority of the content on the short video platform, which leads to the lack of professionalism and uneven quality of video content messages. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance the self-discipline awareness of users on TikTok and enhance the platform supervision of the platform.

## VI. CURRENT SITUATION OF NEW MEDIA AND TRADITIONAL MEDIA

According to the data of the survey on the number of TV users in the United States after the emergence of Internet

mobile video, it is found that the new media is not replacing the relationship, but expanding the relationship. For example, traditional American TV such as ABC NBC are looking for ways to enhance exposure and user stickiness by setting up new media. To increase exposure, some mainstream media and TV stations such as CCTV and People's Daily have set up their official account on TikTok. There is no obvious boundary between new media and traditional media anymore and a phenomenon of media convergence is coming.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The progress of technology and the rise of consumer status led to the shift of media discourse power from specific institutions to the masses. As a result, the TV media have a huge difference compared with the short video platform. TV has the advantages of good content production, but the disadvantages are long duration, unidirectional transmission and space-time constraints. In comparison, the short video is simple, the subject matter is more civilian, and the communication is multi-directional. This change makes the content gradually turn into surface entertainment; professional content is decreasing. For traditional media, they should consider the transfer to the new platform where has larger amount of target users. And for short video, it should absorb more professional content from traditional media.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to show my deepest gratitude to my teachers and professor in my university who helps me set up a good academic goal and teach me master the basic research methods and structure of the paper. They put forward a lot of good suggestions for me. Also, I would like to thanks my classmates for their support, they have also given me lots of kindness suggestions. Because of TikTok production's threshold is low, so there may be some low-quality content. Compared with the strict control of professional content by TV agencies, the "TikTok platform is likely to be able to make potential negative effects." (Wang, 2019) So this requires that the content publishers strengthen self-discipline and viewers sharp their discernment.

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