REVIEW ARTICLE

Decoding art communication studies in the age of digital technology: Toward the redefining and reshaping of the medium

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Abstract

The new age of consumption demands that art communication studies be redefined and reshaped. Media and media innovation have been main concerns in the research of art communication. Integration experience is becoming the core of the innovation of new consumption in China, as infrastructure, media content, consumption context, and structure change under the influence of digital scenarios. New forms of media revolutionize art communication media, which are being reshaped in aspects of communication such as form, content, function, and carrier. The reshaping is happening with the development of theories and new forms of business, emergence of new consumption, new technology integration, media integration, and so on. Therefore, the life-changing development of media integration determines the strategic and practical significance of the third media.

Keywords: Digital technology; Art communication studies; Media integration; The third media

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1. Introduction

The advent of the new age of consumption is ushering in an era that no one would imagine. New consumption features a change in consumption structures where consumers bid goodbye to spending modes resulting from shortage economy compared to an increased desire to immaterial consumption, especially that related to culture and art. As such consumption rises incessantly, business forms of new consumption need to cater to a diversified, multi-tiered, and customized consumer demand. As a result, it is unsuitable for us to follow the same pattern in the face of shortage economy where mass production is used to meet mass needs. Therefore, we should build experience scenarios to facilitate integration experience and develop immersive consumer experience so that multi-tiered consumer needs and behavior in pursuit of diversity and customization could be constantly satisfied.

Surely, these consumer needs and behavior boost the development of experience economy. However, it also makes products and services by the mass-production-for-mass-needs standard no longer a solution to the emerging consumer demand. In other words, consumers are often inundated with all-pervasive hard-sell advertisements which indoctrinate consumers didactically. Such a traditional model of consuming products

and services barely fits the trading environment unique to new consumption. With the continuous development and improvement of the new consumption environment, it is crucial to develop consumption scenarios based on the characteristics of new demand so that consumers can experience the corresponding products and services conveniently and systematically. It is easier to judge whether such customized scenario experiences meet personalized consumer demand. The realization and popularization of digital scenarios are on target especially with the development of new forms of infrastructure, which gives the rapid growth of experience economy a solid foundation. Meanwhile, the building of new consumption scenarios of art can not only satisfy a variety of consumer needs, but also provide platforms and pave the way for the functional extension of cultural, artistic, and esthetic education, the dissemination of content, and the cultivation of spirit. It is also an important instrument for establishing cultural stance and values. Moreover, this is in line with our development direction that artistic consumption should consider both integration and popularization.

As there is an increasing tendency for art communication to be integrational with cultural content more digitized, the market is facing a growing demand for its building of sharing and scene experience. It explains why the rise of the third media, the reshaping of cultural media, is deemed as the anchor point to change how people perceive art communication studies and foster a new development pattern. However, a lot remain unknown on this matter and there is not enough systematic summarization and analysis of its inherent law. In short, the rise of the third media holds sway in contemporary art communication. Research and practices that fail to realize this cannot contribute to the investigation and development of art communication effectively and precisely.

2. The evolution of media

The historical dimension of media is complicated, be it from systematic or managerial aspects. The history of media has taken its twists and turns — it takes account of the advent of traditional media in the beginning, followed by specific forms of the media, forms of communication, then medium forms and innovation-driven development to media integration. In the new age of consumption when new economy takes form, media integration gradually comes into its own. It is not only a combination of the media and communication channels in form, but it also makes possible an important societal advance in communication pathways, from an information society to a platform-based society with developments in digital and smart technologies.

The relationship between media and reality as well as the social influence of media has been avowed concerns of sociology. Academic focus on books and newspapers — then the mainstream social media — could trace back to the 19th century. Scholars were interested in how these media affected the establishment of opinion networks and formulated some famous theories based on the theory of social interaction. In the early 20th century, Western sociologists first put forward symbolic interactionism which believes that individuals influence each other through the transmission of symbols and meanings. Since then, some western scholars have further suggested that people's *self*-interaction is the internalization of their social interaction with others, or rather, the individual brain's response to social communication with others. Consequently, media are referred to as the "intermediary of social relations." Thus, the "meaning" of media is also determined, which affects people's understanding and practice of the social context they live in. All these theories help the concept of "media" gradually become the focus of journalism and communication studies[1].

Now, the challenge is how to innovate art studies with more potentialities, for which new approaches need to be adopted. The establishment of art communication as a discipline is an important means that boasts practical value. The current state of media development has told us a lot: The Chinese realm of art is not unproblematic and its art market is also chaotic. Although some colleges and universities have set up art communication programs, they fail to lay the foundation for related disciplinary research. That is to say, there is still no systematic investigation and summarization of the research object and its characteristics art communication delves into. The gap between reality and ideals — the goal of popularizing culture and art together with real-life need for discipline improvement — needs to be filled. After fully acknowledging the challenges in front of us, it is recognized that art communication studies in China are far from state-of-the-art, and there is room for improvement considering the definition and research of art communication media[2].

This also explains why we should take heed of medium and its reshaping. First, it is because the medium is the main focus of communication studies. Besides, the context of media development has experienced a significant change. Moreover, the medium itself is also developing based on a certain logic of development.

2.1. Digital infrastructure enriches media scenarios

In recent years, with the rapid popularization of the mobile internet and the advancement of the historic process of

globalization, cross-cultural exchanges, and connectivity are becoming a new platform and mechanism to promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind. Against this premise and background, it is considered an irreversible trend to facilitate new global integration based on mutual learning and cultural fusion, which isolationist views of any country, group or individual cannot hinder. The rebuilding of social information system by information dissemination technology, a new type of infrastructure, also makes technology essential in fostering the theoretical paradigm of information dissemination. This not only acknowledges the importance of technology, but also fully merges communication theories with technology at the core. In addition, technology as a context becomes the dominant representation of a mediated society. Technological forces that were once embedded in social logic begin to dominate social processes across the board. During the transformation process, two features of technical logic — centralization and dispersion — have become increasingly prominent[3].

These two features make possible not only personalized services over the "platform + Internet" model, but also the diversified, multifarious, and multi-path possibilities for the development of artistic consumption. Customized services, especially related to cultural products, have greatly bolstered the innovation of artistic consumption and cultural industry. On this basis, research and practice on defining and reshaping art communication media tend to focus on the establishment of a series of digital scenarios and new forms of digital infrastructure.

2.2. Media content production are undergoing rapid transformation

The medium is no longer dismissed as trivial in information and communication theory. Instead, it is treated as the theoretical context. There are several reasons for the rapid changes in media content production. First, it is due partly to the rapid expansion of the boundaries of content production. Most of the traditional media content comes from traditional disciplines, research, and teaching institutions, but the form of disciplines and teaching and research institutes have undergone major changes since the New Period. In terms of art education, more emphasis was given to art courses in the strictest sense. Today, art management and economy programs, including art business, art market, art industry, art finance, art technology, and the like are more focused on, which has formed the content basis of art communication media. At the same time, teaching and research institutes, which prioritized teaching and research, are transforming into a functional system that leverages enterprises, universities, research institutes, and end-users.

The second reason is that the integration of new technologies, especially that of technologies and mechanisms such as the Internet, big data, artificial intelligence, cloud service block chain, and so on, has brought about major changes in media content production as regards to content, form, and means. Thus, the dimensions of content production expand nonstop. Third, with the development of new forms of infrastructure, the creation of digital scenarios contributes to new consumption patterns, which scales up media content production unparalleled in history. Of particular importance is the advent of the era of customized communication when pan-entertainment and diverse content has or will play a key role in intelligent and digital life. Fourth, the source of media content production is changing. Conventionally, research and teaching institutes were the main actors for knowledge production. However, with the development of cross-border integration, the industry has become an important knowledge content producer independent of research and teaching institutes, and roles the industry and educational institutions play, respectively, in knowledge content production has been reversed. This phenomenon, new to media content producers, should be taken seriously.

2.3. The integration and change of consumption context, consumption structure, and consumer demand

In the past, art communication relied more on education, publicity, display, and indoctrination. Interpersonal communication is realized by constantly organizing various meetings and events. Now, market and consumption, however, play an important role in art communication. For example, although the cultural history of the United States is not long, its culture spreads fast and penetrates into other societies powerfully. Marketing and consumption mechanisms are the main culprit. Simply put, the successful circulation of American culture is heavily dependent on its chips, blockbusters, and French fries, which are based on the products, marketing, and industrial mechanism functions. Therefore, it is clear that artistic consumption is not only about meeting material needs, but it is also an effective way to achieve cultural dissemination, build cultural confidence, and demonstrate cultural values.

Therefore, it is vital to understand and recognize the importance of media integration and mass communication during artistic consumption. Especially in the new age of consumption, Chinese art market, art industry and art products are in urgent need of empowerment by cultural dissemination. Moreover, the general public needs art in their daily life to cultivate aesthetic taste. Consumption has thus become an important front for the dissemination

of art, as well as indicating its integration with the popularization of art.

2.4. Integration experience is becoming a new mode of cultural consumption

Media integration is revolutionary in that it has sounded the clarion call for the new economy, especially the new cultural economy. The development of media integration has seen its progress from the media, communication, medium, and to integration[4]. It not only combines media channels with forms, but also promotes the evolution of human society from an information society to a platform-based one with smart and digital technologies. At the same time, media integration also revolutionizes models of knowledge production, knowledge learning, knowledge display, knowledge dissemination, and knowledge service. This unravels some academic claim that media integration includes the integration of materials (i.e., tools), operation (i.e., business), and theories (i.e., ideology), and it is also dependent on institutional (regulation) innovation to guarantee success[5]. This point of view emphasizes that media integration is the convergence of many aspects of media which could be categorized as the aforementioned three kinds of fusion.

Whether the division of the fusion into three types is definitive remains uncertain, but with the rapid development of new media technology, media integration is inevitable. The main reasons for its development are first political considerations. Political forces exert both positive and negative effects, to a certain extent, on the development of media. Political ecology is another important restrictive factor. The second reason is economic factors. Commercial interests and market competition are used to motivate further development of media, and the consumer demand also stimulates its growth. The next reason is cultural factors. Foreign cultures, including the practical and theoretical innovation of media integration, as well as the integration and intercommunication of Chinese and Western cultures, have also become the direct thrust of media integration in China. The last reason is technical factors. Information technology characteristic of "platform + Internet" initiatives has become an important driving force for media integration. Technical factors not only support the development of media, but are also a part of media integration.

2.5. Diversity in unity: technology integration liberates the content and form of communication

The medium plays a pivotal role in art. How the medium of art is represented determines the artistic form and it is also an inseparable part of art content. Therefore, the medium is both the form and the content of art. In addition, art

communication is closely related to technology. Without technology, it is like a chariot without a wheel; even if it is loaded and strives to move on, it will lose its direction. Be it the internet or media integration, it is the result of technological progress. The development of the art industry in China is due largely to digitization, especially the rapid iteration of big data, artificial intelligence, block chain technology, and intelligent terminals which turns digitization, then a trend, into a reality. The development of new digital-based business forms has become the keynote of this change. On this basis, the setting of digital scenarios and new types of digital infrastructure also make art communication a harmonious unification of content and form.

3. The change of media effects draws more attention to new media

In respect of the reshaping of media, care should be exercised to both traditional media and new media, especially the communication effects of the third media under the influence of artistic consumption and art market.

Shao Peiren, a Chinese scholar, proposes the concept of "the mediation of art" earlier in his book, *Art Communication*, with meta-medium and modern medium as the two elements. In his opinion, meta-medium refers to artistic forms existing from time immemorial, while modern medium is art medium that exhibits the capability of being popularized and replicable[6]. Some scholars extend his theory and state that art media display four main characteristics. First, the media can enable artists to make clear and reasonable judgments on objects or affairs that can arouse people's interest. Then, it plays an intermediary role in extracting art materials, creating artworks, and disseminating art. Third, the art media are expressive which can convey artists' emotions and thoughts to the audience in a special way. Finally, in the deep-level mechanism, art is medium-centered, a communicative activity that connects art communicators (i.e., the artists) with the receivers. Art has thus become a medium-centered interactive behavior[7].

Some scholars also suggest that based on their defining characteristics, communication can be divided into three stages: primitive communication, one-way communication, and interactive communication. From the perspective of object of communication, it can also be divided into three steps: interpersonal communication, mass communication, and focus communication. The "third media" we argue for in this paper is a new form of media that prides itself on the characteristics of interactive communication and focus communication.

3.1. Traditional media

Chinese scholars Li Qin and Xiong Chengyu observe that the revolution of communication technology and the trend of humanization have brought about changes in ways of communication, which directly and deeply affects social forms and structures. They further propose the five stages of communication, namely oral communication in ancient times, handwriting communication in medieval times, printing communication in early modern times, electronic communication in modern times, and immersive communication in contemporary times. It is made manifest in the alternation and renewal of the stages together with the update and inclusion of different communication media that communication needs to expand its scope, improve efficiency, and satisfy the demand for diverse information[8].

The corresponding forms of art media also take five stages: the stage of oral literature with oral language and body language as the medium, the text-based written art stage, the writing and printing art stage with paper and printing as the medium, the electronic art stage which is based on electronic technology, and the internet-based digital art stage. Among them, the first three phases are also called eras of traditional media. The era of third media this paper investigates is a fully integrated era that rises above electronic and the internet technology, keeps in tune with new consumption and new communication, and boasts inclusion and innovation.

3.2. Digital media characterized by the internet

As our society's social cultures and ways of living evolves constantly, the emergence of new needs, driven by the scientific, technological and industrial revolution, and continues to advance the iterative evolution of social production. The development of information and digital technology, particularly, is moving human subsistence and development toward a new era.

American scholar Mark Poster is among the earliest to categorize the emerging media featuring the Internet as the "second media age"[9]. He points out that the first media age (i.e., the traditional media era) is indicated by one-way, linear, and top-down communication, while the second media age is an interactive and two-way communicative loop, a new form of media that is characterized by relationships between the agents of communication and the communication paths.

In the second media age, the internet taps into the huge potentialities of infrastructure, big data, cloud computing and artificial intelligence, and thus turns itself into the new representative of content production. The ever-intelligent omni-media environment is leading the transformation of human social interaction using great computing capacity and complex algorithms. However, algorithms without systematic control and operational responsibilities are often driven by network traffic to please users. While constantly producing and recommending homogeneous content, they also form a highly dependent relationship between users and the platform.

3.3. The rise of new forms of media and the third media

The innovative development of new forms of media is a new growth during the innovation of new business forms of digital industries, and it is where communication integrates with different business forms and generalizes itself to different aspects of life. It is also a strategic response to current media integration. The new forms of media, a general term for all the media forms that are taking place at the moment, mainly refer to the mass media that are characterized by ubiquitous network as the physical basis and immersive communication. In essence, the new forms of media are the comprehensive integration of human beings and the media. To some extent, human could be compared to a medium. Moreover, some scholars argue that the definition of new forms of media should not follow the traditional linear inductive system which simply attributes new forms of media to niche, mass, or focus communication under interpersonal communication. Instead, the new definition should be based on the essential type of communication, looking for a new dimension between information dissemination and relation dissemination[10].

The third media are born out of the integration of experiential consumption and new forms of media in the process of development. New resources need to be promoted by new media integration, which could satisfy new consumer demands and accord with new technologies, so that the needs of more personalized, diversified, and technologically integrated consumption could be met. Therefore, we can say that the third media featuring media integration and generalization is not only a form, but also a form of business, a catalyst for the development of new economy and new consumption. The third media are also the adhesive for the organization of resources, assets, and industries, the innovation of the product market, and the integration of terminal consumption.

In conclusion, both the promotion and transformation of new resources demand new media integration. This requires three most important strategic directions. First, we should follow the internal laws and development logic of media integration. Second, emphasis should be placed on how it is consumption-driven, increasingly personalized, diversified, and experienced. Third, heed should be paid to

the innovation and integration model brought about by the integration of new technologies.

4. The rise of the third media

As information technology revolution reshapes the ecology of social communication, we have witnessed the systematic shift of global connectivity from offline to online. Accordingly, art communication is becoming more and more integrated, the content of communication more and more digitalized, the functions of which place more emphasis on sharing and scenario experience. How are the media to do with such changes? The answer is that the rise of the third media is changing the cognition and development landscape of art communication.

4.1. Reshaping art communication media

4.1.1. Means of communication: Communication through traditional media, internet media, and streaming media integration

As the carrier of communication, the medium has mainly progressed through three stages: traditional media communication, internet media communication, and communication through streaming media integration. Traditional media communication, also known as mass communication, refers to the process of transmitting information to the public through mass media such as newspapers, magazines, books, radio, movies, and television. The main feature of Internet media communication is focus communication. Focus communication selects specific types of media according to social groups with different characteristics. It is a form of communication targeting a niche audience so it is also called demassification communication or sub-mass communication. Representative of the communication reform under the integration of streaming media, pan-mass communication refers to a type of personalized and niche communication provided to the public based on the ubiquitous network, which is a combination of many-to-many and one-to-one communication.

While art communication is transforming from traditional means to modern methods, the overdependence of some art forms on traditional communication methods has gradually reduced themselves to minor cultures, such as traditional Chinese opera and acrobatics. Art forms such as photography, film, television, and music, however, are well adapted to modern communication media and thus have the chance to bloom. The media are on the track of a platform-based and internationalized transformation whereas media integration is based on media digitization. Facing the shift of communication means from traditional media, the Internet media to streaming media integration,

traditional news communication theories can no longer swim with this tide. Especially in the wave of digitization, even if western communication theories are widely and rapidly introduced, they cannot guarantee the practice of communication studies in China a cutting edge. Therefore, theoretical and practical training should be fostered, the academia and the industry should be united, and digitization should be integrated with business innovation so that a new platform for cognitive consensus and innovative development can be built.

4.1.2. Content of communication: Dissemination of knowledge information, information integration and digital stream

In the context of new consumption, media integration has become an important carrier and mechanism for new business models and industries. During the development of media integration, platformization has become an important driving force to promote media integration, and vice versa. Media integration is an important channel for the expansion of new industries. In the process of media integration, the biggest change is found in content production. Consequently, media integration serves as a platform, a channel, and also the content. Therefore, media integration is also an innovative process of service, and this service is also a product. Media integration has thus allowed the (business) forms of the current media industry to enjoy diversity in unity.

4.1.3. The functions of communication: Knowledge and information learning, massive information sharing, and scenario-based integration experience

Western scholars Robert Scoble and Shel Israel are the first to define mobile devices, social media, big data, sensors, and location-based services as the five technical forces of context. The arrival of the "age of context," in their own words, is the product of technological development at a given time. The purpose of contextual dissemination is to adapt information and services to different contexts for the good of the users.

Historically, communication theory has focused on the specialist practice of traditional media and emerging media, thus forming a relatively vertical and systematic theoretical system for the specific discipline. As the media and society shares more and more similarities, traditional communication takes up less and less room in social information transmission. Instead, information communication with wider connotations has emerged as a new theoretical paradigm. A media-centered way of living, based on information communication, is reshaping the social formation.

More importantly, media integration and a culture-centered new economy, closely intertwined, have been deeply involved in organizing, establishing, and discovering the value of new resources. This engagement not only furthers the systematization and capitalization of the value integration of new resources, but also ensures faster progress toward the new economy era. In doing so, value discovery and value rebuilding are the core and premise, while media integration is also seen as a bridge between the value discovery and reestablishment of new cultural resources.

4.1.4. The carriers of communication: Traditional media, innovative media and third media

Communication media, also known as the means, channels, or tools of transmitting message, are the carriers of communication content. On the one hand, the medium, as a technological means, determines the rate, scope, and efficiency of communication. On the other hand, the medium is also considered an organization, whose system; ownership, ideology, and cultural background also govern the content, form, and function of social communication. As an early carrier of communication media, traditional media are mainly divided into four categories: newspapers, magazines, television, and radio. As per the nature of the carrier, it can also be classified as paper media (books, newspapers, magazines, etc.) and electronic media (TV, radio, etc.).

Proposals for economic globalization and a community with a shared future for mankind also work towards cultural blending and a cultural community in harmony. Cultural transfer and integration, thus, become the inevitable from historical and contemporary perspectives. As information exchange extends its influence, the carrier of information has also changed in the process. New information carriers such as computers, optical fibers, and communication satellites have become the basis for media innovation under the new technology revolution. With the acceleration of communication integration and content digitization, the function of communication media highlights the integration of sharing and scenario experience, which also brings the third media out.

Earlier attempts to define the third media fail to accentuate the uniqueness of humanity due to the limitations of the medium itself. To regain the uniqueness of the individual requires the advancement of media technology and conceptualization. At present, when using the third media in many fields, there is some confusion about the characteristics of third media. The primary agent of the third media not only includes the "triad" structure, namely, information, production and disseminator, but

also entails the specific conceptual designation of "being with the public." Therefore, the agents of information dissemination, diverse as they are, tend to be unified[11]. The integration of the multimedia field and multi-information dissemination with the help of the third media also means that information transmission is more likely to be decentralized and enriched[12].

4.2. The basis for the development of the third media

The reason why the third media are the center of attention today is that its development has a broad theoretical and practical foundation. For now, it can be summarized as follows:

4.2.1. Theoretical aspects

Art communication is not just about disseminating information, but most importantly, it also uncovers the artistic value. Besides, there are two major stages in the study of art communication: the first is the study of commercialization, or rather, the study of art economy. Specifically, it includes five major sectors: art business, art market, art industry, art finance, and art technology. These are what the commercialization of art must go through, and also the market and industrial foundation of the third media research in the field of art communication. The second stage is content dissemination under the process of non-commercialization, such as art creation, museum management, and many aspects of art industry management, and it is also the theoretical and professional foundation of third media research.

4.2.2. New consumption

The rise of new consumption makes experience, especially integrated experience and in-depth experience, the focus of consumption. New consumption is not only the transformation and upgrading of traditional demand, but it also benefits from the push made by emerging demand. It continues to popularize offline consumption and welcome the rapid rise of service consumption. New objects, channels, and methods have become the most prominent features of new consumption.

In the era of art communication reform, the existing high-end art products and competitive prices cannot impress consumers. Better experience with art, which has already replaced mere products and prices, becomes a differentiating factor for new consumption, and meanwhile it also exerts influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Physiological experience includes five senses: sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell; while in the field of psychology, experience is defined as an emotion that affects audience feedback. Yet in business, experience is an economic tool. In experiential consumption, consumption is a process, and consumers are the "products" of this process.

One of the hallmarks of consumerism is media theorist Stuart Ewen's conceptualization of the "Commodity Self." He suggests that subjectivities are more or less mediated and constructed through the consumption of commodities. Likewise, Japanese sociologist Miura Atsushi also tracks the *four stages of consumption*: *the first stage* dominated by a small number of middle classes, *the second-stage consumer society* that is family-oriented, *the third stage* characterized by individualistic tendencies, and *a fourth stage of consumption* that rebuilds connections between people with a sense of fulfillment. With the replacement of different stages of consumption, commodity consumption has also shifted from material-based consumption to experience-based consumption under the background of deep integration. This kind of experiential consumption is also the basis for the third media.

4.2.3. Technological integration

The integration of science and technology promotes the development of new types of infrastructure which continuously gives birth to new business forms, making digital art assets the core element of operations. Digital art assets in the form of digital industries need the support of digital scenarios. Digital application scenarios will also enable a comprehensive upgrading of the experience. For the art industry, this is also a digital upgrading of its inherent business model. The digital innovation of the integrated service platform for artworks has become the key to the formation of digital art assets, as well as the key to the innovation of the digital art wealth management. The development of precise user positioning, scenario recognition and artificial intelligence (AI) technology, to name just a few, underpins the digitization of offline experience scenarios. It will also help the art industry reduce costs and increase efficiency, and promote the innovation and upgrading of digital application scenarios in the traditional art market.

4.2.4. Media integration

Digitization and emphasis on experiencing have permitted the continual integration and generalization of the media, and promoted the scenario-based development of art communication. The art market has been through traditional, mixed, and new business forms. The traditional business form mainly includes three transactional models: galleries, expositions, and auctions. The mixed one, which is also called art e-commerce, makes the traditional art market more Internet-based. The spread of the new digital business forms must cooperate with matching new theories. In this process, it is vital to make art communication scenario-based. The construction of new types of infrastructure and digital scenarios, based on digital technology, has brought about major changes in the

art market, which has created strong market innovation effects. Today, an auction may be easily accomplished with only one live broadcaster, a mobile phone, and a fill light. In just 5 or 10 years, whether it is the market or the industry, digitization has become the key to promoting the integration of media and e-commerce and thus profoundly changing the model of art communication.

4.2.5. New business forms

As the Chinese art market enjoys the abundance of business forms and the diversification of structures, the cross-border integration of business forms has become a major trend. Driven by digitization, digital scenarios based on new types of infrastructure provide a wider room for the innovation of new business forms. The new business form is already the basis for understanding the Chinese art market and also developing market integrity. The new business form is neither a concept nor a logic, but is generated in the process of changing the underlying structure of the market. Only by deeply understanding the underlying structure of the market can new business forms become a reality. The diversification of consumer demand brought about by media integration has become the banner of the art industry innovation, and it is also the most active and sensitive driving factor in the market.

4.3. Concepts and characteristics

The concept of the third media garners historical significance in the process of media integration. It also describes the situation where the rise of the new consumption, the integration of new technologies, and the innovation of new forms of media are the mode. Its conceptualization shores up the evolution of media integration.

Therefore, the third media can be regarded as a pan-media, which generally refers to a market-based communication carrier. In other words, by integrating artworks, commerce, market, industry, ecology, and other systems, the third media draw upon the market and business forms of new consumption to achieve art communication. The maturity of the ubiquitous network is the material basis and technical premise of the third media age. Immersive communication is the dominant form of the third media age. Pan-mass communication helps differentiate the third media age from the first media age defined by mass communication and the second media age characteristic of focus communication.

Media integration forwards the rapid development of the new economy, and the continuous development of new business forms has spawned the rise of the third media. As an emerging type of media, the third media consist of the following features.

4.3.1. Experiential

The diversified and personalized consumption under the influence of media integration seeks the experience economy, especially the immersive experience in consumption. What is much sought-after in the new age of consumption is products and services that allow first-hand experience. Whether the products and services meet the needs of personalized consumer pursuits is a very important evaluation criterion.

4.3.2. Integrated

Media integration plays an important role in fostering the organization of resources, assets and industries, the development of product market, and the integration of terminal consumption. It not only aids the development of new resources, but also creates a new integrated business form. Such a transformation demonstrates that new resources provide a new stage for media integration while value discovery is its new challenge. The creative transformation of value is the new future for media integration, for new resources not only require value discovery, but also the creative transformation of value.

4.3.3. Contextual

The scenario-based consumption experience in the new age of consumption is looking for whether it can satisfy personalized consumer demand. Being platform-based is both the basis and an important driving force for realizing media integration. The "platform + Internet" mode makes possible the diversification of and provides multi-paths for multifarious and customized art consumption, which greatly promotes the development of art consumption that is based on scenario experience.

4.3.4. Business forms

Broadly speaking, media integration is also a new business form of the cultural industry. How to promote the development of media integration and build omni-media has taken center stage in the New Period. It is strategically important because media integration is no longer confined to media communication in the traditional sense. To gain a deeper and systematic understanding of the significance of media integration requires appreciative analysis of the innovation of the cultural industry. It is not enough to concentrate merely on some changes in the ways of production and dissemination of media integration. Instead, we should see that the fundamental changes media integration has brought about in the cultural industry, especially the revolutionary changes in the exploration, integration, application, value discovery, and realization of cultural resources.

4.3.5. All-in-one

We can see the all-round integration of the medium and the content as well as the form, channel, and mode of communication. In the new consumption context, media integration is both a carrier and a mechanism, working as both a platform and a channel, functioning as both a content and a product. This type of integration is a mechanism for the development of new business forms. Media integration is realized by making it platform-based. Media integration has a great impact on content production. In this sense, it innovates services.

4.3.6. Esthetic education

The rise of experiential consumption makes consumption itself a critical way of cultural and artistic recognition and dissemination. From media, the internet to industrial design, from music, sports to leisure travel, from architecture, film to literature, culture has developed into a huge economic entity. Experiential consumption, diversified and customized, makes the consumption of products and services more scenario-based. Based on the technological integration of the "platform + Internet" model and driven by media integration, it also helps different kinds of business forms in the cultural industry merge together. The communication and education of culture and art are thus integrated with daily mass consumption, cultural experience with cultural consumption, hence the vertical intersection of art education and art business. All these have become a new business form after the integration of multiple business forms, which, truly entertaining and educational, enables people to acquire aesthetic education in their experience.

4.4. The general picture of the development of the third media

Many challenges lie ahead, as a variety of media integrate with each other, especially with the rise of the third media. First, there is the theoretical challenge. Traditional economic theories justify themselves given that resources they rely on are also considered traditional. However, as the impact of the Internet and new resources on today's world is increasingly huge, a serious challenge is mounted to some underlying concepts in traditional theories that are considered incontestable, some development models that are taken for granted, and some basic methods including some model algorithms. This is because the characteristics of resources have undergone important changes. Theories based on this should also be changed.

Second, how to develop new concepts and models is also an effort. Not only should concepts centered around new resources be developed, but it is also necessary

to underscore traditional concepts and models of development. Third, the integrated development of new technologies also poses considerable challenges. The general trend toward the integrated development of new technologies has made major changes in many aspects including the cultivation of new business forms, the shaping of new trade, and the innovation of new products. Fourth, making advancements also gives rise to some difficulties. The main reason is that fundamental changes and challenges occur in the development of new business forms. These challenges have already been around us, but we have not yet adapted to these changes, to which we still find traditional concepts a solution.

Correspondingly, as media integration continues, the emergence and development of the third media have also continuously demonstrated the following strategic trends:

4.4.1. The development of digital and intelligent technologies attracts more and more attention

At present, digitization involves the Chinese art industry. In the next 3 to 5 years, the entire art market and the art industry will face a difficult transformation of business forms. It is necessary to understand the digital development of the art industry in the broader context of our century. It is a time when the consumption structure is going through rapid transformation, a variety of art consumption models are taking shape, and digital-based consumption scenarios are also under formation.

4.4.2. There has been growing interest in immersive experience grounded on digital scenarios

The profound changes in the development of the art industry are evidenced by the birth of new digital service scenarios based on new types of infrastructure. A once immature system might have made a quick breakthrough due to the construction of new types of infrastructure. A new basic feature of the new age of consumption is the rise of cultural and artistic consumption. In other words, more and more consumers are in pursuit of diversified, multi-tiered, and personalized products and services, together with immersive experiences.

4.4.3. Greater importance is attached to platform-based services

Art e-commerce is a typical example, which has gone through three stages. The first phase is making the traditional business forms of the art industry Internet-based. The second is the platform-based transaction of the art industry. It is a platform for display, transaction and service based on Internet technology. Its focus is on transaction process management which is based on witness transactions and transaction traceability management that is grounded on

registration. The third period is the digitization of the art industry, that is, the development of new art e-commerce based on a digital comprehensive service platform. By integrating the functions of art e-commerce platform in the second stage, more emphasis is placed on the management and service of data, namely, digital credit reporting and customer credit management.

4.4.4. The value of all-round integrated development is greatly appreciated

The development of media integration follows a logic of the media-communication-medium-integration. It is not only the integration of channels and forms of media and communication, but also promotes the transformation of human society from an information society to a platform-based one with digital and smart technologies. The development of the media starts from traditional media, then forms of communication, and medium, and then to media integration.

4.4.5. Integrated development that supports aesthetic culture is valued

The rise and development of the contemporary esthetic culture suggests the following underlying trends. First, it derives from yet extends aesthetics – beyond aesthetics, as it is. It evolves from the existentialist ontology in anthropology and demonstrates the arche, authenticity and intersubjectivity of existence, thus laying the foundation for the transformation of contemporary Chinese esthetics. Second, the sudden emergence of studies of esthetic culture is characterized by its high sensitivity, careful attention, and full support to the survival of aesthetic culture, and continues to expand the research paths for the transformation of contemporary Chinese esthetics. Then, the continuous growth of and increasing interest in aesthetic Sinicization are based on the identification of life in the Chinese cultural tradition, which is the juxtaposition of reality and virtuality. Finally, the notion of "beyond esthetics" highlights survival because only on the quality basis of feeling, experiencing, and appreciating survival, can it be possible to embark on the ideological road to the *arche*. If there is no such primitive communication in esthetic ideologies, it is impossible to talk about the source and renewal of aesthetics.

In the fusion of aestheticism, consumerism, and urbanization, it is inevitable that the development of contemporary Chinese art has turned aesthetic culture secular, instrumentalized, fragmented, fashionable, novel, entertaining, and snackable. Since the 1990s, the world's technological, political, and economic landscape has undergone tremendous changes. Technological progress is changing the public's esthetic concepts, ways of

production, and study habits. The biggest change is found in the transmission and organization of information based on the integration of internet technology, communication technology, and information management technology.

The new business forms, under the trend of aesthetic and cultural integration, must use innovative cultural integration and technological innovation in concepts, means, approaches, and models to spread Chinese culture and Chinese aesthetics. It can thus enhance the capability of the cultural industry and internationalize Chinese culture. The revolutionary changes in the exploration, integration, application, and value discovery and realization of cultural resources brought about by media integration are also important aspects that should be paid attention to in the development of media integration.

4.4.6. Cross-cultural integrated development is heeded

Cross-cultural integration refers primarily to the exchange and fusion of different cultures. In the context of globalization, it broadly covers the cross-border communication and integration between cultures regardless of ethnicities, ideologies, and development backgrounds. Be it globalization or localization, in essence it is still a matter of interests. Globalization focuses more on the issue of vision, while localization stays alert to the balance and focus of interests between internationalization and localization.

At present, cross-cultural integration extends its development mainly in four directions. One is to integrate with different ethnic groups and their cultural systems across the world. Second, cross-cultural integration of traditional industries is also taken into account. Third, cross-cultural integration also needs to blend with emerging industries. The last one is that it should interact and integrate with what grows out of itself. Market and business forms of consumption need to be further involved in the process of cultural and artistic dissemination, which helps cross-border integration between cultural and artistic consumption. Cultural and artistic consumption thus become a part of contemporary social life and a means to enable cross-border communication in the context of globalization.

4.5. The development of the third media has strategic and practical significance

The rise of the third media ostensibly results from the development of media integration. However, fundamentally, it is the transformation of esthetic culture as well as means, motivations, and channels of cultural innovation against the background of the new age of consumption and the integration of new technologies. This transformation is not merely an issue of communication studies, but a real insight into such a change requires broader and in-depth knowledge about the background.

Broadly speaking, media integration is also a new form of the cultural industry. At the moment, a growing number of people realize that promoting media integration and building omni-media has become an important strategic issue in the new era. Besides, media integration is a fundamental change in the development of the art industry, especially a revolutionary change in the exploration, integration, application of cultural and artistic resources, and value discovery and value realization. The in-depth development of media integration makes the discovery of new resources more independent, systematic, bountiful, and strategically meaningful.

In addition, the rise of the third media has played an active role in re-establishing aesthetic culture and utilizing the market to foster the development of social aesthetic education and the popularization of art. Market and consumption models can spread cultural and artistic knowledge, carry out social esthetic education, and form a new mechanism for new art communication, which we should value, study, and make good use of. This is a major research topic raised by the emerging experience economy. It is of great strategic significance for the construction of a culturally powerful country. Finally, the rise of the third media provides a good solution to the task of taking Chinese culture to the global stage. Increasingly, consumption, the market and the industry become important channels for cultural dissemination and experience. Therefore, the emphasis is on how to communicate in a language that is universally intelligible. The answer is to adopt the code of conduct and language widely accepted in the market, industry and financial institutions, which is the "lingua franca" that we should be more familiar with and capable of.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no competing of interest.

Author contributions

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