

Innovative Construction of Converged Media Talent Cultivation Model Based on the Omni-Media Skill Matrix

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Abstract: As media convergence continuously deepens, the omni-media skill matrix serves as an important support for the core competitiveness of converged media talents. However, under current traditional talent cultivation approaches, it suffers from flaws such as overly specialized skills, misalignment with practical demands, and deficiency in practical applicability, hindering the cultivation of versatile talents that meet the requirements of industrial evolution. Grounding in talent cultivation realities in grassroots media units and higher education institutions, this paper analyzes the basic concept of the omni-media skill matrix, elaborates on the challenges faced by current converged media talent cultivation, proposes a new type of “skill-based, practice-driven, and multi-stakeholder co-cultivation” cultivation mechanism, and provides practical and actionable implementation measures, aiming to break through traditional cultivation barriers, enable the talents capabilities to meet the industry requirements, and offer grassroots-applicable and actionable insights for converged media talent cultivation.

Keywords: Omni-Media Skill Matrix; Converged Media Talent; Cultivation Model; Innovative Construction

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1. Introduction

With the rapid and continuous development of media technology, converged media has become an inevitable trend in the media industry. The demand is also increasing day by day for converged media talents in grassroots media units and various enterprises and government-sponsored institutions. However, current talent cultivation approaches still remain in the traditional model, emphasizing theory over practice, and overemphasizing specialized skills while neglecting the cultivation of comprehensive competencies. This has led to the fact that the talents produced cannot meet the needs of various application scenarios in the omni-media era [1]. Therefore, it is extremely necessary to establish a converged media talent cultivation system based on the omni-media skill matrix, focusing on skill integration and practical implementation, and addressing the disconnection between talent cultivation and industry advancement. It equally serves as a strong safeguard for accelerating the high-quality development of media convergence.

2. Core Connotations of the Omni-Media Skill Matrix and Converged Media Talents

2.1 Core Strategic Imperatives of the Omni-Media Skill Matrix

The omni-media skill matrix is not a simple combination of various skills. Instead, it anchors in communication requirements of converged media, integrating skills such as text editing, video shooting and editing, new media operations, live streaming planning, and public opinion analysis, etc., forming a “fundamental skills + core skills + extended skills” module system [2]. The fundamental skill module focuses on traditional media essential skills such as writing capability and news sensitivity. The core skill module involves short-form video creation, operations of new media platforms, and other popular communication skills nowadays. The extended skill module includes livestreaming product promotion and boundary-spanning collaboration, etc. And based on these, it develops a complete set of skill system adapted to converged media contexts, enabling talents to be competent in various occasions and forms of publicity work.

2.2 Core Competency Requirements for Converged Media Talents

Converged media talents differ from traditional media professionals, requiring both specialized versatility and

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knowledge-action integration as fundamental attributes. They should have a solid academic background in journalism, adhere to the correct public opinion orientation, and be proficient in various skills of the omni-media skill matrix, and be capable of independently conducting topic planning, content production, and release, etc. In addition, they should have strong hands-on capabilities skills and innovation capabilities, be able to promptly keep up with the changings in media development, and based on this, develop affective and grassroots-applicable multimedia products according to specific circumstances, achieving the integration of social benefits and economic benefits [3].

2.3 The Collaborative Mechanism Between Omni-Media Skill Matrix and Core Competencies

The omni-media skill matrix and core competencies are not two separate parts, yet an integrated whole that mutually support and rely on each other. The skill matrix serves as the concrete lever for the practical implementation of the core competencies, while the core competencies provide the value guidance for skill application. From the perspective of skills, fundamental skills correspond to the political literacy and journalistic professionalism of converged media talents, ensuring no content creation deviation. Core skills manifest the integration capabilities and user thinking. On the basis of proficient mastery of technologies such as short-form video production and new-media operations, the talents must also understand the operational rules and audience characteristics of different platforms. Extended skills reflect innovation capabilities and market awareness, enabling talents to achieve synergistic balance between social benefits and economic gains in boundary-spanning cooperation and live streaming product promotion. The core of this cooperative approach lies in “transformation”, which involves transforming one’s writing skills into the narrative capability in short-form video scripts, transforming news sensitivity into the accuracy of news hotspot capture, and transforming the public opinion analytical ability into risk warning foreseeability. Only when the different aspects of the skill matrix are internalized as talents’ self-qualities can it be possible to achieve the transition from “being able to do” to “doing well”, and from “single-point breakthrough” to “systematic operation”. Therefore, when cultivating converged media talents, it is necessary to prioritize competency-based education to prevent imbalance between technical skills and fundamental principles, ensuring neither technique nor principle is overemphasized at the expense of the other.

2.4 Practical Pathways for Cultivating Converged Media Talents

Cultivating the omni-media skill matrix and developing core competencies are ultimately to cultivate talents. On the one hand, it is necessary to reform curriculum offerings to break through traditional disciplinary boundaries, and build a multi-dimensional integrated curriculum group integrating “news and communication”, “digital technology”, “art design” and “marketing”, enabling students to experience the end-to-end converged media production while in school. On the other hand, it is necessary to strengthen the practical components, establishing on-campus converged media practical training bases, and implementing authentic project-driven teaching to train students’ various capabilities in practical components across topic planning, content production, platform release, and effect monitoring. Concurrently, it is necessary to promote industry-education collaborative education, maintain long-term cooperative relationships with mainstream media, new media platforms, and MCN institutions, and adopt on-post practicum and project-based learning to achieve seamless articulation between talent cultivation and industry demands. Simultaneously, it is necessary to establish a dynamic capability assessment system, discarding the sole knowledge testing method and making a diversified assessment program centered on work quality, influence, and creativity, support talents to develop their individual characteristics and specialties while mastering the skill matrix, so that they can be both “all-rounders” and “specialists”. Under the background of deep media convergence, only by constantly updating philosophy and improving methods can higher education institutions cultivate a group of converged media talents with ideals, capabilities and accountability, thereby laying the groundwork for the advancement of ideological and cultural development.

3.Current Dilemmas in the Cultivation of Converged Media Talents

3.1 Rigid Cultivation Models with Persistent Industry Misalignment

Currently, most talent training still adopts the traditional approach of “theory teaching + simple practicum”. The course arrangement mainly focuses on theoretical knowledge, and the practical components are mostly just a formality, rarely enabling students to communicate with grassroots media and enterprises in-depth. Many training institutions have not adjusted their course structures in accordance with the requirements of the omni-media skills matrix, resulting in the technical skills of students failing to meet the industry demands. After employment, they still need to take a long time to adapt to their roles before they can be competent for their jobs, existing the problem of “learning-application misalignment”.

3.2 Monolithic Skill Development with Insufficient Convergence Awareness

Some cultivation approaches place too much emphasis on the cultivation of specialized skills, either focusing solely on text editing or only on video production, while neglecting the integration of different skills ^[4]. Many practitioners possess only one skill, resulting in them failing to be competent at comprehensive tasks in the omni-media environment. For instance, those who are good at writing do not know how to edit videos, and those who are proficient in operations do not understand content planning. This fails to meet the fundamental requirements of the converged media “one work, multi-channel release”, impeding the growth space of talents.

3.3 Inadequate Practice Platforms Leading to Weak Field-Ready Capabilities

Converged media talent cultivation requires practical training. However, currently, most training institutions lack sustained practice platforms. On campus, practical training is mostly conducted through simulation operations, while external internships are mostly one-day inspection visits, making students struggle to get involved in authentic converged media work. Due to a lack of authentic environmental challenges, students’ technical proficiency remains at the level of “basic operation” rather than “proficient mastery”. Consequently, they become floundering when confronted with complex scenarios after graduation.

4.Pathways for the Innovative Construction of the Converged Media Talent Cultivation Model Based on the Omni-Media Skill Matrix

4.1 Optimizing the Curriculum System to Solidify the Foundations for the Skill Matrix

It is necessary to restructure the curriculum system based on the omni-media skill matrix, break through traditional disciplinary boundaries and achieve comprehensive coverage of “fundamental courses + core courses + extended courses”. The fundamental courses retain fundamental knowledge such as news theory and writing, solidifying the expertise foundations for students. The core courses offer courses related to short-form video shooting and editing, new media platform operations, and live-streaming planning to align with the development trends in the industry. The extended courses offer courses such as public opinion analysis, boundary-spanning cooperation, and public welfare communication, enhancing students’ holistic competencies ^[5]. Moreover, the course content focuses on practical utility and discards abstruse and complicated theoretical explanations. Instead, case-based teaching, practical training, and other approaches are employed, enabling students to acquire skills during the learning process.

4.2 Establishing Practice Platforms to Enhance the Effectiveness of Experiential Empowerment

The deep integration of converged media ecological technologies is reshaping the traditional communication pattern. As a result, media features, such as multimodal integration, cross-platform operations, and industry boundary ablation, are emerging. This not only puts forward higher demands on the knowledge integration quotient, technology-industry alignment, and boundary-spanning innovation capacity of media talents in applied undergraduate institutions, but also urges various institutions to ground themselves in the development logic of the media society and the transformation and upgrading realities in the cultural industry, and explore new forward-looking and actionable educational paradigms for media talents through the thinking with a supply side

structural reform mindset. In the context of converged media, the innovation in the applied undergraduate media talent cultivation system is not only derived from the inherent requirements of the regions where higher education provides services, but also represents the key to resolving the talent supply-demand misalignment and supporting the healthy and sustainable development of the media industry. Higher education institutions should uphold the principle of “practice education”, provide various practice platforms to enable students to develop their skills through real-world projects. On campus, they can establish converged media practical training bases to create grassroots media work environment, enabling students to participate in the production of various content such as campus news and public welfare activities. Off campus, they can actively cooperate with grassroots media centers and local enterprises to jointly establish internship and practical training bases, and organize students to engage in on-post practicum and participate in specific converged media work, such as promoting rural areas or introducing local cultural characteristics, enabling them to enhance their skill application level and achieve the goal of “Learning for Transferable Application” through practical activities.

4.3 Building Collaborative Mechanisms to Consolidate Synergistic Education Efforts

It is necessary to break down the barriers among educational institutions, media organizations and enterprises, and establish a “school-media collaborative, and school-enterprise cooperative” talent cultivation model, and invite front-line media workers and enterprise technicians to serve as part-time counselors, and rely on their work experience to provide practical guidance to students. The cultivation institutions collaborate with media and enterprises to launch customized cultivation programs, determining the skill training directions based on industry advancement, ensuring the seamless articulation between talent cultivation and industry role requirements. In addition, they establish bidirectional communication channels to regularly understand the new requirements for talent capabilities in society and improve teaching methods accordingly. It is necessary to establish a long-term mechanism featuring “talent co-cultivation, process co-management, and achievement sharing”, carry out school-enterprise cooperation to jointly build practical training bases, bringing authentic projects into the classroom for practical training on news collecting, editing, production, technical maintenance, and other aspects, establish “dual-mentor mobility stations”, where professional educators are dispatched to media organizations or enterprises for practical immersion, in order to promptly supplement new knowledge and technologies, and apply them in classroom teaching, and build digital collaborative platforms to enable the instant sharing of teaching cases and industry information. Concurrently, it is necessary to organize skills competition, innovation and entrepreneurship activities, etc., to achieve competition-driven learning and innovation-led training and tap students’ potential. Through these measures, we will establish effective linkages between the education chain, talent chain, industrial chain, and innovation chain, transforming the “detachment of learning from practice” into “integration of learning and application”. This shift will continuously supply enterprises with highly skilled applied talents who can “perform immediately upon employment and become backbone professionals upon mastery”.

4.4 Strengthening Competence Cultivation to Elevate the Core Competitiveness of Talents

While cultivating skills, it is also important to focus on the holistic competency development of talents. On one hand, it is necessary to strengthen professional ethics education, enabling talents to remember their news mission, convey positive values, and create affective and life-aligned converged media works. On the other hand, it is necessary to cultivate students’ innovative spirit and adaptability, enabling them to understand the new technologies in media development, actively acquire new skills and means, and enable creative expressions based on actual circumstances to enhance the influence of converged media works. Additionally, it is also necessary to focus on cultivating the cooperative spirit of talents to meet the needs of multi-departmental collaboration in converged media projects. At the same time, it is essential to pay attention to establishing a theory-practice integrated, on-campus-off-campus collaborative education mechanism. On the one hand, it is necessary to establish diverse practice platforms, such as school-media cooperation, project-based learning, and simulation converged media

centers, so that talents can master the complete set of processes across news collecting and editing, production, and operations in practical operations, and improve their capability to solve complex problems through the “learning by doing and doing by learning” approach. On the other hand, it is necessary to enhance interdisciplinary comprehensive cultivation, guiding talents to acquire more knowledge in humanities, arts, technology, etc., enabling them with broad vision and deep cultural grounding, so that they cannot only specialize in a certain field but also enable to collaborate with personnel from other fields.

On this basis, it is also necessary to pay attention to cultivating the media literacy and social responsibility of talents, make them realize the important role of the media in information dissemination, public opinion guidance, cultural transmission, etc., cultivate solemn respect for information authenticity and communication ethics, while guarding the fundamental principles when pursuing traffic and influence, and regularly hold activities such as industry-frontier report sessions, high-quality work exchange meetings, and professional ethics analysis sessions to foster talents’ enduring passion and professional resilience in journalism. Finally, it is necessary to build a dynamic evaluation and feedback system to continuously improve the cultivation programs, evaluate the holistic competency education effects within a certain period, and revise the curriculum offerings and teaching methods in a timely manner according to the changes in the media industry and the laws of talent cultivation, achieving a good interactive relationship among “training, practice, feedback, improvement”, and providing the converged media industry with a group of versatile talents possessing both specialized hard skills and comprehensive soft competencies.

5.Conclusion

The reform in converged media talent cultivation approaches based on omni-media skill matrix is an effective means to address the current talent cultivation challenges and adapt to industrial evolution. This model, grounded in a skill matrix and driven by experiential empowerment, takes collaborative education as its safeguard. It breaks through barriers in traditional cultivation approaches to achieve effective alignment between talent capabilities and industry demands. During implementation, it must integrate grassroots realities, prioritize practicality and operational feasibility, continuously enrich course offerings, develop practical training bases, and foster synergistic education in order to cultivate “specialized yet versatile” converged media talents who integrate knowledge with practice, ultimately building a robust talent pipeline for high-quality media convergence development.

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