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# КОММУНИКАЦИОННАЯ СТРАТЕГИЯ ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВА КИТАЯ ПО ОТНОШЕНИЮ К МАССОВОЙ АУДИТОРИИ В ОФИЦИАЛЬНЫХ АККАУНТАХ МЕСТНЫХ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ СЕТЕЙ DOUYIN И WECHAT ПО СРАВНЕНИЮ С ТРАДИЦИОННЫМИ СМИ

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*Аннотация. Коммуникационная стратегия правительства Китая в официальных аккаунтах местных социальных сетей Douyin и WeChat отличается от подхода к традиционным СМИ. Это связано с особенностями этих платформ и их влиянием на массовую аудиторию. В официальных аккаунтах местных социальных сетей Douyin и WeChat, правительство Китая применяет более прямой и непосредственный подход к коммуникации с массовой аудиторией. Они используют короткие видео, аудио и текстовые сообщения, чтобы представить свои инициативы, политику и достижения. Это позволяет правительству достичь широкой аудитории, особенно среди молодежи, которая активно использует эти социальные сети. Официальные аккаунты в Douyin и WeChat также обеспечивают интерактивность и возможность обратной связи с аудиторией. Авторами в статье рассмотрены особенности коммуникационной стратегии правительства Китая по отношению к массовой аудитории в официальных аккаунтах местных социальных сетей Douyin и WeChat по сравнению с традиционными СМИ.*

*Ключевые слова. традиционные СМИ; Новые средства массовой информации; политическая коммуникация; Короткое видео; WeChat; Доуин, политическая роль СМИ, Интернет.*

# CHINA GOVERNMENT'S COMMUNICATION STRATEGY TOWARDS MASS AUDIENCE IN OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS IN LOCAL SOCIAL MEDIA DOUYIN AND WECHAT COMPARING WITH TRADITIONAL MEDIA

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*Abstract. The communication strategy of the Chinese government in the official accounts of local social networks Douyin and WeChat differs from the approach to traditional media. This is due to the features of these platforms and their impact on the mass audience. In the official accounts of local social networks Douyin and WeChat, the Chinese government takes a more direct and direct approach to communicating with a mass audience. They use short video, audio and text messages to present their initiatives, policies and achievements. This allows the government to reach a wide audience, especially among young people who actively use these social networks.*

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*Official Douyin and WeChat accounts also provide interactivity and the possibility of feedback from the audience. The authors of the article consider the features of the communication strategy of the Chinese government in relation to the mass audience in the official accounts of local social networks Douyin and WeChat in comparison with traditional media.*

***Keywords.*** *Traditional media; New media; Political communication; Short video; WeChat; Douyin, the political role of the media, the Internet.*

## Introduction

Political communication refers to the behavior of political communication subject to promote the flow of political information through relevant political communication methods according to certain political purposes. Political communication plays an important role in the political process and political life. McNeill categorizes the political communication functions of media in an ideal society into five categories: informing, educating, platform, exposure, and advocacy. Shao Peiren believes that the function of political communication refers to: "The function of political communication, that is, the responsibility and effectiveness of communication, is the sum of the mission, means, and results of political communication." Li Yuanshu summarized the function of political communication as the sum of the mission, ability, and role of political communication. Therefore, the function of political communication refers to the behavior results of the government, social political organization and other political communication participants who produce specific political influence through relevant political communication behavior modes according to certain political purposes.

## 1. The Political Communication Function of Media

The core of political communication is to promote the flow of political information and disseminate political value through various political communication capabilities. Under the background of globalization, western countries represented by the United States, with the help of capital advantages, information technology and hot media resources, promote their political concepts in the world, and take the political values of "freedom, justice, democracy, and the rule of law" as the basis for countries around the world to establish democratic systems. To a certain extent, the spread of political values is the spread of political systems. With the deepening of China's reform and opening up, some political values and institutional design thinking in western countries provide a good theoretical basis for China to promote the reform of political system and administrative management. However, the dissemination of political values in our country should be based on our traditional and specific national conditions, and spread the core socialist values through existing media resources [7].

The media is a power resource and an enhancer of discourse power. It is the main way to shape the image form of social life, and also a key way to gain reputation and have significant influence or even manipulation over real life. The media plays a crucial role as a means and

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medium for connecting the dissemination and reception of mobile political information. Traditional media relies on the government to gain political and economic discourse power. As the monopolist of political communication information, the government directly controls and coordinates the setting of political communication agendas, the selection of political communication content, and the tone of communication. With the advancement of technology, new media relies on advanced transmission technology to create a new space for political communication. Using the internet, especially the mobile internet, as an emerging medium for political communication, has had a huge impact on social and political life. Traditional media conducts political communication through political propaganda, policy dissemination, and coordination with social management, while new media, with its own technological advantages, provides an interactive platform for the public to receive and disseminate political information more quickly and conveniently, as well as initiate political issues and participate in social discussions. Academic discourse, folk discourse, and palace discourse are launched together on online platforms to form an interaction. At the same time, new media has expanded citizens' "right to know". In an era where information and information are growing exponentially, the public has more channels, information, and materials available than ever before [9].

**The Political Communication of Traditional Media**

Traditional media use "agenda setting" to determine the value of information that the audience wants to obtain, make choices, manipulate and control the information disseminated, and the audience may learn from the mass media what issues are more important than other issues. Although mass media may not directly change the audience's attitudes and perspectives, they can tell the audience what they think. In other words, traditional media tells us what we think, not how we think. This agenda setting is in line with the government's propaganda policies, spreading the concept of governance to the public from a one-way perspective, conducting policy propaganda, and assuming the political dissemination function in promoting the political values of the party and government.

The political communication function of traditional media includes two major components in terms of expression: current political news and social livelihood, which play different roles in the political communication of "agenda setting". Current political news mainly reports on party and government meetings, interprets policy documents, and promotes governance concepts and dominant values. In China, traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television are mainly controlled by the propaganda departments of party committees at all levels according to administrative divisions, so traditional media at all levels have corresponding reports on current affairs and the new country. Political news is mostly released on the first page of newspapers and during prime time on radio and television, which aims

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to achieve political dissemination through market behavior. Compared to the one-way political communication method of current political news, the role of social and livelihood programs (sections) in political communication is often unknown [6].

In fact, social and livelihood programs (sections) not only play an important role in policy dissemination, but also actively participate in the government's social management, actively guiding official political values to penetrate the hearts of the people. In recent years, television programs on social and legal mediation have sprung up like mushrooms after rain, such as Jiangxi TV's "Gold Medal Mediation", Dongfang TV's "New Old Uncle", Hubei TV's "Mediation Scene", Sichuan TV's "Let Love Be the Master", and Sichuan TV's "Extraordinary Topic", which have successively appeared on various local television screens. The emergence of such programs is closely related to the government's proposed governance paradigm of "harmonious society". The government encourages the use of mediation as a means of dispute resolution and emphasizes the social management concept of "great mediation, maintaining stability", which has been disseminated in the programs [3].

By conducting a statistical analysis of the 48 programs of Sichuan TV's "Very Active Questions" program throughout 2012, It was found that political keywords such as "harmonious society", "socialist core values", "scientific outlook on development", "governing for the people (Serve the People)" and so

on appeared repeatedly, of which "harmonious society" appeared most, 29 times in total, "socialist core values" 20 times, "scientific outlook on development" 19 times, "governing for the people (Serve the People)" 21 times. This data exceeds the number of political keywords captured in the current political news broadcast by Sichuan TV's Xinjian Information Channel during the same period. The number of times political keywords appear in programs reflects the ranking of political communication and also reflects the changes in the government's dissemination of political information through traditional media. The most frequently used political keywords in 2013 were "Chinese Dream" (25 times) and "mass line" (24 times), while "harmonious society" dropped from first place in 2012 to third place in 2013, only 19 times.

## The Political Communication of New Media

New media provides a platform for the public to participate in criticism and discussion of public issues. According to Habermas' public domain framework, the public with full right to know must maintain a high degree of criticality when participating in discussions on public issues. The development of new media has indeed brought critical public discussions to Chinese society. With the diversification of expression methods, the critical spirit has spread in the Internet. Opinion leaders from different backgrounds are committed to expressing their political views through WeChat, Douyin and other online tools, so as to infiltrate the political value orientation in

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the real society into the Internet discussion. The Internet has also promoted the flow of political information up and down, and online public opinion is increasingly valued by the Chinese government, which is increasingly affecting its decision-making thinking. New media users use "online search" to supervise and expose corrupt officials, or use information technology tools to conduct offline protest activities, forcing the government to respond actively, fulfill their administrative responsibilities, and improve social management methods [5].

The "Sun Zhigang Incident" promoted the legislative process of the country and abolished the detention system that had been implemented for decades. The "hepatitis B" incident forbids employers to check hepatitis B. In the 2007 Xiamen and 2011 Dalian PX events, online blogs and emails became a platform for disseminating a large amount of information, quickly focusing the public's attention on PX and its potential health issues. People move from online to offline and gather to raise dissent with the local government. The people and the government established a foundation of mutual trust through dialogue, ultimately reaching a consensus and drawing a successful conclusion to the event.

According to the 23rd "Statistical Report on the Development of the Internet in China" by the China Internet Information Center, 61.8% of respondents generally first see their understanding of major news through the internet. 76.9% of respondents said that after going online, they pay more attention to social events than before, and 41.9% of respondents admitted that the internet is their main channel for expressing opinions. According to the 33rd report, as of December 2013, the number of Chinese netizens reached 618 million, with an internet penetration rate of 45.8%. In 2008, the number of netizens in China was 298 million, and the internet penetration rate was only 22.6%. This indicates that with the promotion of informatization and digitization, the rapid development of the Internet has promoted the increasingly important role of new media in disseminating political values dominated by civil rights and democratic consciousness [8].

**Problems of Current Political Short Videos are Disseminated in Terms of Methods in Government Affairs**

The birth of social media has made short videos the main channel for information reception, and current affairs short videos have also become an essential part of China's current affairs activities. For example, during the annual "Two Sessions" period, mainstream media represented by CCTV release many short videos, occupying the main part of current affairs content. At present, political communication is no longer limited to the past forms. It can be very serious and can also adopt forms that are currently favored by teenagers to attract audiences. For example, CCTV News has 110 million fans on the Douyin platform, reflecting a new channel for people to receive information in recent years. But behind these current situations, there are also many hidden problems.

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The continuous deepening of media integration has gradually diversified the actual communication forms of mass media, and its visual communication characteristics can break through the audience's rigid and fixed image of previous government communication. The rise of short videos in 2018 has created a new platform for the transformation of current political media. Under the influence of policies, platforms, users and operations, government short videos have begun to be popularized on Douyin and WeChat platforms. At the same time, they provide new channels for the information disclosure of local government agencies, and lay the foundation for developing government influence and building a harmonious society.

*5.1 Serious' pan-entertainment 'situation*

Because young people make up the majority of the audience, the media needs to make some "setbacks" in order to attract audience attention. In the official account of Beijing SWAT, the videos produced have reached millions of likes. The main content it produces is the daily exercise of special police officers, paired with "step on" music and short video clips that young people like, quickly gaining a large number of fans. Most of the audience praised the handsome work of special police officers and did not delve into the story behind them. The video then sent also contains elements that are of interest to many young people. Popular music that often appears on Douyin is used in the life of special police. In terms of personnel selection for appearance, Beijing SWAT showcases well built special police officers,

and even produces a collection of instructors who wear fashionable clothes and can drive fast cars. However, the fact is that the average number of videos played today is not more than ten thousand, and the number of fans on the Douyin platform with many users is only three million. It is not difficult to find that entertainment videos that excessively cater to young people only gain temporary audiences. is that the disseminator failed to fulfill the role of "gatekeeper" in the process of disseminating false news [1].

*5.2 Concerns about video quality and copyright issues*

Short videos are a low-cost product that everyone can shoot and use. At present, when individual video producers and self media professionals strive to create original content, there are some who want to opportunistically obtain the same popularity. After removing the watermark and adding some novel video clips, it becomes a video created by oneself. However, most pirated platforms do not have standardized rights protection processes, which to some extent increases the difficulty and cost of rights protection. Some self media government accounts often give up their rights protection due to the high cost of rights protection, resulting in pirated videos crushing high-quality videos when faced with ineffective rights protection.

*5.3 Inaccurate positioning, overly generalized content, and lack of original content*

The short video covers the author's philosophy and the spirit they want to convey. In this regard, political short videos should convey the image of the

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government and the quality of life for the general public. However, on the platform of Tiktok, most of the content released by mainstream media such as CCTV News and People's Daily is related to people's life. For example, positive energy events such as "Brother Transforms into Spider Man to Surprise Primary School Sisters" or "Everyone Works Together to Save Children". This part of the video has added reasonable background music to deepen the audience's feelings, in order to achieve the goal of promoting positive social energy. However, its positioning is relatively vague, with a wide range of content and a large number, coupled with official accounts that do not value originality, it is often reprinted by major platforms. In addition, there is another type of video that makes people feel like they are posing, which is prone to aesthetic fatigue.

**Communication measures of current political content in the environment of Douyin and WeChat short video**

Communication measures of current political content in the environment of Douyin and WeChat short video

Gather hotspots of current political content to make it more interesting. At present, publishing political news in the form of short videos can attract the attention of the audience and create relevant topics. In 2015, the Renaissance Road Studio released the song "Song of the 13th Five Year Plan". This short film revolves around the directions of good listening, good looking, and fun, and has been loved by many young people. Not only did it convey the core of the "13th Five Year Plan" concept to the audience,

but it also received numerous likes and reposts. Moreover, such visual forms of communication have played the role of agenda setting, making more and more people aware of the goals of the "13th Five Year Plan" concept and promoting civilized norms.

Enhancing the readability of news and highlighting its storytelling, government short videos can more vividly shape the image of party and government agencies and civil servants. With the help of short videos, audiences can intuitively experience the life scenes and states of government officials, and find resonance in them. The visualization of government content can more vividly create a patriotic image of public officials, promoting the integration of two types of public opinion. In 2017, CCTV Micro Video Studio released "The Road of the Servant" and quickly scanned the entire network. Within a week, this video reached 250 million views on the internet, becoming the first "popular" short video after the 19th National Congress. This detailed narrative is closer to the audience and is loved by the general public. In terms of shaping the image of leadership figures, the previous forms were relatively serious and rigid. But 'The Road of the Public Servant' made a bold innovation by adding humanistic care to it, making it easier for the audience to accept [2].

**Effective ways for the development of political short videos in the Internet environment such as Tiktok and WeChat**

*7.1 Mainstream media needs to provide good public opinion guidance*

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Even though everyone in current society is a disseminator, mainstream media is still the most important disseminator among them, and their statements are more persuasive. Officials need to implement what they need to do, especially in the field of political communication, which will involve various interests of citizens. Some government new media, as disseminators, have not fulfilled their obligations in a true sense, but directly spread parody and lax news to the public, thereby affecting the atmosphere and public opinion of society. Therefore, the media should strive to guide the direction of public opinion and continuously regulate the mode of communication. Short videos, as a brand new form of communication, can meet the audience's viewing requirements, not only express their opinions in a shallow way, but also attract attention from all sectors of society. Therefore, mainstream media should use short videos to effectively expand the influence of mainstream public opinion.

*7.2 Realize diversified dissemination*

Due to the rise of short videos, the media has achieved astonishing results in recent times, which is inseparable from the efforts of the creative team. The Central Committee of the Communist Youth League has its own official accounts on Douyin, Kwai and WeChat platforms, and has gained a large number of fans. The Central Committee of the Communist Youth League has also released many activities. For example, it launched the Douyin challenge of "Chinese Costume Day" on April 17, attracting a large number of Chinese costume lovers. In addition, activities such as "New Era Youth Saying" and "Qingming Festival Sacrificing Martyrs" have also been launched, which have been recognized by many netizens. Therefore, short videos need to break through the overly serious and rigid communication methods in the past, and continue to launch new forms of communication to achieve the audience's potential curiosity, thereby also gaining more attention [4].

*7.3 The phenomenon of "pan-entertainment" should be taken seriously*

In order to gain more attention, the media will focus on what the current audience is concerned about and create news that the audience likes. Therefore, it is highly likely that there will be a "pan entertainment" of political communication. Many media outlets will creatively edit current political news, along with music backgrounds and short video clips that young people love, to make originally serious news more vivid and interesting. However, some short videos are only for the purpose of transforming videos, without conveying the actual needs and concerns of the audience. On the contrary, people have become a subsidiary of entertainment. Being too entertaining not only prevents people from understanding the truth, but also wastes a lot of time and money. Therefore, the media should not excessively entertain themselves in short video formats.

*7.4 Find positioning and shape a good image*

Although short videos have many advantages, the information they can convey is still very limited and not as accurate as text. Therefore, under the

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premise of limited content, short videos need to combine the unique image that regional government wants to shape, and use it as a key focus and breakthrough point. Many county-level financial media professionals nowadays combine regional characteristics to create government short videos to attract local attention. Government short videos can also combine the content advantages of various counties and cities to create high-quality content and become a brand for local government affairs.

## Conclusion

Network technology has driven the enthusiasm of the whole people to participate and is an important way of communication for people today.

Douyin, WeChat short video and new government media are the products of the media field under the Internet environment. It has been born under the influence of social development and technological progress, but also faces many difficulties and challenges. With the continuous updating of media methods and content, the short video platform dominated by Douyin has become an inevitable choice for government media. Media workers should approach such situations with a critical and inclusive perspective. Therefore, local government affairs should leverage new media platforms to convey policies in the form of short videos, thereby enhancing the influence of local government affairs.

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