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Analysis of the Evolution of Communication Pathways in the Sports Media Industry during the Short Video Era

-- Taking the Network Traffic and Data as a Perspective

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Abstract: With the advent of the 5G era and the rapid development of short video social media, the trend of the small screen (mobile media) defeating the large screen (TV media) is gradually emerging under the background of diversified and innovative communication methods. Moreover, with the rapid increase in the total number of short video users, short videos greatly influence the operation and communication of international sports organizations and large-scale sports events. Therefore, it is especially important to deeply study and analyze the communication mode of the sports media industry in the short video era. This paper takes the short video content released by the official accounts of FIFA's YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok for the 2022 Qatar World Cup as the research object, analyzes the change path of sports media industry communication in the short video era, and then explores the new development space and economic growth space of sports media.

Keywords: Short Video; Sports Media Industry; Communication Path.

1. Introduction

In recent years, short videos have become a pivotal part of new media and are favored by the broad masses of Internet users. Moreover, the short video is a kind of Internet video content communication method, which is suitable for watching on a mobile state and a short-time leisure state. The length of a short video is generally from 15 seconds to 5 minutes, and it is a kind of high-frequency push video communication content that mainly relies on intelligent mobile terminals to communicate and is suitable for sharing on social media platforms. [1] Hence, this paper explores the changes in the communication path of the sports media industry in the short video era by taking the World Cup short video content released by the accounts of YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok during the 2022 Qatar World Cup as the research object under the perspective of network traffic and data.

2. Connotations and Development Status of Sports Short Video

Sports short video communication is a video communication method that takes an Internet platform as the communication medium, sports as the main communication content, and is generally 15 seconds to 5 minutes long. Moreover, the difference between the communication subject and platform can be divided into portrait sports short videos relying on traditional media, affiliated sports short videos relying on various social media, and aggregated sports short videos relying on specialized short video platforms. The three types of short sports videos are based on the symbiosis and coexistence of the sports industry, laying the foundation for developing sports culture and communicating sports values.[2]

The popularity of short sports videos has made it possible for people to obtain rich sports information in a limited amount of time. Although short in length, this form of video can quickly attract the audience's attention, thus effectively helping them to understand better and master sports knowledge. Additionally, with the communication advantages of greater information density, lower watching cost, more humanization and fragmentation, short videos have become an important means and way of communication in the sports media industry, an important development trend in the current globalization of information communication, and an emerging channel and important carrier for the communication of sports events. [3]

The U.S. was the first country to venture into the short video field. In 2011, Viddy, a video-sharing tool, appeared, offering users the ability to shoot in real-time, edit quickly, and share simultaneously. While Twitter officially launched Vine, a video-sharing app, in 2013, which was well received by Internet users. Six months later, the photo social networking site Instagram also launched a video-sharing function, which allowed users to shoot 15-second videos and share them. Currently, there are five apps with daily activity exceeding one billion worldwide: Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok.

With the development of technology, the short video's user base is becoming more widespread, its communication speed is becoming faster, and its entertainment function is becoming stronger, making it an indispensable part of people's daily life. In addition, the short video platform is easy to operate, low cost to produce, and also has good interactivity. Moreover, with the development of technology, the popularity of sports has made great progress, and the emergence of short videos has enabled the sport to gain more attention and support on social media more effectively.

3. Feasibility of Sports Communication in Short Videos

3.1. Huge User Scale

According to the latest statistics, the global daily active users (DAU) of the short-video platform TikTok will exceed 1 billion by 2022, which indicates that short videos have become a leader in social media with a growing number of users, and have become an important channel for people to

obtain information, spread information and entertainment. [4]

3.2. Fast Communication Speed

The huge user group of short videos makes it possible for the information to spread rapidly. Furthermore, social media platforms use users' downloads, follows, and retweets to spread original video content quickly and gain support from enthusiastic audiences, thus achieving a broader influence. [5]

3.3. Simple Operation

It is easy to post short videos; just log in to your account and click the "+" button at the bottom of the page, the system will automatically provide exciting music and special effects, and users can shoot videos immediately or combine all the content, including sound, images, text, etc., to complete an instant creative expression. By using social media platforms, it is possible to create easy-to-understand short videos in a very short period of time, which greatly accelerates the spread of sports and makes the creation of sports content easier and faster.

3.4. High Interactivity

The short video is a kind of Internet video content communication method, which is generally communicated on new media platforms, suitable for watching in a mobile state and short time leisure state, with length ranging from a few seconds to a few minutes but generally controlled within three minutes, and is a kind of high-frequency push video communication content. It is mainly relying on intelligent mobile terminals to communicate and is very suitable for sharing on social media platforms. [6]

4. Analysis of the Evolution of Communication Pathways in the Sports Media Industry during the Short Video Era - Taking the 2022 Qatar World Cup as an Example

4.1. Short Video Trend of Tournament Communication

In the 2006 World Cup in Germany, the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) removed restrictions on the use of images on the Internet and introduced online video as a mode of communication for the first time. The Swiss Infront Sports began to move from behind the scenes to the forefront of World Cup coverage when it partnered with websites in more than 100 countries around the world and agreed to broadcast four-minute highlights of each match.

During the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, CCTV analyzed the big data of users' social activities through major online social media (Sina Weibo, Tencent Weibo, Baidu Post Bar, Tianya community, etc.) and focused on the "multi-screen interaction" way of social media watching, with the entrance of audiences watching the World Cup increasingly shifting from the TV screen to PC and mobile.

In the 2018 World Cup in Russia, the global broadcast and viewing report released by FIFA indicated that the total number of viewers of this year's World Cup exceeded 3.5 billion, and the number of viewers of the final reached 1.1 billion. According to a survey conducted by domestic data research agency Iresearch on the Weibo platform, 81.1% of fans chose to watch the games on their cell phones during this year's World Cup, compared to 43.8% during the 2014 World Cup.

In the 2022 Qatar World Cup, a short video has become one of the most popular forms of watching for users, with AI artificial intelligence technology becoming more and more perfect and various algorithms emerging. Moreover, based on the live streaming of the tournament, the AI editing system is used to quickly output the representative events occurring in each game to form short videos, which brings viewers a more immersive, companionable, and engaging watching experience.

4.2. Diversification of Communication Platforms

In recent years, the media communication of the World Cup has shown a significant trend of social media, and the 2014 World Cup in Brazil can be regarded as a starting point. Although the early forms of social media, such as Sina Weibo, were already born in China at the time of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, the development of social media was still immature, like Facebook and Twitter in foreign countries, and the mobile Internet and intelligent terminals were still in the early stage of rapid development. It was not until the 2014 World Cup in Brazil that social media officially became one of the primary media choices for people to obtain World Cup information and interact online.

The five major social media platforms listed on the home page of FIFA's official website are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, and TikTok, forming FIFA's five major social media communication matrices, as seen in the short video distribution platforms during the 2022 Qatar World Cup. Furthermore, FIFA has opened its own official World Cup accounts on these five social media platforms and conducted high-quality new media communication and operation, forming a social media matrix for the World Cup in Russia that is officially recognized and actively promoted. The links to the official website of FIFA World Cup Russia and the official accounts of the five major social media are listed in Table 1:



Figure 1. Social media matrix of the official website of FIFA 2022 Qatar World Cup [7]

For FIFA, the quadrennial World Cup is its most influential event IP in terms of influence, communication value, and media development potential. In the course of the World Cup, FIFA, as the organizer of the tournament, relies on social media to achieve the communication objective of making the World Cup a worldwide quadrennial carnival and a media event with a global reach. Moreover, with mobile social media increasingly becoming the primary medium for ordinary people to access information and interact online, building its own social media platform matrix is an important part of the overall communication strategy of FIFA and other major international sports organizations with similar

positioning.

Table 1. Data of the five official social media accounts of FIFA

Media Platform	Number of Fans (myriad)	Home Page Links
Youtube	1930	https://www.youtube.com/@fifa/videos
Facebook	5610.6	https://www.facebook.com/fifaworldcup/
Twitter	1,251.7	https://twitter.com/FIFAWorldCup
Instagram	1670	https://www.instagram.com/fifaworldcup/
TikTok	693	https://www.tiktok.com

4.3. Portrait Screen + Split Screen: to Enhance Immersion Experience with Live Streaming

In the era of deep media integration, competitive sports broadcasting especially emphasizes immersion and presence, which puts higher requirements on the technical application and content production of small-screen broadcasting. As an exclusive FIFA licensed broadcaster of the 2022 FIFA World Cup on a new media platform, CCTV relies on the advantages of channel resources and the rich experience of traditional TV media in live streaming to realize the transfer of game scenes with "portrait screen + split screen" small-screen live streaming, further meeting users' requirements for scenario and immersion.

From the point of view of the user experience, the portrait screen can free both hands compared with the traditional landscape screen live streaming, which is more in line with users' daily one-handed operation and operation habits at any time. From the viewpoint of content experience, the 9:16 portrait screen live streaming pattern reconstructs the writing mode of space, scene, and movement of the game field, with less switching, more slow motion, richer close-up details, and more diversified perspectives, taking into account the athlete's picture and the overall game of the game field. The relatively centralized information processing mode not only enhances the narrative function and fully shows the athletic color but also further brings users closer to the field and deepens the immersion of being in the scene. The short video platform enhances users' subject participation with a more intelligent and humanized interaction experience. Users can choose either portrait or landscape mode, and they can also choose their own watching view from multiple camera positions such as "aerial view", "stadium panorama", "star players", "horizontal and vertical tactics", "coach", etc.

4.4. Intelligent + Efficient: Artificial Intelligence to Help Short Video Production

The rapid release of intelligent productivity in the communication of major sports events has brought about innovations in communication content, presentation, and distribution mechanisms. Moreover, based on the underlying logic of intelligent technology for information resource allocation, the main structure of event communication is built, fully demonstrating the powerful content productivity of mainstream media platforms. For example, with the help of "intelligent technology + editing technology" to ensure the effect of portrait screen live streaming and full immersion content presentation. Relying on algorithmic recommendation technology to customize the event services and achieve "short with long" and other common techniques. The artificial intelligence editing system played a particularly prominent role in the communication of this World Cup, not only to maximize the benefits of copyright but also a positive exploration of sports communication to the stage of strong intelligence. The artificial intelligence editing system can accurately identify, intelligently rate, automatically segment, categorize multi-dimensionally, and independently edit and store huge images in the whole live streaming match. On the one hand, CCTV uses the artificial intelligence editing system to output the championship-winning moments and highlight moments without time delay while the event is live streaming. The artificial intelligence editing system can quickly capture the theme and automatically generate the event highlights, and the personal videos and "five best highlights" of popular stars such as Messi and C Luo are very dramatic, which not only meet the "fan psychology" of different fans but also show the beauty of competitive sports.

5. Conclusion

"Short video + sports" is a new mode of communication that combines new media, sports, and short videos. It incorporates the elements of fierce sports competition, entertaining performances, and exciting moments, thus better meeting audiences' needs in the current social media era. In addition, it is also popular because it is more grounded and closer to the public. Moreover, studies have shown that the advantages of short video platforms have successfully formed a unique communication model that reshapes the communication path of the sports media industry and has achieved good effects. Although there are still some problems to be improved in the communication process, it provides an important reference for how to effectively communicate sports events in the new media environment and meet the diversified needs of audiences.

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