

Study on the Innovative Integration of Visual Presentation and Humanistic Spirit in In-depth News Reporting

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Abstract: Surfing News “Mountains and Rivers” series of in-depth reports is the mainstream media news agencies in the visual communication era when technology is prevalent in the fusion of visual presentation and humanistic spirit of communication attempts and performances, this paper to the second series of the “through the coastline: offshore fish shortage” in the visual breakthrough and humanistic spirit of the innovative integration of the characteristic path and experience to explore, hope to be able to adapt to the needs of the development of visual communication and enhance the humanistic spirit, but also to meet the needs of the times and strengthen the development of visual communication.

Keywords: in-depth news reporting; visual presentation; humanism; innovative integration

With the emergence of technology-driven visual communication in the realm of in-depth news reporting, journalists find themselves grappling with a dilemma. Should they adapt to the demands of the modern era and strive to establish a presence in visual communication? Or should they uphold a content-first approach, focusing on delivering human-centric news stories that highlight the emotional well-being of individuals? One such in-depth news report is “Crossing the Coastline: Offshore Fish Drought,” which utilizes various cutting-edge media technologies such as H5, data motion graphics, video, and hand-drawn illustrations. This paper serves as a case study, investigating the innovative fusion of visual presentation and humanism in the landscape of in-depth news reporting.

1. Technocratic supremacy and lack of humanism in the age of visual communication

1.1 The prevalence of technocracy in visual news communication

The rapid advancements in technology have revolutionized the media landscape, expanding its boundaries and driving transformative changes. In addition to serving as a crucial avenue for information dissemination and news production, the media assumes a pivotal role in pioneering the practical application of advanced technologies.^[1] The application of new media technologies, such as cloud computing, artificial intelligence, VR technology, big data, and H5 technology, has not only introduced novel communication methods and news patterns but has also played a pivotal role in revolutionizing communication ideas and concepts. However, during the development of media technology, we have also witnessed the negative effects of new communication technologies. Some in-depth news reports have become enamored with the visual pleasure offered by media technology, gradually prioritizing “technology first” over the traditional notion of “content is king,” thereby neglecting the humanistic aspect of in-depth news reporting.^[2]

1.2 The lack of humanism in the age of visual communication

With the rapid development of information technology and vast information resources, news reports are abundant, while people’s attention and time are scarce. Visual communication offers an economical, effective, and adaptable means of reporting in today’s era.^[3] In the era of visual communication, attention is often focused on external presentation rather than the humanistic essence of people-oriented reporting. This emphasis on capturing users’ attention has led mainstream media outlets to prioritize visual elements. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the “People’s Daily” WeChat account featured a headline and accompanying images that highlighted the global spread of cases. However, this approach lacked humanity and gave the impression of a competitive narrative rather than emphasizing the humanitarian aspect. While media reports must adapt to changing user needs, they should not solely rely on visual appeal.

2. Humanism in the in-depth report “Crossing the coastline: offshore fish shortage

2.1 Exploration of humanism in the “Mountains and Rivers” series of in-depth reports

Since its inception in 2014, the “Mountains and Rivers” series, developed by Surging News and its sub-team “the sixth voice,” has introduced a total of five comprehensive news report products. The first report, “Seeking Hu Huanyong Line of China,” was launched in 2017. This report was inspired by a question posed by Premier Li Keqiang regarding the Hu Huanyong Line, which highlights China’s demographic characteristics. Specifically, the densely populated southeast region and the sparsely populated northwest region present a challenge for ensuring equitable access to the benefits of modernization for people residing in the central and western parts of the country.^[4] Pengyuan News explores various topics with a humanistic approach.^[5] Until 2022, the same series of in-depth human-interest stories by Surging News has been doing very well. In an environment where the marine environment is even worse in 2023, it is even more necessary to reflect on how to reflect the humanistic spirit in news reports.

2.2 The Humanistic Spirit in the Visual Communication of “Crossing the Coastline: Fish Drought in the Sea

“Crossing the Coastline: Fish Drought in the Coastal Waters” is the second work of the “Mountains and Rivers” series, and the origin of the planning is based on the humanistic spirit, the plight of the coastal fishermen and the pollution of the sea in recent years. “Sea Cucumber Boom”, “Abundance and Failure of Mackerel”, “Before Going Ashore”, “Like Fish, Not Fish”, The six chapters of “For the Mangroves” show the impacts of over-exploitation of the coastline on human beings and fish, and warn more people to protect fishery resources.

In this comprehensive news report, the intertwined portrayal of “fishers,” their families, society, rivers, lakes, and nature exhibits a deep respect for life. The exemplary “Crossing the Coastline: Fish Shortage in the Sea” stands as a year-long achievement by Surging News’ creative team. Spanning from Liaoning to Hainan, this in-depth coverage of coastal fishery resources involves a collaborative effort of editors, illustrators, data editors, map designers, and page developers.

3. Characteristic Paths of Deep Integration of Humanistic Spirit in Visual Expression

3.1 Visual cover and news title complement each other to maximise the dissemination of the core theme

Some scholars research statistics show that 70% of the traffic and at least 10% of the click rate in the new media reports are due to the news cover and title contribution, the colourful cover design can focus the attention of the users and readers over, and produce emotional resonance.^[6] The overall color palette in the Offshore Fish Shortage report follows a unified design style and language. The cover of the report uses a large-sized poster-style image, maintaining a clean and tidy page while still delivering a strong visual impact. Visual elements such as fishhooks, bubbles, fishing boats, and direct sunlight from the deep sea are added to complement the news headline “Offshore Fish Shortage” and create a distinct and prominent thematic image. The deep blue color of sunlight passing through seawater enhances the visual presentation, effectively conveying the core theme of the report to readers in an intuitive manner.

3.2 The visual presentation is closely linked to the report design.

The article explores fish scarcity in “Crossing the Coastline: Offshore Fish Drought” through skillful use of colors and visual elements. The contrast between dark blue and bright yellow symbolizes the ocean and human fishing activities, creating a powerful visual narrative. Integrating photography and hand-drawn illustrations enhances expressive meaning. By juxtaposing blue character illustrations with real scenes, human presence in the ecosystem is emphasized. The composition, including color, position, light, simplicity, style, and focus, portrays the disappearance of individuals due to depleted fishery resources. Relevant presentation techniques, such as hierarchical navigation and engaging visuals, enhance the narrative. Small illustrations integrate seafood products, while concise tables and a visualized parabola demonstrate chronological changes and the impact of over-exploitation on the coastal ecosystem.

4. Double-pronged approach to build a visual presentation and humanistic spirit of innovation and integration of communication community.

4.1 Strengthening theme identification and optimising textual information content

Ales Eljavec scholars in his book “The Age of Images” pointed out that “whether we like it or not, we are in a society in which the visual has become the dominant form of social reality.”^[7] Visual presentations have an inherent advantage in reaching out to audiences, which makes it indispensable to explore diverse visual communication from a technical and applied perspective. For this reason, from the audience’s point of view, to strengthen the theme of recognition, in-depth news coverage of the cover, title and overall style design is more attractive. Subsequently, the optimisation of textual information content is the key to enhance user stickiness, Simply put, that is, the media in-depth reporting, not only to focus on the expression of the content presentation, the text content should also choose a reasonable way of expression, in order to achieve the overall refreshing.

4.2 Increase the interpenetration of graphics and text.

The “picture” here does not only refer to the simple news pictures, but also refers to the static visual form of the in-depth report to express the information in the picture, for example, “Crossing the coastline: offshore fish drought” in the data news pictures, chapter cover “hand-drawn” pictures, news pictures, etc., in the relevant description of the picture, in order to achieve the overall refreshing. etc. In the description and development of the pictures, it is necessary to achieve the interpenetration of graphics and text, so as not to detach the visual communication from the presentation of the news facts. The visual elements on the cover of Crossing the Coastline: Offshore Fish Drought are intertwined with Offshore Fish Drought.

4.3 Improve user participation and interaction, and efficiently evoke social responsibility.

The report, “Offshore Fish Wasteland,” belonging to the “Mountains and Rivers” series of in-depth reports, strengthens theme recognition, optimizes textual information content, and enhances the interpenetration of graphics and text. Through innovative techniques and breakthroughs in visual communication, it effectively highlights the humanistic spirit. By incorporating features such as page-turning, sliding, and chapter selection, it enhances user and reader experience by offering easier, faster, and simpler access to the content. This approach allows users and readers to personalize their reading experience, thereby improving the dissemination effect. Significantly, the diversified textual reporting and visual communication complement each other by effectively evoking emotions in users and readers.

Conclusion

In today’s visual-centric culture, in-depth news reporting should draw lessons from the success of multimedia in visual communication. By leveraging a comprehensive platform, news reporting can prioritize the editing of visual elements to cater to the audience’s preference for visuals, optimizing the visual presentation of in-depth news. Furthermore, as a vital tool for conveying cultural spirit, in-depth news reports must adapt to the evolving landscape and actively engage in the visual communication arena. While capitalizing on its content strengths, news reports should emphasize the allure of textual elements, reinforce the significance of in-depth reporting, and delve deeper into its unique cultural significance and appeal.

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