

New Media Marketing Dilemmas and Innovation Pathways for Publishing Houses under Multiple Institutional Logics: A Case Study of Zhejiang Publishing United Group

Chuqing Zhou, Xiao Qian*, Yiyi Cao

School of Cultural Creativity and Management, Communication University of Zhejiang, Jiaxing, Zhejiang, China

** Corresponding Author*

Abstract: In the present period of extensive media integration, publishing houses face certain practical problems in their new media marketing, like unclear brand positioning, lack of emotional connection with readers and poor matrix management. Previously, most studies focused on the technical fields or marketing methods, but they did not pay much attention to the basic structural causes of these problems. Our research is based on institutional logic theory and takes three publishing houses under the Zhejiang Publishing United Group as examples. Through multi-case analysis and in-depth interviews, we examine the various institutional logics and their conflicts in the new media marketing field. The investigation shows that publishing houses operate in a complicated situation affected by four institutional logics: government logic, market logic, professional logic and corporate logic. There are internal conflicts among these four logics in decision-making, content production and organizational structure. The algorithms and traffic rules of new media platforms aggravate these conflicts. A great many difficulties that publishing houses meet are the external manifestations of the internal contradictions and inconsistencies among these logics. From the viewpoints of the three publishing houses, it has been discovered that the innovation in new media marketing is not achieved by strictly following a single logic, but is a flexible selection process of combining multiple logics.

Keywords: Institutional Logic Theory; Publishing Houses; New Media Marketing; Selective Coupling; Digital Publishing

1. Introduction

In the digital age, short videos and

live-streaming e-commerce have become part of the daily activities where people get information and buy things, and this change has reshaped the marketing ecosystem of the publishing industry. In recent years, the book category has performed prominently on live-streaming e-commerce channels, with sales volume continuing to grow. At the same time, the revenue that publishing houses get from running their own new media channels has grown fast, and this growth makes new media marketing a necessary engine for the industry's growth.

But behind the fast growth in industry data, the new media marketing practices of publishing houses face challenges that include an unclear brand positioning, weak emotional connections with readers, and a matrix management system that does not work well. The widespread practice of using gimmicks such as “clearance sales” and “slightly damaged genuine copies” to drive traffic at low prices is also profoundly altering the publishing selection and creative ecosystems.

In response to these challenges, it is necessary to explore the structural roots of the significant differences in new media marketing practices among different publishing houses amid the same digital wave. Existing research often examines these issues at the managerial level, such as technology application, marketing strategy, and talent cultivation, but pays insufficient attention to the structural causes underlying these challenges.

This paper argues that to truly explain the differences in new media marketing practices among publishing houses, one must go beyond the superficial level of strategic choice and delve into the institutional context in which publishing houses are embedded, examining how multiple institutional logics shape both their experience of these challenges and their choices of action. Therefore, this paper

introduces institutional logic theory and use three publishing houses under the Zhejiang Publishing United Group as case studies, it employs a comparative multi-case analysis to systematically explore the multiple institutional logics and their conflict mechanisms within the new media marketing field of publishing houses, thereby revealing the structural roots of their dilemmas and pathways for differentiated innovation.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Researches on New Media Marketing Dilemmas of Publishing Houses and Limitations

Existing research on the dilemmas between publishing houses face in new media marketing and their underlying causes can be broadly categorized into three categories.

The first branch attributes these dilemmas to capability gaps in publishing houses' technical and strategic execution. Studies in this stream focus on optimizing specific operational strategies. Some scholars have proposed systematic improvement plans for publishing houses' new media marketing, covering areas such as talent cultivation, channel partnerships, product portfolio optimization, logistics cost control, and incentive mechanisms [1]. Others have emphasized key strategies such as cultivating vertical user communities, driving traffic with high-quality content, building a marketing matrix that integrates both horizontal and vertical dimensions, and promoting editorial involvement in marketing to achieve "editorial-marketing synergy" [2]. While this line of research provides frontline marketing personnel with actionable practical guidance, it tends to attribute these dilemmas to insufficient operational experience and rarely interrogates why the same strategies yield markedly different results across different publishing houses.

The second branch explains these dilemmas as a mismatch. Publishing houses have their own internal talent and training systems, but the new media environment asks for different skills. Some researchers say the publishing industry lacks enough creative talent. A good professional needs solid knowledge in their field, plus skills in new media technology and marketing. However, traditional publishing

houses lack both the talent pool for such roles and the corresponding training systems [3]. The explanation has its strengths in highlighting the necessity to develop organizational capacity. However, it remains at the descriptive stage. That is, it only describes the type of talent needed by publishing houses but fails to identify the reasons for a lack of such talents on an institutional basis.

A third explanation points to a structural mismatch. Traditional publishing marketing models, according to this view, are poorly suited to the environment of deep media convergence. Four problems are identified: reaching audiences is difficult; converting interest into sales is hard; building strong ties with readers is challenging; and spreading information effectively is a struggle. From this diagnosis, scholars propose a new path "breakthroughs in knowledge, events, content, and formats" [4].

This research provides a comprehensive perspective and reveals structural issues in the publishing industry. However, it focuses solely on the publishing industry without considering various practices adopted by different publishing houses.

The three branches of research reviewed above each have their own focus, and they largely concentrate on strategy implementation, talent adaptation, and industry models. This paper introduces institutional logic theory, shifting the analytical focus from resource allocation and strategic choice within organizations to the coexistence, conflict, and selective coupling of multiple logics within the institutional field in which publishing houses are embedded. This paper offers an analytical framework for understanding the dilemmas and diverse practices of publishing houses in new media marketing.

2.2 Institutional Logic Theory and Its Applicability

Institutional logics are socially constructed and historically modeled material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules that shape the cognition and behavior of actors [5]. Institutional logic theory posits that any organization exists within a complex field, and its behavior results from the interweaving and collision of multiple institutional logics rather than being the product of a single efficiency logic [6]. When multiple institutional logics coexist, different logics can support one another

to a certain extent, or they may impede the realization of another. Organizations can employ "selective coupling" to adjust the models among different institutional logics, thereby meeting external legitimacy requirements while maintaining internal operational efficiency. This concept is applicable to analyzing the diverse demands faced by publishing houses in the new media marketing field and their corresponding strategies.

2.3 Identification of Institutional Logics in the New Media Marketing Field of Publishing Houses and the Analytical Framework

As a means of applying institutional logic theory into researching new media marketing in publishing houses, this research identifies four institutional logics that are faced by the publishing house today. The four logics include government logic, market logic, professional logic, and corporate logic.

The government logic is a normative paradigm. It derives from government policies, regulations, and ideological requirements. In the Chinese publishing industry, the government logic imposes a binding effect on actors. The binding effects of the government logic are manifested through ideological security, review of content orientation, and regulatory requirements of policies. Moreover, the government logic defines the scope within which publishing houses conduct their operations. Sometimes, however, the government logic creates a resource for the publishing house in the competition.

The logic of the market evaluates such aspects as economic gains, market share, and growth rate as the objectives of operation. As such, the market logic emphasizes efficiency and seeks to optimize short-term performance. In terms of marketing within new media, the logic of the market can be identified in the focus on the performance indicators, like traffic, conversion rate, and GMV. Publishing houses functioning on new media need to operate based on the closed-loop model, following trends and cooperating with opinion leaders.

Professional logic derives from the publishing industry as an institution of production of knowledge and distribution of culture. The logic is future-oriented. It takes into consideration the high quality of the academic writing, the high

level of culture, as well as the profundity of thoughts. This means that whenever there is any new media promotion conducted by publishing houses, the primary logic of knowledge has to be respected.

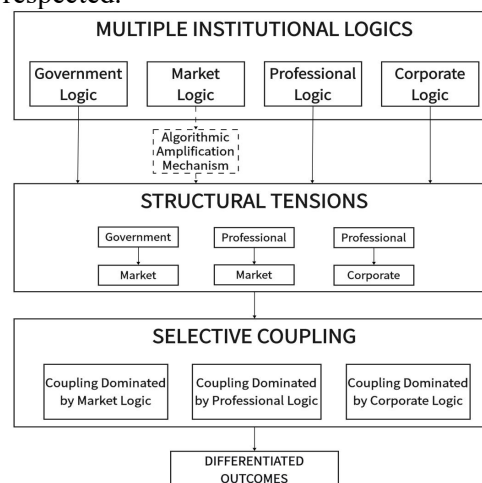


Figure 1. Analytical Framework for the Dilemmas and Innovation Pathways of New Media Marketing in Publishing Groups under a Multi-Institutional Logic

Corporate logic derives from the manner in which the publishing corporations operate internally and assess themselves. The corporate logic is exhibited through financial metrics and a keen analysis of input/output ratio analysis. Corporate logic provides resources for media transformation but restricts creativity since it does not want to take risks.

These four logics do not act separately. They combine when publishing houses make decisions in regard to marketing strategies on new media, which leads to three major tensions between them. First, from the decision-making perspective, government logic is interested in ideological safety, while market logic aims to maximize traffic and efficiency. This is the tension between legitimacy and efficiency. Secondly, from the content perspective, professional logic is interested in long-term benefits, while market logic is focused on sales here and now. This is the value tension. Finally, from the organizational perspective, corporate logic analyzes financial outcomes, while professional logic strives to create a cultural brand. This is the goals tension. Algorithmic recommendations as the instruments used by new media platforms are merely technical instruments. They cannot be seen as another institutional logic. But instead, they integrate all of these logics under the logic of traffic, thus exacerbating the existing contradictions.

This paper constructs an analysis framework for examining new media marketing within publishing houses, as shown in Figure 1.

3. Research Design

3.1 Research Methods

This case study is characterized by research questions which highly rely on the specific situation, and its procedure is quite complicated. Hence, the case study approach would be the appropriate approach to adopt in this case. In this paper, a multi-case comparative design approach is utilized. This approach relies on comparing cases based on their similarities and differences.

3.2 Case Selection

The case subjects used in this paper include three publishing houses in the Zhejiang Publishing United Group, namely the Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House, the Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House, and the Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House. All three publishing houses have the same group affiliation, but their approaches to new media marketing are quite diverse. According to a report in China Press and Publishing News (2025), the Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House has achieved notable success on Douyin, where its official account has accumulated over 350,000 followers and generated an annual sales revenue exceeding 30 million yuan. The Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House employs the niche approach where the focus is placed on product lines with high average order values. This helps the publishing house to attract collectors through thematic live-streams about thread-bound books. The Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House, by contrast, draws on its roster of signed authors to organize live-streaming personalized autograph events, achieving a differentiated breakthrough through a bespoke customization model. These three cases were selected to illustrate how publishing houses operating under the same corporate group and institutional pressures can adopt divergent selective coupling strategies, thereby achieving differentiated competitive positions.

3.3 Data Collection

Data for this study were collected via two distinct channels. The primary channel

consisted of semi-structured interviews, and the secondary channel drew upon existing secondary data. Subsequent to collection, the data were subjected to a validation procedure.

The research team carried out semi-structured interviews in two phases during the period from 2023 to 2025. The interview sample comprised not only the heads of new media departments from three publishing houses but also frontline employees across various functional roles, including operations, live-streaming hosts, and video production staff. A broad range of themes was addressed during the interviews, encompassing the development trajectory of new media marketing, platform-specific strategies, content creation practices, performance assessment mechanisms, operational challenges encountered, and corresponding strategic responses.

In addition to primary data, the researchers collected substantial secondary data from multiple archival sources. Specifically, operational metrics from the publishing houses' new media accounts were harvested from four major platforms—Douyin, RedNote, Bilibili, and WeChat official accounts—including follower counts, likes, live-streaming activities, and gross merchandise value (GMV). Additionally, the research team acquired annual reports from each publishing house, industry media coverage, as well as semi-annual and annual reports released by Zhejiang Publishing & Media Co., Ltd. These secondary datasets were utilized by the team to validate interview data and provided a temporal context for the case study.

3.4 Data Analysis

Firstly, the research team ordered the important new media marketing events of the three publishing houses in chronological order. It assisted in the formation of a development trajectory for each company. Further, the research team applied some basic assumptions about institutional logic theories and performed thematic coding in analyzing interview transcripts and second-hand information. Upon completion of the individual case analyses, a systematic cross-case comparison was undertaken to discern the convergent and divergent models across the three publishing houses, specifically regarding their recognition of institutional logics, experiences of institutional conflict, and adopted coupling

models.

4. Marketing Dilemmas under Conflicting Multiple Institutional Logics

The dilemmas that publishing houses encounter in new media marketing are not caused by only one technological issue or a personnel lack. They result from the inability to integrate the government logic, market logic, professional logic and corporate logic during the process of digital transformation. From the perspective of industry live-streaming practice, self-broadcasting by publishing houses generally suffers from problems such as narrow product selection, serious content homogenization, insufficient investment in technology and funding, and a lack of new media marketing thinking [7].

4.1 Ambiguous Brand Positioning

Positioning a brand based on publishing houses' professionalism requires long-term considerations. Therefore, publishing houses need to create a unique brand identity based on the publication itself. Readers will get into conditioned reflexes regarding certain genres and certain brands. Professional logic requires commitment and patience for the investment in brand construction from the publishing house side.

However, in the context of new media marketing, the market logic focuses more on traffic acquisition, sales conversion and profitability increase, with "traffic-ism" being a typical manifestation of this capital logic [8], which involves chasing hot topic, offering discount pricing and cooperating with influential opinion leaders for rapid sales volume growth. Hence, the mismatch between the professional and market logic occurs. It results from a difference in their respective timelines and values.

Previously, publishing houses can distribute such tension through multiple channels. For example, physical bookstore distribution and library lending channel would bear different pressures. However, new media platform unifies the two kinds of logics into a same traffic algorithm and conversion metrics, hence intensifying the conflict.

According to Jiang Fan's survey research in "Current Status Review and Path Exploration of Brand Building in Chinese Publishing Enterprises (including publishing houses)," only

45.75% of surveyed publishing enterprises possess a clear brand positioning, while 38.74% explicitly state that they have no brand positioning, and another 15.51% consider brand positioning unimportant [9]. The publishing enterprises simply chase fashion or borrows from other industry's marketing lingo instead of getting down to analyzing their book content. Thus, their brand positioning becomes rather ambiguous. They will not be able to form an identifiable cultural brand identity in customers' mind which would distinguish them from general retailers.

At the corporate level, publishing conglomerates evaluate their publishing houses based on operational performance such as operating income or growth in profitability. This indirectly encouraging each house to gravitate toward a "broad and comprehensive" brand identity strategy and try to maximize profits rather than create a strong name within specific niche market. Under such pressure, it becomes virtually impossible to sustain the long-term professional approach to brand development.

4.2 Weak Emotional Connection with Readers

Weak emotional involvement with the readership is yet another significant problem for publishing houses in the context of new media marketing. In addition to the dual cultural and commodity attributes of books themselves, live-streaming also functions as a means of emotional connection and healing companionship, so publishing houses need to pay greater attention to meeting consumers' emotional needs [10].

In the traditional publishing industry, the emotional bond between the publishing house and the readers was formed from the accumulated experience of reading and personal communication. This bond rested on three pillars, namely, readers' trust in the professionalism of the publishing house, their agreement with its taste, and the sense of being a part of a certain community. New media marketing disrupted the very logic of this bond. Market logic and government logic push from different directions.

Market logic cares about short-term efficiency and turning traffic into sales. It squeezes a buying decision into just a few seconds on new media platforms. At that moment, emotional excitement and price factor matter most. This

squeeze hurts the long trust-building process that professional logic needs. Under this kind of pressure, some publishing houses use low-price tricks like “clearance sales” or “slightly damaged genuine copies” to pull in traffic. When market logic takes over, publishing houses pay too much attention to short-term sales numbers. They forget to grow a deep cultural tie with readers by sharing professional content. If a publishing house only sends out one-way content and does not talk back and forth with readers in real time, it will find it hard to build a deep emotional connection. Nowadays most publishing houses either solely promote book information in a one-way manner or directly pursue sales targets, they fail to combine professional depth with genuine, interactive engagement.

Government logic also exerts a subtle influence on readers' emotional connection. Government policies ask publishing houses to take on the public job of building cultural frontlines. They care about the value direction and social benefit of the content that in new media marketing, publishing houses use safe, standard words to sell their books. They want to avoid any fight that might come from saying something too personal. This risk-avoiding way makes the brand's personality fuzzy, and it weakens the emotional tie between the brand and its readers. Market logic pushes on time. Compelling publishing houses to compete for readers' attention with more engaging content. Government logic pushes on content, imposing stringent requirements on content quality, urging publishing houses to exercise caution and avoid publishing any risky statements. These two forces together squeeze the space that professional logic needs to build trust with readers.

4.3 Deficient Matrix Management

The problem of inefficient matrix management is another important impediment to integrated brand marketing of publishing houses. Currently, most publishing houses have separate models of operation in which various marketing channels act independently from one another. Therefore, publishing houses' new media platforms, shelf E-commerce, online community spaces, bookstores lack integration. This results in insufficient synergy, preventing them from establishing a closed-loop circulation through all channels of users' activity. As a consequence,

the accounts on different platforms will overlap in their goals, and their content will fail to correspond to communication practices specific to particular channels, thus squandering marketing resources.

As we can see, every platform requires different user experience, which, in turn, translates into a distinct communicative model. For example, Douyin prefers quick and vivid content while RedNote tends to focus on visuals and recommendations. WeChat Channels works best through social trust. At the same time, if a publishing house maintains many accounts on different platforms, they often lack a coordinator overseeing all aspects related to maintaining the tone of the brand. What is more, even within the organization, every channel operates under different departments. When the brand attempts to communicate, there is no standard to measure the image and no coordination of the contents. The difficulty faced here is that it is impossible to create a solid image of the brand.

In addition, apart from the deficient matrix management, it is also important to consider the corporate logic and government logic pressures in such cases. From the angle of corporate logic, each publishing house in the group operates its own account matrix independently. The group checks each house's performance based on that house's own revenue and profit growth, so there is little incentive for the houses to work together. On the government logic side, government logic applies a one-vote veto to content security. This makes publishing houses tend to replicate identical content across all channels, aiming to lower the risk of non-compliance and reduce review costs, rather than making content that fits each platform's users.

5. Case Analysis: Comparison of Three Selective Coupling Models

Under the tension of multiple institutional logics, the Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House, Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House, and Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House have developed three distinctly different selective coupling models, resulting in markedly differentiated market positions.

5.1 Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House: Coupling Dominated by Market Logic

The Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing

House was the earliest to embrace new media marketing transformation within the Zhejiang Publishing United Group. In 2023, its main Douyin account achieved a GMV exceeding 30 million yuan, with over 330,000 follower count. From an institutional logics perspective, the success of this publishing house lies in adopting market logic as the dominant logic while internalizing professional logic into the differentiated development of its account operations.

5.1.1 Dilemmas and transformation

In the early stages of its transformation, the Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House clung to the traditional business model of “selling only its own publications” and soon encountered a bottleneck. Relevant managers in the new media department recognized that their publishing house's catalog breadth was insufficient to generate sustained platform traffic, thereby precluding the possibility of normalized e-commerce live-streaming operations via the official account. The constrained range of titles could neither accommodate the rapid product-rotation demands intrinsic to live-streaming commerce, nor cater to the varied interests of the vertical fan community.

The publishing house recognized this problem and changed its strategy into following the traffic distribution rules and influencer operation rules that the Douyin platform uses. The publishing house transformed its official account from a platform merely displaying its own books into a specialized curation account focused on the comic book niche. This new account targets audiences with a passion for comic literature. The shift freed the publishing house from the constraints of its own product line. Today, the publishing house can select quality titles from the entire comic book market for live-streaming sales, thereby satisfying the diverse purchasing needs of this fan community. Corporate logic also had an impact on the new media transformation of the Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House, but differently. Initially, when the new media transformation was taking place, there were encouragements for such activities provided by the Zhejiang Publishing United Group. Encouragement created space for the publishing house to maneuver regarding its plans. However, upon completion of the transformation, the group began to place greater emphasis on performance

targets, which to a certain extent prompted the publishing house to shift from selling books alone to diversifying its product offerings centered around book-based IP.

5.1.2 A Return to the core of professional logic

Adoption of market logic poses the threat of loss of identity of the publishing house. Following the shift of focus of the publishing house to comic books in live streaming, its official account started promoting books from other publishing houses.

The publishing house embedded professional logic in its influencer marketing model. Through this process, the publishing house was able to restore its identity through the use of the niche it excels in, namely comic books, as well as leveraging the strong IPs owned by the publishing house such as the web literature IP *Sword of Coming*. The publishing house has also been cautious about creating the right persona for the streamer. For instance, the streamer has dual identities. As one of them, the streamer has an identity of being a publishing professional working for the publishing house. Additionally, the streamer is also a comic book enthusiast. In live streaming, the streamer provides critical analysis of various editions of comic books from both an enthusiast's and professional perspective. This double role gives the interaction two kinds of trust. One from a fellow fan and the other from an expert. The straightforward transaction now becomes a communal relationship built on trust.

The publishing house has sub-accounts like the Luoposhan Branch, which belongs to the *Sword of Coming* IP. By these accounts, the publishing house sells the latest serialized print volumes of the *Sword of Coming* IP and limited cultural and creative products. In this way, the publishing house created a fanbase, which actively interacts with the content produced. The main point here is that the IP resources developed by the professional logic should be monetized using the market logic.

At the same time, the presence of government logic means the presence of a hidden boundary, which the publishing house needs to respect. Namely, when choosing products for live streams and creating the script for streams, the publishing house avoids ideologically sensitive topics and provides live streaming training on new media platforms for streamers. All the publishing house's promotional activities comply with the Regulations on Publication

Administration and platform's regulations. Compliance with regulatory norms did not affect negatively the publishing house's market performance, but rather strengthened its reputation among readers.

Embracing market logic does not necessitate abandoning professional logic. Rather, the publishing house has demonstrated that embedding professional logic into its brand identity as a distinctive personality trait can appeal to readers, forge strong emotional connections, and leverage professional content for market purposes.

5.2 Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House: Coupling Dominated by Professional Logic

Unlike the Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House, Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House took a different route to adapt itself to the digital era. This publishing house adopted a strategy driven by professional logic, and that provided it with coherence. Although its net profit performance does not rank among the highest within the group, it enjoys an irreplaceable branding in the mind of its target audience.

5.2.1 Identification of logic conflicts

Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House understood the essence of the market logic quite well. Such a market logic relies on the principle of cheapness and traffic above all else. Its managers recognized the irreconcilable contradiction between its core business of ancient text publishing and this type of market logic.

According to interview findings with employees in the new media operations position at this publishing house, the price war on the platform did not suit their business logic, because the cost of their production is rather high. Also reading ancient literature requires additional background information, therefore, there is no large audience for the promotion.

Professional logic in the management of the Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House exists deeply within the organization itself. In addition, the core audience members, who are very loyal to the firm, also recognize this logic. The corporate logic also influences the Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House, which manifests in terms of a measured form of support. According to the annual report of Zhejiang Publishing & Media Co., Ltd., the

Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House exhibits a relatively large gap in net profit when it compared with other enterprises within the group. However, the firm considers the value and societal contribution associated with the publication of ancient books. As a result, there is no pressure placed on the enterprise to maximize profit.

5.2.2 Proactive avoidance and platform shift

The Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House switched to another channel for reaching out – abandoned Douyin, while chose WeChat Channels as a substitute. WeChat Channels operates on the basis of social trust and private traffic.

This platform has relatively slow content distribution, and therefore requires the audience to show extra commitment and trust. Thus, WeChat Channels will be better for promoting ancient books since sales of such books require an element of a special culture ceremony. The live streaming room was positioned as the rare book storage room, which created a real atmosphere of treasure hunting. The host transformed the conventional book-selling pitch, opting instead for clear and accessible language to provide thorough analyses of books. Meanwhile, the publishing house's editors and scholars were invited to conduct special lectures dedicated to introducing newly published works.

Under this approach, the price is used to determine the most suitable customers for each product. Quality content also raises the collectible value of the book. A set of four books, which cost two thousand yuan, sold 28 copies during its first live broadcast. The expensive price tag indicates that products with significant cultural values can have a dedicated loyal customer base through targeted marketing. The government logic proved to be an effective source for the Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House. The publishing house launched live-streaming promotional campaigns to promote major projects such as the Zhejiang Wen Cong project and Song Dynasty Block-print Series, which are consistent with the government policy of promoting Chinese culture. Therefore, the publishing house was in a position to enjoy many benefits in terms of its applications for special cultural grants as well as participation in national book exhibitions.

The approach that was applied to operate Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House

depended on professional logic as the foundation. Market logic served as a supporting logic. This move has transformed the publishing house's role in preserving cultural heritage into a unique competitive advantage in the market. Thus, this case analysis demonstrates that rejecting market-driven logic does not equate to conservatism.

5.3 Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House: Coupling Dominated by Corporate Logic

In contrast to the two preceding publishing houses, Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House faced not a trade-off between market logic and professional logic, but rather a more complex scenario. The children's book market is characterized by rigid demand and a stable audience, and it is also the largest segment in China's book retail market, as well as the most fiercely competitive and the most intensely affected by new media [11]. Yet parents—as the actual purchase decision-makers—exercise highly cautious selection criteria. They expect publishing houses to provide added value and higher-level trust endorsements beyond merely offering compliant content. Against this backdrop, Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House, through a series of exploratory efforts, ultimately identified an innovation path centered on Corporate Logic through its inscribed copy live-streaming with renowned children's literature author Shen Shixi. As of 2025, the total GMV through its new media channels had reached 50 million yuan.

5.3.1 Logical conflict identification and resolution

During the initial transformation period, Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House faced the squeeze of multiple institutional logics. Government logic imposed strict review and value-orientation requirements on children's publications, delimiting the creative boundaries of new media marketing content. Market logic demanded the use of entertaining and fragmented content to capture the attention of parents and children. Professional Logic expected publishing houses to provide in-depth educational content rather than remaining at the level of superficial fun displays.

For a considerable period, Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House exhibited a state of "multiple attempts, difficult to focus."

The house deployed operations across Douyin, WeChat, and other platforms, developed the Xiao Budian (Little Dot) series of emojis and audiobooks, and experimented with editor-hosted live-streaming activities. However, these practices lacked a unified core logic to connect them; various resource investments failed to produce synergistic effects, and a breakthrough remained elusive.

The turning point appeared when the publishing house cooperated with Shen Shixi to launch an inscribed copy live-streaming. The author personally inscribed the young reader's name on the book's title page and appended a personal message, transforming a standardized children's book into an exclusive customized version for a specific child. This elevated the book's added value and created a high-barrier differentiation among similar titles, resolving the issue of parents' high-level trust requirements for book purchases.

5.3.2 A replicable model centered around corporate resources

The author's inscribed copy live-streaming model does not adjust content itself; instead, it breaks away from traditional operational logic, systematically mobilizes and leverages the publishing house's unique resource advantages—its rich pool of children's book authors and accumulated book awards. The success of the Shen Shixi's inscribed copy live-streaming was not accidental; rather, it represents a replicable model that publishing houses can repeatedly deploy with different contracted authors.

Meanwhile, this model circumvents the structural tensions within the complex environment faced by Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House, shifting the competitive dimension toward the high-threshold trust endorsement and unique emotional added value brought by inscribed copy live-streaming with celebrated authors. From the perspective of market logic, a standardized book is thereby transformed into a scarce commodity with premium pricing potential. Through positive textual interaction between the author and young readers, Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House also generates additional social benefits that encourage reading.

Building on the author's inscribed copy live-streaming model, Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House further developed

corresponding derivative merchandise based on author personal IP and book IP. From the perspective of corporate logic, this extension increases copyright revenue for the Publishing House, optimizing its revenue structure. Simultaneously, the development of derivative products extends the vitality of the inscribed copy live-streaming model itself, enabling the

new media marketing of Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House to achieve sustainable development rather than remaining at the level of one-time traffic monetization.

5.4 Cross-Case Comparison

The cross-case comparison of the three publishing houses is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Juxtaposed Comparison of Coupling Models among Publishing Houses under the Zhejiang Publishing United Group

Case	Coupling Model	Core Practices
Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House	Coupling Model Dominated by Market Logic	Full-category live-streaming sales, vertical positioning, composite streamer persona
Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House	Coupling Model Dominated by Professional Logic	Shift from Douyin to WeChat Channels, high average order values, possesses academic cultural dissemination functions
Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House	Coupling Model Dominated by Corporate Logic	Author Signing Live-Stream Event, Development of Cultural and Creative Merchandise

Comparing the three cases, the Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House and the Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House adopted entirely different strategies in terms of logical selection. Nevertheless, both strategies succeeded in establishing core priorities within various logical frameworks. Furthermore, each strategy facilitated the construction of a coupling model calibrated to the specific organization. Specifically, Zhejiang Literature & Art Publishing House prioritizes market logic as its dominant framework while positioning professional logic as its core principle, enabling it to rapidly boost sales revenue through effective application of this guiding logic. In contrast, Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House adopts professional logic as its primary framework, supplemented by market logic considerations. This approach has enabled the publishing house to establish a unique brand positioning in the high-end collection market that remains unparalleled by competitors. In contrast, Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House has taken a unique approach—dominated by corporate logic that systematically mobilizing its pool of contracted authors, has discovered a differentiated trajectory through exclusive author's inscribed copy live-streaming.

Based on these comparisons, we conclude that the success of selective coupling does not depend on adopting or rejecting any particular logic, but rather requires identifying a specific dominant logic suited to the organization under multiple institutional pressures.

6. Conclusions and Discussion

6.1 Research Conclusions

This study introduces institutional logic theory into the research on new media marketing among Publishing Houses, revealing the origins of the dilemmas faced by publishing houses due to new media marketing are highlighted: the dilemma stems from the inability of publishing houses to align the logics of government, market, professional, and corporate spheres against each other during digital transformation while new media platforms integrate multiple distinct logical dimensions through their algorithmic systems.

Through a comparative case analysis of three publishing houses under the Zhejiang Publishing United Group, this study derives three distinct selective coupling models to address the multiple institutional logics conflict faced by publishing houses in new media marketing: the market logic-dominated coupling model, the professional logic-dominated coupling model, and the corporate logic-dominated coupling model. These three models provide researchers with a lens for observing how publishing institutions make divergent strategic choices during digital publishing transformation.

6.2 Research Limitations and Future Directions

There are several limitations with this paper. First, we have selected only three publishing houses under the Zhejiang Publishing United Group for case analysis, which limits the

validity and generalizability of our research findings to some extent.

The second limitation lies in our primary reliance on qualitative research methods to collect evidence supporting the study's conclusions. Future research could explore combining qualitative and quantitative approaches; the quantitative approach may be able to leverage rich and reliable first-hand data to validate the effectiveness of the coupling model proposed in this study.

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