

## **REDEFINING EXCELLENCE: PRESENTERS IN THE MEDIATIZATION LANDSCAPE**

**Ming Liang Wei**

School of Media, Yangtze University, Wuhan, China

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10260170>

---

**Abstract:** In today's highly mediatized society, the role of the presenter as a representative of the media institution has undergone significant transformation due to decentralization of discourse and shifts in the media landscape. This paper delves into the challenges faced by presenters in defining their excellence, reclaiming their status, and adapting to the evolving technological landscape. Through a comprehensive literature analysis, it examines the role dilemma confronted by presenters in the wake of intensified mediatization. Moreover, this paper proposes strategies for enriching the role and significance of presenters in alignment with current trends, with the aim of offering valuable insights for the advancement of the hosting and communication industry.

---

**Keywords:** mediatization, presenters, media institution, role dilemma, communication industry

---

### **Introduction**

In a deeply mediatized society, the decentralization of discourse and the changes in the media industry have had a dramatic impact on the industry norms and status of the presenter as the voice of the media institution. After the impact, how to clarify the excellence of good hosts, how to regain the glory of hosts, and how to cope with the impact of technological updates are all the aims of this paper. This paper adopts the method of literature analysis to analyze the role dilemma encountered by the identity of the host after the further deepening of mediatization, and puts forward the method of how to enrich the role connotation of the host in accordance with the trend, in the hope that it can provide a reference significance for the development of the hosting and communication industry.

#### **1. The Role Dilemma of the Presenter in the Age of Deep Mediatization**

##### **1.1. Media reshaping the media society**

The media plays an increasingly important role in today's society and has an immeasurable impact on society. According to Stig Shawa, mediatization is when the medium itself becomes a social institution in its integration into society and culture. It is difficult to imagine the impact that the absence of media today has had on lives and even personalities. A mediatized society, also known as the mediatization of society, is a "world of media"<sup>[1]</sup>. In today's world it is not difficult to realize that media logic has become an important part of the functioning of society and has profoundly influenced the rules of the existing system, becoming a key force in shaping society. The development of mediatization has been driven by four main waves, each of which has fundamentally changed the media landscape<sup>[2]</sup>. In recent years, digitization and data are driving the media into a whole new phase, and the phenomenon of mediated existence that accompanies it has not only changed people's living habits, but also

silently influenced our way of thinking. Nowadays, with the widespread practice of meta-universes and Web 3.0, the number of communication media has grown exponentially, while eliminating the boundaries of the communication field. This trend has led to the gradual integration of communication activities into people's daily lives in a variety of forms, which has resulted in a significant expansion of the scope of the media industry to an unprecedented degree. The intervention of digital technology also continues to broaden the boundaries and landscape of the media industry.

Overall, media economy research is gradually moving beyond the study of single industries to the exploration of media pluralism with higher connectivity and diversity. From the top down, boundaries are dissolving and shifting between media industries. Among them, the host industry shows particularly obvious characteristics, traditional media hosts and new media anchors are increasingly intertwined in the form of work content, forming a novel and complex audio-visual communication landscape. It is not difficult to find that compared to the traditional style, the behavioral path and professional functions of the host have changed significantly.

### ***1.2. Hosting a shift in the location of the communication field***

Since the success of the first Spring Festival Gala in 1983, which led to the trend of "Gala Culture", hosts have played an important role in the variety shows, which are mainly songs and dances. With their unique function of controlling and scheduling, they take center stage and represent the heart of the show. Over time, the rise of personalized and specialized star hosts has attracted a large number of viewers to pay sustained attention to a particular TV program through the business card effect, such as Cui Yongyuan's Tell It like It Is, Wang Xiaoya's Happy Rhetoric, and Chen Luyu's Lu Yu Youyou. Host culture has become a unique landscape on Chinese screens.

However, guided by the new demands of new programs, the rotation of new media anchors and crossover hosts has had a huge impact on the status, industry norms, and behavioral content of the traditional role of the host.

Within the industry, program upgrades, innovations and market orientation have also become important reasons for the host's center stage position to shift, and the host's role has become more generalized. Host generalization is primarily aimed at host specialization. Host generalization refers to the breaking of professional boundaries for hosts, allowing more and more people from various walks of life not only to participate in a variety of identities and roles within programs but also to become the main communicators of the program. They take on the functions and responsibilities of professional hosts<sup>[3]</sup>. For example, it's hard to find traditional hosts in the recent hit variety shows "Hahahahahaha" and "Hello Life," where the host function is spread out among various guests. In the "Central Young Summer" program, in addition to the flow of the appearance of the curtain call, the host from the program scheduler into the content process propeller, its personal charm has long been out of the spotlight.

### ***1.3. The Epistemic Crisis of Host Culture***

Outside the industry, in the era of media depth, the popularization of information technology and digital technology is intuitively embodied in the level of "tools". In the context of technological empowerment, the lowering of the barriers to program production and the inclusive, democratic nature of cyberspace have given rise to a number of grassroots hosts and personal channel programmers. They utilize the "tools" in their hands for self-exhibition for fun and commercial investment. As Henry Jenkins puts it, "Media companies are intent on accelerating the flow of content through distribution channels in order to increase profits, expand markets, and strengthen audience acceptance, while consumers, in turn, find ways to utilize different media technologies in an effort to influence each other and bring media content under their complete control"<sup>[4]</sup>. We have seen that in the

media practice behavior of self-media anchors, most of them either take advantage of the topic to create momentum, or because of the alternative to stand out, in order to banter and grotesque style of the classic serious text delivered under the auspices of the traditional media in the past interpretive resistance and confrontational decoding. When profound contemplation and moving spirituality are understood to be heavy and complicated, this victory of the "common man" has also impacted the mainstream culture and traditional presidency of communication under the ridicule of the spectators. The explosion of new media audiovisual programs may not be due to their far-reaching cultural impact, but rather to the power of technological empowerment that has brought about sufficiently expansive spatial and temporal conditions for the discourse of the general public to reverberate. If the path of mass culture is to constantly shatter and recreate the sacred, the magic of new media culture is precisely that "it can always be loaded with irrationalist, emotional and even pleasurable impulses of malice. This impulse, which has been suppressed by the aesthetic production of popular culture, shows great power once it is released" [5].

The influence of the "instrument" is not only on the transmitter, but also on the recipient. The multifunctional nature of the digital media has brought about audio-visual upgrading and cross-screen and multi-screen interactions, which have shaped the audience's unique "fragmented and entertaining" reading and listening habits, and this has led to the host's cultural influence being less stable than it was in the past. In addition, since 1992, China has put forward the goal model of "socialist market economy", and the audience concept of Chinese news media has also been growing. However, in today's part of the host in with the new trend, new thinking, diversification of young people's needs to match the change in a passive stagnant position, no change is stagnant.

## 2. Exploring the Role of the Presenter in a Deeply Mediatized Society

### 2.1. *From the collective to the individual: further enhancement of personalized expression*

As the embodiment of the personality will of the collective institution, traditional hosts have the requirements of their own platform behind their words and actions, and will be subject to great constraints in terms of content output and expression of views, and even some of the private matters of life are subject to the constraints of their institutions. In the context of today's market-driven demand for personalized expression, it's necessary to grant hosts a certain degree of freedom to facilitate their individualized presentation. However, not far from the previous emphasis on expressing collective will, the coexistence of individuality and collectivity is not contradictory, but rather a dual requirement. The presenter needs the help of a platform to provide it, and the platform is reflected in the personalized expression of the presenter.

Increasing market demand has forced the audience to put forward richer requirements on the content of the host's previous role, so that the host should be suitable for the public taste of the popularization of the program host. Generally speaking, being rich in entertainment is an important prerequisite for the popularization of the host. Wilbur Schramm summarized the functions of communication in four areas: first, the "social radar", where people rely on the media for information to define their existence. The second is "operation" and "management", where the transmitting party aims to "persuade" and "direct" the receiving party to "interpret" and "decide". The third is "guidance," with the transmitting party being the "instructor," and the receiving party is learning. The fourth is "entertainment," where the transmitting party provides "amusement," and the receiving party "enjoys" the entertainment [6]. For most viewers in today's deeply mediatized age, accepting the imparting of information by the book can be painful. Neil Bozeman's *Entertainment is Dead* points out that in today's "hide-and-seek" world, entertainment is a central feature. A presenter who puts himself in the collective content and ignores himself will

give up humanized expression, which is equivalent to confining an individual in a closed space, and it is difficult to touch the audience's heart, not to mention to make the content of the program that the general public likes to see. Therefore, in response to the trend of entertainment, the role of the host has become more personalized, shrinking the "host" and enlarging the "person". CCTV famous host Sabing perennial reputation as a good host of legal programs, interview with the richest man in the world, Jack Ma, because of its "not interested in money" comments forced to stifle laughter a "war" famous. Zhu Guangquan, a famous news program host, is on fire out of the circle for his vivid and interesting personalized news expression that wins the hearts of viewers. Howard Stern, USA As a radio host, Howard Stern has attracted a loyal audience with his radical and controversial style.

### **2.2. *From Big Screen to Small Screen: Sinking Communications to Fit the Audience***

No one is perfect, there are no perfect people in the world, and naturally there are no perfect presenters. Hosts don't have to be perfect in everything they do, and the occasional mistake can bring them closer to the audience. From the perspective of the mainstream cultural values conveyed by traditional TV programs, the grand narratives, noble spirits, and touching wills they represent somehow constrain the hosts not to be a flawed person in the program production. The role image of this form is related to the traditional host's discursive position above the audience, as a spokesperson in the social collective body, its "I say you listen" discourse pattern has gradually ceased to be applicable to today's increasing "audience-centered" media view of deep media. In personalized expression, authenticity is the life of personality. And authenticity means that there is no such thing as perfection, and an imperfect presenter will be more real and three-dimensional and charming.

Dramaturgical theory, first proposed by the American sociologist Goffman Goffman interpreted people's social behaviors semiotically, arguing that identity is the core link in understanding the socialization process of human beings, and that "performance" has become an important behavior for people to construct their own identities. Taking this as a logical starting point the identity image management of the presenter is very important for facilitating the hosting communication, different identity images are often suitable for delivering different messages and enhancing the audience's trust and identification with the presenter. On the basis of shortcomings alone, it might be better to capitalize on the power of having shortcomings in moderation to stand out in a crowd of great presenters. As we have seen, Bening, as a popular host, in a variety show, his words "arsonist of the heart" with narcissistic self-aggrandizement were circulated on the Internet, which attracted a lot of attention and fans. In addition, at the recent Guizhou Village Super, its unimaginative shouting down the field added to the real power. The undoubted point is that the effectiveness of this personalized expression of Sabine in hosting communication is very prominent and widely noticed. The famous American YouTuber Darren Watkins Jr. has also used his flawed "hyperthyroid" persona to become popular online and quickly make a name for himself. An imperfect persona is instead appropriate for a presenter in today's deeply mediatized era, where presenters are ip-created and multiple platforms and integrated media are co-developed, and audiences tend to get to know the presenter from multiple sides. When a presenter with a great personality shows the flaws and mistakes that they will make as human beings, it is easier for the audience to empathize with them emotionally, because this performance reflects exactly the same imperfections that we have in ourselves. Such characters are more likely to trigger emotional resonance in the audience and prompt a deeper emotional connection.

### **2.3. *From material to spiritual: remembering the social role of the facilitator***

It is especially important for presenters not to ignore today's deeply mediated society. The participation of the media is closely linked to the various changes taking place on a global scale. In today's world, each of our food,

clothing, housing, transportation, culture and entertainment are all linked to the media, people are increasingly living in the information network woven by the media, the media extends our senses, and while it brings great convenience to our lives, it also brings certain negative impacts due to the amplification of the senses. For example, some people can develop media dependency, where the loss of contact with the media can manifest as mania, anxiety, and restlessness. In addition, technological advances and media development have also compressed people's span of time and space, bringing speed to life at the same time, but also making it difficult for some people to accept "slowness", and it is difficult to slow down to meditate and read and think rationally. At the same time, the "speed" of the media society also makes it more difficult to control undesirable information. What deserves our vigilance is that, if the media content people receive lacks a humane spirit and thought-provoking perspectives, containing only interpretive resistance against mainstream culture and an adoration for abstract and bizarre culture, over time, we will become indifferent to the authenticity of societal hot topics, powerless in logical assessments of events, and purposeless in our stance towards public opinion, gradually evolving into one-dimensional individuals.

According to Marcuse, the so-called "unidirectional man" is "the man who has lost the capacity to negate, criticize and transcend. Such a person is no longer capable not only of pursuing, but even of imagining an alternative life to the real one, which is the concentrated expression of the totalitarian character of advanced industrial societies." Unidirectional thinking also has the potential to influence a society, and with today's technologically empowered communication, the delivery and discussion of hot content occurs at breakneck speeds, and it is with people's active communication that all sorts of online myths are formed. And one of the downsides of this situation is that people can inadvertently become purveyors of and subservient to spam. The high-speed transfer of information is pervasive and farreaching on a global scale. "We started using the same brain 'global brain', or 'cyberbrain'; together we produce the same pleasure 'global pleasure' "<sup>[5]</sup>. The presenter, the traditional spokesperson of the medium, should now also be the voice of the Word.

We emphasize the personal business ability of the facilitator, but we also emphasize whether the "way" conveyed by the "tool" has its humanistic concern and spiritual power. Now, the eighteen weapons of science and technology have descended, the development of change is changing rapidly, but it must be known that all changes do not change their zong, where the zong refers to the host of the output of the content of the main point, and the content of the main point is related to the stance, point of view, beliefs, morality, i.e., "Tao". It is more important for a facilitator to set up a mindset that allows the "tools" to serve the "way" of the belief in the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics, rather than technical and business skills. In an excessively media-driven society, hosts cannot merely focus on the enhancement of media technology, disregarding the essence of content. As natural opinion leaders, hosts should utilize their own image and resource advantages. Moreover, they ought to grasp the trends of the era, shoulder social, cultural, moral, service, and guiding responsibilities during the process of hosting communication. This should extend globally, voicing and disseminating messages.

### 3. Conclusions

The deepening power of the media, under the influence of the power of technology, the elimination of the boundaries of hosting communication, the change of the hosting industry norms, and the transformation of the market demand for segmentation and entertainment, all of them put forward the requirements for a richer role content of the hosts, i.e., more personalized, sincere, and possessing the power of moral and spiritual hosts. Moreover, while the transformation of material forces is decisive for the transformation of spiritual forces, we

also appeal to the countervailing capacity of the spirit. Manifested in specific hosting endeavors, hosts mustn't lose their humane concern nor simply go along with the tide, advocating certain societal vulgar cultures for the sake of traffic and gains. On the contrary, they should uphold professional ethics, organically fuse high-quality cultural content while adhering to new requirements and an entertainment-oriented approach, creating works that resonate with and delight the general public. Things move forward with twists and turns. The current temporary "denial" of classic mainstream cultural content and presenters will surely evolve into affirmation. Hosts who insist on individuality, sincerity, and integrity will surely be able to reshape the glory of hosting and embark on this path of development of negativity.

## References

- Wu, J. (2022). *The mediatized society from a field perspective: internal and external fluxes and practical challenges*. *Southeast Communication*, (4), 1-2.
- Yu, G. M., & Geng, X. (2021). "Deep Mediatization": Ecological Patterns, Values and Core Resources of the Media Industry. *Journalism & Communication*, (12), 76-91+127-128.
- Wang, H. (2021). *Observations on the Development Trend of Variety Program Hosts in the Era of Integrated Media*. *China Radio & TV Academic Journal*, (03), 78-80+117.
- Storey, J. (2010). *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction Seventh Edition*. Peking University Press.
- Zhou, Z. (2013). *Ways of Interpreting China: Cultural Landscapes in the Age of Media Fracture*. China Film Press.
- Schramm, W., & Porter, W. E. (1984). *Men, Messages and Media: A Look at Human Communication*. Xinhua Publishing House.