

Production and Guarantee of Governmental Short Videos under the Vision of People's Wish for a Good Life

Hailin Ning¹, Zhouyu Chen², Junwei Wang^{3*}

^{1,2}School of Humanities and Communication, Ningbo University, Ningbo, China

³ School of Media and Law, NingboTech University, Ningbo, China;

*Corresponding author: Junwei Wang, guanggao181@nbt.edu.cn

Abstract: Given that short videos have attracted extensive attention of the public, the rise of governmental short videos makes governmental new media more interactive and responsive. However, the competition of short video market is fierce. A considerable number of government agencies and public institutions lack operating experience on short video accounts. The overall influence of these short video accounts is weak, and a mechanism of short video production is necessary. From the perspective that a new era is expected to fulfill people's wish for a good life, we suggest combining people's wish for a good life and governmental short videos. On the one hand, this approach identifies the audience clearly and thus benefits the production of high-quality short videos; on the other hand, it helps to attract more audience and thus meets the people's needs for a good life in the new era. Governmental short video production should focus on three aspects: sense of fulfillment, sense of happiness, and sense of safety. Production guarantee should focus on contents, platforms, and dissemination motivations.

Key words: good life, governmental short videos, short video production

Tob Regul Sci.™ 2021;7(5-1): 3621-3626

DOI: doi.org/10.18001/TRS.7.5.1.138

Governmental short videos refer to videos with a length of several seconds to several minutes posted by various levels of government departments and agencies on short video platforms or governmental websites, governmental Weibo accounts, and governmental WeChat accounts in order to publicize governmental affair information, vision of the government and the Communist Party of China (CPC), and

participation of governmental affairs. An increasing number of central and local government departments start to enter short video platforms after the Central Committee of

the Communist Youth League of China and the Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission opened their TikTok accounts in March 2018, showing a burgeoning trend. With the coming of 5G era, governmental short videos with the features of portability, visibility, and intellectualization will be a rising star in the media world. Given that short videos have attracted the attention of the public, the rise of governmental short videos makes governmental new media more interactive and responsive. However, the huge user base of TikTok, Kuaishou, Meipai, Miaopai, and Bilibili does not guarantee a large user base of governmental short video accounts. Governmental short videos are still in its

infancy despite the emergence of a small number of popular videos about courts, police, and fire department. Some popular accounts include 四平警事 ("police affairs in Siping), 圳能量 ("Shenzhen power"), and 浙有正能量 ("the power of Zhejiang"). However, many short video accounts do not have the experience of short video production and dissemination. In general, the dissemination potential, influence, guiding ability, and credibility have not been fully leveraged. Researchers and practitioners should put more effort to support the application of governmental short videos in real life to serve the people and the society.

1. Direction of governmental short videos suggested by people's wish for a good life

In the report by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China delivered at the 19th National Congress of the CPC (hereinafter "the Report"), the principal contradiction in China is the one between the unbalanced and inadequate development and the people's ever-growing needs for a better life. As a service window of the government, short video accounts aim to disseminate the voice of the government and the people, serve the people, and fulfill the needs for a good life with this understandable and popular media that combine entertainment and education. In the new era, media use habit of the public and the needs for media has changed dramatically. Short video accounts can be accepted only if they can fulfill people's needs for a good life and the effect of dissemination will increase accordingly. TikTok has its expertise in attracting users. Its slogan is "record good life". Good life is an ideal state of life that comprises of a healthy body, a warm family, a harmonious society, and a friendly environment. Since the Internet era, a new dimension of the good life has emerged. A new question brought by the Internet to us is how to exhibit beautiful thing and improve our happiness and how the Internet helps us to realize and record vice versa [1]. Comparing with "record good life" of TikTok, the primary goal of the governmental short videos is "realize good life". Because government short videos represent the government, the corresponding contents, themes, and forms are different from those of normal short videos.

Norm

al short videos are more flexible in terms of entertainment, contents, etc. while government accounts are subject to certain limitations. However, it does not mean that government account cannot attract a large number of followers. Rather, governmental accounts also possess unique advantages. For example, the professionalism, credibility, and dissemination of positive energy of governmental information can indeed fulfill people's needs for a good life.

2. Three dimensions of governmental short video production under the vision of people's needs for a good life

The Report points out that "...we should see that our people will always have a strong sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security". These three senses are an overall representation of people's wish for a good life and also fundamentally reflects the Party Central Committee's response regarding how to fulfill people's needs at the beginning of a new era. Representing people's needs from the sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security shows CPC's self-awareness of its historical mission as the party in power [2]. Therefore, as a new form of media, governmental short videos should consider fulfilling people's needs for a good life as the underlying goal. Specifically, the production of governmental short videos should follow the sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security. In general, the primary aspect of governmental short video production under the vision of people's needs for a good life is contents. Undoubtedly, the dissemination of governmental short videos has a crucial influence on the fulfillment of people's needs for a good life. Moreover, the form of governmental short videos is also of great importance. From the perspective of contents disseminated, governmental Weibo, WeChat, and public accounts can provide the sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security. The popularity of short videos is closely associated with their form. Attractiveness is the premise of the dissemination effect realization. No effect will be reached if the number of users is small. In addition, the form of short videos should better fit contents and themes and thus facilitates the generation of the sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security. Consequently, the form and contents of

governmental short videos should be unified. Both of them should fit the people's needs for a good life to generate a synergy. In the following part, we will discuss each dimension of the three senses regarding the union of the fulfillment of people's needs for a good life and short videos.

2.1 The dimension of the sense of fulfillment

Sense of fulfillment refers to the feeling of satisfaction after people gain certain benefits. Sense of fulfillment is the fundamental attribute of short videos. From the perspective of contents disseminated, governmental short videos should provide the sense of fulfillment at the first place. According to the functional orientation of governmental short videos, disseminating useful information, as the primary function, is the premise of providing sense of fulfillment. Anti-fraud information posted by government and police accounts, governmental affair information posted by local government, travel information posted by tourism bureau accounts, and epidemic prevention and control information posted by health department accounts all provide useful information for the public and triggers the sense of fulfillment. Therefore, governmental short video accounts should position themselves clearly, focus on contents, provide unique information, and employ a differentiation strategy to obtain an advantage in this use-differentiated and competitive market.

The contents and form of governmental short videos both have a pivotal influence on the generation of the sense of fulfillment. Governmental short videos satisfy various sensory requirements by integrating video, music, sound, caption, and bullet screen. Sitcoms, vlogs, character intellectual properties, and live shows are all popular short video forms. Both contents and form can strengthen users' needs for information, participation intention, and eventually the influence of governmental new media.

2.2 The dimension of the sense of happiness

Sense of happiness is the increase of the sense of fulfillment. Happiness is a topic with special attractiveness. Definitions and theories of happiness are abundant. Simply speaking, sense of

happiness is the positive and pleasant emotions. In the sense of happiness, joy is generated when needs are fulfilled. This joy includes not only the pleasant emotional states in daily life and work, but also the spiritual feelings such as social recognition and common value received through hard work and self-realization. Governmental short videos mainly disseminate contents with positive energy and some moving contents can lead to a sense of happiness from extreme joy.

Governmental short videos can easily provide emotional resonance and thus spiritual satisfaction. For example, a series of short videos about the military parade on the 70th anniversary of the People's Republic of China's founding show people the major achievements since China's Reform and Opening-up and the medical practitioners' meritorious deeds during the fight against COVID-19 incur a strong feeling of happiness. Besides, the way of storytelling can also generate the sense of happiness. "@四平警事" focuses on describing cases in an entertaining way with Northeastern China accent and sitcom design. Humorous language and cheerful storytelling facilitate users' learning of the knowledge about law and the generation of the sense of happiness. Sense of proud can also appeal to people and increase the sense of happiness. Certainly, governmental short videos cannot only disseminate positive energy and negative behaviors should also be reported. Recently, many governmental accounts on TikTok forwarded one case that an elderly who cannot use E-payment in Yichang went to a community to pay the medical insurance with cash in the rain but got rejected. The dissemination of similar things can attract extensive public attention and urge the government to reform service approaches, leading to an increase of people's sense of happiness.

2.3 The dimension of sense of security

Sense of security is the foundation of happiness. The Report emphasizes that "we must...take protecting our people's security as our mission and safeguarding political security as a fundamental task, and ensure both internal and external security, homeland and public security, traditional and non-traditional security, and China's own and common security. We will

improve our systems and institutions and enhance capacity-building for national security, and resolutely safeguard China's sovereignty, security, and development interests."Sense of security reflects people's psychological appeal for a long-term stability. This psychological appeal includes both the expectation for a stable life in the future, and the expectation for a sound security system and social justice [3].

A growing number of government institutions including police departments and courts open their social media accounts and post short videos. Governmental short videos provide users with the sense of security by not only promoting the national image and exhibiting the national power and stability, but also teaching knowledge in daily life such as anti-fraud tips. The guard of territory by soldiers, the protection of people by police, and the punishment of criminals by justice department reflect the superior public security condition in China and increase people's sense of security. The contents of governmental short videos should reflect these security contents. Central and local governments provide a strong guarantee for people's work and life and make people experience the sense of security via the image. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, a tremendous number of governmental short videos have shown how powerful China is. Some short videos posted by foreigners comment: "China is the safest place to live in." On the contrary, if too many governmental short videos with negative energy are posted, although they all reflect facts, it may trigger the sense of fear for users. It is harmful to live in an environment with no sense of security. This is also an issue related to the media agenda setting. Governmental short videos should pay attention to the dissemination of positive and negative energy. After the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, short videos about people across the country supporting Wuhan and Hubei and epidemic control increase people's sense of security.

Visual images introduce a sense of security because "seeing is believing". Visual images can increase the sense of security by putting people into the specific context. "@四平警事", as a publicity window of police department, repres

ents the image of the Chinese police. In terms of the overall conception, "@四平警事" builds an image of the police that is positive, fair, and friendly to the society and users via a series of short videos on TikTok, shows the fairness and effectiveness in law enforcement, and makes users feel that the police department is reliable and powerful. In the short videos of "@四平警事", the fight against crime, the timely processing of cases, and the open-up of information are beneficial for deterring crime and the stability of society, which can improve users' sense of security. Visual images can also improve the sense of security via details. For example, "@温州交警" ("Wenzhou traffic police") carefully classifies topics and selects hosts with corresponding gender and experience to publicize for different users. Specifically, traffic regulation questions are answered by female traffic officers, traffic law questions are handled by male officers, and questions about the daily life of traffic police are illustrated by young officers. Various publicity approaches aim to close the gap between users and police, and provide users a sense of intimacy and participation. The large number of posts by "@温州交警" indicates that the police officers upload real-time questions and duty summaries to TikTok every day and their conscientiousness to work reflects how they value the sense of security of their users. The daily updated vlogs also show that government departments' endeavor to become close to people, transparent, and reliable, improving users' sense of security. Both "@四平警事" and "@温州交警" leverage their own advantages and use TikTok to publicize their conscientiousness and reliability. Government has abandoned the rigid publicity mode. An increasing number of government agencies learn from "@四平警事" and "@温州交警" and open their TikTok accounts to build a friendly image and develop their own characteristics. In the future, the new image of government departments and agencies will be deeply rooted in people's mind.

Certainly, although each short video has its unique strength in one dimension, the sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security brought by governmental short videos are an inseparable

whole. The three-dimension classification is only for research purpose.

3. Production guarantee of governmental short videos under the vision of people's needs for a good life

To become a useful tool to fulfill people's needs for a good life, governmental short videos should evolve regarding contents, form, and platform construction to ensure high-quality contents and efficient dissemination channels. First, changes should be implemented in terms of contents and platform construction to ensure high-quality contents and efficient dissemination channels. Meanwhile, governmental short video accounts should not be misled by the phenomenon that some cities become popular in a short period (e.g., Chongqing, Chengdu, and Ma'anshan). Moreover, they should not only focus on the dissemination of major events (e.g., military parades on the National Day)—these videos only increase the popularity of cities but do not necessarily translate to favorability. Therefore, governmental short video accounts should focus on what they are expected to do. Only actively engaging in social governance in the new era and satisfying people's needs for a good life can earn people's favor and support.

3.1 Content production guarantee of governmental short videos

Although governmental short videos are a hot spot but there are still many accounts are inactive. Top governmental short video accounts are mainly from public security and police departments. These accounts attract users via users' interest in novelty. However, the lack of high-quality works is the primary issue for almost all governmental short video accounts. “@四平警事”, which has been top-ranked among governmental accounts, attracts users with short videos composed, directed and played by three police officers. This mode cannot last long and does not fit the Internet thinking. The talents of them will be exhausted one day. Many skit artists who used to be famous have disappeared, let alone police officers who lack professional performance knowledge. Hence, high-quality contents should be extracted from and used for the people. Only governmental short video contents extracted from

the people are needed by the people—a vibrant source of creation. Moreover, after years of false information and excessive entertaining contents, people have been aesthetically fatigue for those entertaining contents and the pursuit for novelty has slowed down. Now, people are seeking for information conveying positive energy and information that is useful. The contents of governmental short videos are different from those entertaining contents in normal short videos and the advantage of them lie in the credibility, authority, and usefulness. Governmental short videos are produced to solve people's practical problems. Therefore, the contents of governmental short videos should be extracted from and used for the people so that users will like them and be attracted by them in the long run. Therefore, governmental short video accounts should allow users to upload videos and build an interactive environment. However, this function is missing for the majority of accounts. Certainly, governmental short video accounts should monitor the contents and employ the “UGC+PGC” mode—users upload short videos to governmental short video accounts and the professionals from these accounts then integrate and optimize these contents. 问政 (“Asking about politics”) by “人民日报+” (“People's Daily +”) have made an active exploration on this mode.

3.2 The guarantee of short video platforms

A large number of governmental short videos accounts have been created on TikTok and exert significant impact. However, we should overlook various problems. For example, governmental short videos cannot be forwarded on WeChat, Weibo and other social media platforms. The influence of governmental short video are limited due to the conflict in interest between Tencent and ByteDance. In addition, the algorithm of Tencent lead to Matthew effect—videos that have more views are more likely to be recommended. Due to the nature of governmental short videos, their attractiveness is hardly comparable to that of entertaining videos, leading to a narrow spread. Even users who are interested in governmental short videos may be distracted by other videos. Consequently, governmental short videos accounts can improve their influence by

utilizing the support of government and mainstream media to establish their own platforms and lead the positive energy of the society. Governmental short video accounts should position themselves as a government's window of social governance and a service platform of the Party and the country for the people.

3.3 The guarantee of short video dissemination dynamics

To fully utilize the effect of governmental short videos on fulfilling people's needs for a good life in the new era, we need to actively explore the operating mechanism of governmental short video platforms. Government department and mainstream media can refer to the mode of TV stations to build governmental short video platforms. Different levels of governmental short video platforms should be integrated to build a comprehensive platform. In this way, the dissemination channel will be more efficient. Contents can be integrated to provide information in depth and reach a broad range of audience. An effective dissemination mechanism should have a powerful and enduring driving force. Governmental short video accounts are a part of duty of government departments and agencies. However, this duty does not guarantee a success of these accounts, which can be seen from the inactivity of many governmental short video accounts. In fact, governmental short video accounts should not be overcautious. They can post advertisements such as selling agricultural products for farmers, promoting local tourism resources, and building city images to lighten the financial burden of different levels of government and also give governmental short video accounts a more active attitude to publicize their videos.

Conclusion

The essence of fulfilling people's needs for a good life is to fulfill people's needs in livelihood. It is a question about how new media technology promotes the progression of the society and a new mechanism of effective social governance. As a service window of the government, governmental short videos should follow the user habit of short videos and take fulfill

ing people's needs for a good life as the fundamental goal. Government should publicize its voice and serve the people with short videos that are easy to understand, popular and entertaining. Government should use short videos as a carrier to change its way of work and actively attract users to participate in social governance. We expect an interactive system of Internet social governance from the bottom up to fulfill people's needs for the sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Zhejiang Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences Circles in China: A Study on the Motivation Mechanism and Implementation Path of Government Short Video Users. (No. 20XXJC02ZD)

References

1. ByteDance. (2019) An Report of Beautiful Life in Short Videos.
2. Qi Weiping.(2017) Fulfilling people's wish for a good life in the new era with the sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security.
3. Zhang Haishi, Sun Daoshe. (2017) The sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security: the people-centered manifestation in the new era.