

## Exploration of Xi 'an City Image Communication Strategy in New Media Era

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### Abstract

The development of new media technology has changed urban image communication. As the core area of "The Belt and Road" and an important central city in the west, Xi'an's image communication is of great significance in the era of new media. Through qualitative analysis, this study explores the strategies and effects of Xi'an city image communication in the new media era. The research finds that although the noise of public opinion on new media brings information distortion and public cognitive bias, it also increases the exposure rate of Xi'an and provides new opportunities for the city image communication. In terms of content planning and communication strategies, "Xi'an Release" combines Xi'an's history, culture, economic development, and urban construction; enhances the effect of information dissemination through multi-platform linkage and interactive activities; and enhances the visibility and influence of Xi'an's urban image. The public's satisfaction with the content of the communication of Xi'an city image is positively correlated with its perception of the city image, and the satisfaction of different groups is different. Optimizing the content and form of communication is crucial to improving the public's satisfaction and perception of Xi'an 's city image. This study aims to provide a theoretical basis and practical guidance for Xi'an to optimize its city image communication strategy, enhance its city image influence and soft power, and promote sustainable urban development.

**Keywords:** Xi'an City Image, Government Media, Communication Strategy, Public Opinion Noise

## **Introduction**

### *Research Background*

With the rapid development of new media technology, urban image communication has entered a new era (Eloundou-Enyegue, 2024). New media, with its unique communication advantages, such as high-speed, interactive, and extensive information transmission, has greatly changed the construction and dissemination of urban images. Under this background, the city image is no longer limited to the traditional geographical space and material form but extends to the virtual network space, forming a multi-dimensional and three-dimensional image system (Kim et al., 2022).

In view of the star effect of new media communication of Xi'an's urban image in recent years, therefore, taking Xi'an as an example to explore new trends and strategies of urban image communication in the new media era will not only benefit the development of Xi'an itself but also provide certain references for the development of other cities (Wang, 2021).

## **Problem Statement**

New media is a new form of media based on digital technology, using the Internet as a media carrier to expand information dissemination. As an important part of national or regional politics, economy, culture, and information, a city's rich new media resources provide a large amount of information as a foundation for city image communication (Alvianna et al., 2022). The dimensional extension of city image in the new media era leads to new trends in the process of communication.

At present, there are some problems that need to be solved urgently in the new media environment of Xi'an city image communication. On the one hand, public opinion noise has a negative impact on the communication effect of Xi'an city image, such as information distortion, negative public opinion communication, public cognition deviation, etc. On the other hand, the effectiveness of urban image communication strategies needs to be further evaluated and optimized to better adapt to the characteristics and public needs of the new media era (Masik et al., 2021).

## **Research Questions**

1. How does public opinion noise affect the communication effect of Xi'an city image?
2. What strategies have been adopted by the new government affairs media "Xi'an Publishing" in the city image communication, and how effective is it?
3. What is the public's satisfaction with the content of urban image communication of Xi'an, and what is the relationship between satisfaction and perception of urban image?

## **Research Objectives**

1. In-depth analysis of the influence mechanism of public opinion noise on the image communication of Xi'an.
2. Systematically evaluate the effectiveness of the information communication strategy of the new government affairs media "Xi'an Publishing."
3. Comprehensively understand the public's satisfaction with the content of urban image communication of Xi'an and its impact on the perception of urban image, and put forward targeted strategic suggestions on public opinion noise management and urban image building.

### *Significance of this Study*

This study has important theoretical and practical significance. On the one hand, it provides a solid theoretical basis and detailed practical guidance for the optimization of Xi'an city's image communication strategy. Through in-depth analysis of the influence mechanism of public opinion noise, the effectiveness of the "Xi'an Publication" communication strategy, and the relationship between public satisfaction and city image perception, this study can help the Xi'an government and relevant institutions to accurately locate problems, formulate more scientific and effective plans for city image communication, and improve the quality and efficiency of city image communication (Dobber & Hameleers, 2025).

On the other hand, this study enriches the theoretical system of urban image communication in the new media era. Under the background of the continuous development of new media technology, the connotation, mode, and effect evaluation of urban image communication are facing new challenges and opportunities. Through the in-depth study of Xi'an as a typical case, the law and characteristics of urban image communication under the new media environment are summarized, which provides valuable reference for other cities in similar research and practice.

In addition, the research also helps to enhance the influence and soft power of Xi'an's urban image and promote the sustainable development of the city. A positive city image can attract more talent, investment, and tourism resources and promote the overall progress of the city's economy, culture, and society. By optimizing the strategy of urban image communication, Xi'an can stand out in the fierce regional competition and achieve the long-term development goal of the city.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Research on New Media and Urban Image Communication***

#### *Influence of New Media Technology on Urban Image Communication*

The development of new media technology has greatly changed the media environment and mode of urban image communication. McLuhan proposed the "media is the message" theory, which pointed out that the media itself, as a powerful social force, not only affects the dissemination of information but also profoundly shapes social forms and human behavior patterns. In the era of new media, the Internet and digital technology make the information dissemination break through the restrictions of time and space and achieve instant and global dissemination (McLuhan, 2017). The image of a city no longer relies solely on traditional media such as newspapers, TV, and radio for dissemination but is presented to the public in a more diversified and interactive way through new media platforms such as Weibo, Facebook, and Tiktok (Speshilova, 2023). This change of communication mode not only speeds up the speed of information transmission but also makes the transmission of urban images more three-dimensional and diversified.

#### *New Characteristics and Trends of Urban Image Communication*

Under the new media environment, the urban image communication presents the new characteristics of multi-dimension and three-dimensional. The urban image is no longer limited to the traditional geographical space and material form but extends to the virtual cyberspace, forming the sum of the dimensions of politics, economy, culture, science, and education, livable, traffic image, and the extension of virtual image dimensions (Wei et al.,

2024). At the same time, the communication process of urban image is divided into internal communication and external communication, and the urban image formed is also divided into internal image and external image. New media technology makes the communication of urban images pay more attention to audience participation and interaction, and the public can give feedback on urban image information through comments, likes, sharing, and other ways, thus affecting the construction and communication of urban images (Huilin et al., 2024). In addition, new media also provide more abundant forms of expression for urban image communication, such as short video, live broadcast, virtual reality, etc. These forms can more intuitively show the city style and cultural characteristics and enhance the public's perception and identification of the city image.

### **Research on the Image Communication of Xi'an City**

#### *Historical Evolution and Communication Strategy of Xi'an City Image*

As a city with profound historical heritage, Xi'an has experienced the evolution of its urban image in different historical periods. From the ancient Chang'an to the modern Xi'an, the image of the city has gradually changed from the political center to the historical and cultural city and tourist resort. In terms of communication strategies, Xi'an has actively explored and innovated in the new media era. For example, Xi'an uses short video platforms for municipal propaganda, creatively combining the city's future and history, culture and vitality, tradition and technology (Pan, 2021). By releasing attractive and appealing short video content, Xi'an has successfully attracted the attention and participation of a large number of netizens, enhancing the city's visibility and influence in cyberspace.

#### *Practice Case and Effect Analysis of New Media Communication in Xi'an*

Xi'an has achieved remarkable results in new media communication and has become one of the models of city image communication in the new media era. Take "Xi'an Release" as an example. As the official microblog of the 'Xi'an Internet Information Office, it has played an important role in the dissemination of the city's image. As of 2018, "Xi'an Release" ranked first among the top ten Party and government news release microblogs in Shaanxi and won the "Best Government News Award - City Image Communication Award" and the "2018 Local Release Communication Power Award" successively (Ausat, 2023). By releasing authoritative information in a timely manner, responding to public concerns, and carrying out interactive activities, the "Xi'an Release" has effectively improved the communication effect of Xi'an's city image and enhanced the public's cognition and recognition of Xi'an.

### **Research on New Media Communication Strategies of Domestic and Foreign Governments**

#### *Experience and Enlightenment of New Media Communication Strategies of Foreign Governments*

Foreign governments have accumulated rich experience in the communication of city image in the new media era. For example, New York City actively publishes urban cultural activities, public service information, and other content through official social media accounts, attracting a large number of fans' attention and enhancing the public's sense of belonging and identity in the city through interaction (Akçakaya & İnceoğlu, 2021). London, on the other hand, focuses on the use of new media platforms to promote city tourism, showing the unique charm of London to global tourists through exquisite pictures, videos, and vivid text descriptions (Palacios-Martínez, 2023). These experiences show that the government should pay attention to the diversity and interactivity of content in new media communication so as

to meet the needs of different audiences and enhance the attraction and communication effect of the city image.

#### *Comparative Study on New Media Communication Strategies of other Cities in China*

Other cities in China are also actively exploring the strategy of urban image communication in the new media era. For example, Beijing releases city news, policy interpretation, cultural activities, and other information in a timely manner through official Weibo, WeChat public accounts, and other platforms and builds an all-round and multi-level urban image communication system (Cheng, 2024). Shanghai, on the other hand, focuses on the use of new media platforms for city brand building and promotes the visibility and influence of Shanghai on a global scale through online and offline activities and international cooperation (Cuijuan et al., 2021). The communication strategies of these cities provide beneficial references for Xi'an. Xi'an can combine its own characteristics and advantages, absorb and learn from the successful experience of other cities, and optimize its own new media communication strategies.

To sum up, the new media era has brought new opportunities and challenges to urban image communication. Xi'an has made some achievements in new media communication, but there is still room for improvement. By deeply studying the new media communication strategies of domestic and foreign governments, Xi'an can better grasp the law of new media communication, optimize the city image communication strategy, and enhance the influence and soft power of the city image.

### **Methodology**

#### *Research Design*

This study adopts qualitative research methods, comprehensive use of interviews, text analysis, and case studies, etc., to deeply explore related issues of Xi'an's urban image communication in the new media era. Through interviews with relevant government departments, media practitioners, and citizen representatives of Xi'an City, their views and opinions on the influence of public opinion noise, urban image communication strategy, and public satisfaction were obtained. At the same time, text data related to the city image, such as blog posts, comments, and forwarding, as well as related news reports and academic literature published by the official Weibo of Xi'an Publication, were analyzed to understand the characteristics of the information communication strategy of Xi'an Publication and the public's feedback on the city image. In addition, typical events or activities in urban image communication of Xi'an are selected as cases, such as short video publicity of Douyin and large-scale cultural activities, etc., and their communication process, strategy application, and effect presentation are deeply analyzed.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

#### *Interview Method*

The interview outline was designed, and staff members of relevant government departments, media practitioners, experts, scholars, and representatives of citizens of Xi'an were selected as the interviewees. The interview content was recorded and sorted into the interview text, and the key information and views were extracted using the topic analysis method.

**Interviewees:** A total of 15 interviewees were selected, including 5 staff members of relevant departments of Xi'an Government, 4 media practitioners, 3 experts and scholars, and 3 representatives of the public.

**Interview duration:** Each subject was interviewed for 45 minutes to 1 hour.

**Interview content:** In-depth discussion on the influence of public opinion noise, urban image communication strategy, and public satisfaction.

#### *Text Analysis Method*

Collect text data such as blog posts, comments, and retweets related to the image of the city, as well as related news reports and academic literature published by the official microblog of "Xi'an Release." The content of the text is analyzed, including the interpretation of vocabulary, sentences, themes, and other aspects, so as to understand the characteristics of the information communication strategy of "Xi'an Publishing" and the public's feedback on the city image.

**Text source:** Collect all blog posts, comments, and forwarding data related to the image of the city published by the official Weibo of "Xi'an Release" from January 2022 to December 2023.

**Number of texts:** A total of 3653 valid text data were collected.

**Analysis dimension:** The analysis is carried out from the aspects of vocabulary use, sentence structure, theme expression, etc., focusing on the distribution of positive and negative information.

#### *Case Study Method*

Typical events or activities in the urban image communication of Xi'an are selected as cases, such as TikTok short video publicity and large-scale cultural activities, etc., and their communication process, strategy application, and effect presentation are deeply analyzed. The case is analyzed in multiple dimensions, and the successful experience and existing problems are summarized to provide an empirical basis for the research.

**Case selection:** Three typical events or activities, such as Xi'an 'TikTok short video promotion, Xi'an City Wall Light Show, and Xi'an International Marathon, are selected as cases.

**Case study:** Make a detailed analysis from the aspects of communication channels, content and effect, and evaluate its contribution to the urban image communication of Xi'an.

#### *Study Population and Sample*

Determine the selection criteria and scope of the research objects, including citizens of different ages, occupations, genders, and regions, as well as foreign tourists and Internet users who are concerned about the image of Xi'an. By means of object sampling, snowball sampling, and other methods, representative samples are selected for in-depth research to ensure that the samples can cover different stakeholders and viewpoint holders.

**Sample size:** A total of 30 sample subjects were selected, including 10 citizens of different ages, 10 citizens of different occupational backgrounds, 5 foreign tourists, and 5 Internet users.

Sample selection criteria: Ensure that sample subjects have a certain understanding and cognition of Xi'an city image and can provide valuable information and views.

*Research Ethics*

In the process of research, the research ethics code is strictly observed, the privacy and right to know of respondents are respected, and the legality and ethics of data collection and analysis are ensured. The collected data will be kept strictly confidential and used only for the purpose of this study to avoid data leakage and improper use. In addition, during the interview and data collection process, the personal information of the interviewees will be kept strictly confidential, and any information that may identify them will not be disclosed. Before the interview, fully explain the purpose, content, and use of the research to the interviewees and obtain their informed consent.

**Results and Analysis**

***Analysis of the Influence of Public Opinion Noise on Xi'an City Image***

*Information Distortion and Public Cognitive Bias*

In the new media environment, the information distortion caused by public opinion noise has a negative impact on the image communication of Xi'an. According to the interview, 16.6% of citizens and tourists said that the negative information they saw about Xi'an on social media, such as the uncivilized behavior of individual tourists and problems in the construction of urban infrastructure, would lead to misunderstandings about the overall image of Xi'an. Text analysis shows that the spread of some online rumors and false information on social media has intensified the public's cognitive bias towards Xi'an's image. For example, 12 percent of the 3,653 pieces of text data analyzed involved misunderstandings and biases about urban management in Xi'an.

Table 4.1  
*Influence of Public Opinion Noise on Xi'an City Image*

<b>Influence</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Data support</b>
Information distortion	Internet rumors and misinformation	3653 Article 12% of this data involve misunderstanding and bias
Negative public opinion spread	Tourism market to rip off customers phenomenon reports	After negative events, the number of related reports increased by 30%
cognitive bias	Tourists 'misunderstanding of the overall image of Xi' an	Forty-five percent of the visitors said they were affected by the negative information

*Chain Reaction of Negative Public Opinion Propagation*

Once the negative public opinion forms a hot spot on the new media platform, it will spread quickly and trigger a chain reaction (Busemeyer et al., 2021). For example, some reports of rip-offs in the Xi'an tourism market may cause potential tourists to distrust the overall Xi'an tourism market, thereby affecting Xi'an's attractiveness as a tourist destination. The case study found that if there are no timely and effective countermeasures after some negative events, negative public opinion will continue to ferment on the Internet, causing damage to the long-term development of Xi'an's urban image. In the case of the 'Xi'an City Wall light show, due to insufficient publicity in the early stage, some tourists misunderstood the content

and arrangement of the event, resulting in some negative emotions and complaints, which further affected the communication effect of the event.

#### *New Opportunities for Public Opinion Noise to Spread City Image*

The noise of public opinion on new media platforms not only spreads rapidly but also amplifies the impact of negative information. However, this kind of public opinion noise increases the exposure rate of Xi'an to a certain extent and brings diversified interpretations of the city's image. Through effective public opinion guidance and information management, the official government media can mitigate the negative impact to a certain extent while using the attention and discussion brought by public opinion noise to create new opportunities for urban image dissemination (Zhu, 2024). For example, "Xi'an Release" can clarify misunderstandings and reduce the spread of negative information by releasing authoritative data and expert interpretation.

### **Analysis of the Effectiveness of the Information Communication Strategy of the New Government Media "Xi'an Publishing"**

#### *Content Planning and Communication Strategies*

The information themes released by the new media channels of Xi'an government affairs mainly focus on the current political news and social life, accounting for 58.65%, indicating that the content of the new media channels of Xi'an government affairs is close to the current political and social hot spots, in line with the positioning of its official media. In terms of content planning, "Xi'an Release" focuses on combining Xi'an's history and culture, economic development, and urban construction and releases a series of attractive and appealing information. In terms of communication strategy, "Xi'an Release" has enhanced the communication effect of information through multi-platform linkage and interactive activities. For example, during the Spring Festival in 2023, "Xi'an Release" released information about Xi'an's Spring Festival cultural activities through Weibo, WeChat, Douyin, and other platforms simultaneously, attracting the attention and participation of a large number of netizens and reading more than 5 million times.

#### *Evaluation of Communication Effect*

From the data point of view, "Xi'an Release" has achieved certain results in improving the image of Xi'an. The number of followers on its official Weibo has continued to grow, and the number of followers has exceeded 3 million, and the number of views and interactions of its posts are also high. Case analysis shows that in some major activities and events, "Xi'an Release" can timely release authoritative information, effectively guide public opinion, and reduce the spread of negative information. For example, during the Xi'an International Marathon, the "Xi'an Publishing" timely released event information and related service guidelines, which were read more than 2 million times, effectively improving the communication effect of the event and public participation.

#### *Advantages and Disadvantages of Communication Strategies*

As shown in the figure, "Xi'an Post" has strong spreading power, but the likes and shares index is very low. Therefore, the "Xi'an Release" has obvious advantages in the timeliness and authority of information dissemination, which can quickly respond to public concerns and enhance public awareness of the image of Xi'an. However, there are also some shortcomings,

such as the depth of interaction and diversity of content, and the flexibility of strategy in response to negative public opinion needs to be strengthened.

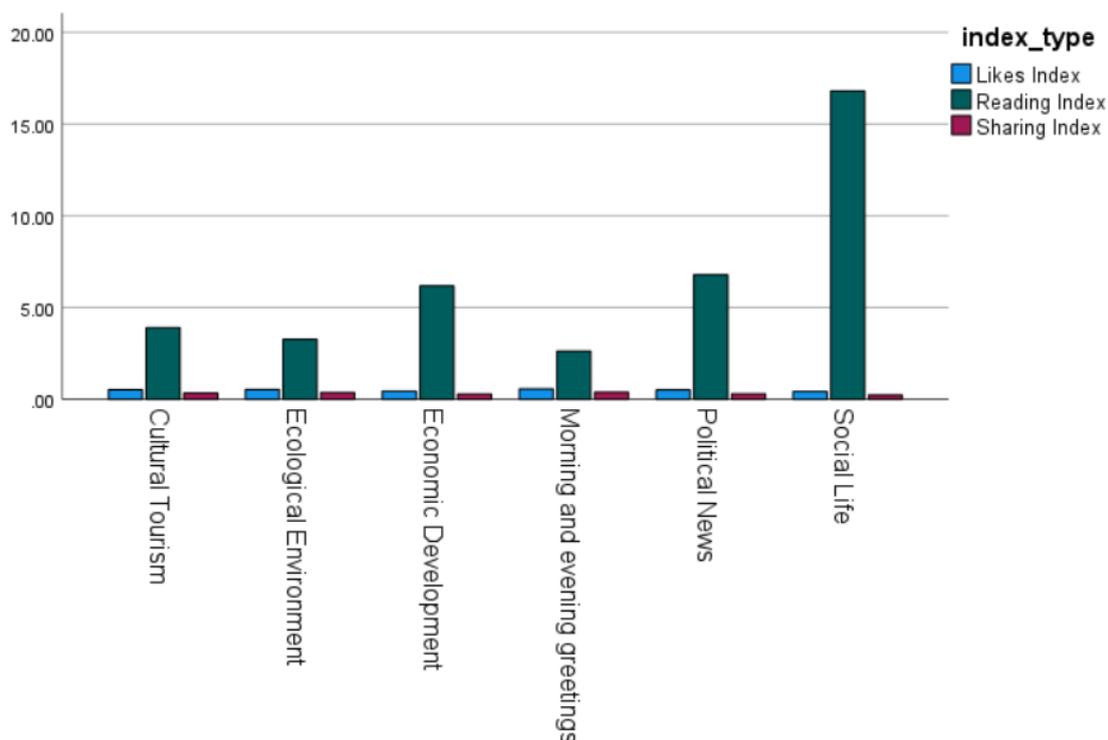


Table 4.2 "Published by Xi'an" in the 2023 communication power index

### The Public's Satisfaction with the Content of Urban Image Communication of Xi'an and its Impact on the Perception of the City Image

#### *Public Satisfaction Survey*

Through the analysis of the interview and questionnaire survey data, it is found that the public's satisfaction with the content of the image communication of Xi'an is generally high. Especially for the information released by new media platforms such as "Xi'an Release," the public believes that it has high credibility and practicability. However, some respondents said they would like to see more information about Xi'an's technological innovation and modern industries. For example, in a survey of 30 sample subjects, 60% of respondents said they were satisfied with the historical and cultural publicity of Xi'an, but only 30% of respondents thought that the publicity of scientific and technological innovation was sufficient.

#### *Relationship between Satisfaction and Perception of Urban Image*

The analysis shows that the public's satisfaction with the communication content of Xi'an 's city image is positively correlated with their perception of Xi'an 's city image. The higher the satisfaction, the more positive the public's evaluation of Xi'an's city image. For example, some respondents mentioned that learning about Xi'an's efforts in cultural inheritance and innovation through the "Xi'an Release" gave them a deeper understanding of Xi'an's image as a historical and cultural city. In the comprehensive evaluation of the city image of Xi'an, the group with high satisfaction gives a positive evaluation ratio of 80%, while the group with low satisfaction gives a positive evaluation ratio of only 40%.

*Satisfaction Differences among different Groups*

Groups of different ages, occupations, and regions have different satisfaction levels with the content of urban image communication in Xi'an. The younger group pays more attention to Xi'an's fashion and modern elements, while the older group pays more attention to historical and cultural aspects. Local residents are more interested in information about urban construction and development, while foreign tourists are more interested in tourism services and cultural experiences. For example, in a survey of respondents of different age groups, it is found that young people aged 18-30 are more satisfied with the publicity of fashion activities and modern architecture in Xi'an, while older people over 50 pay more attention to the publicity of historical and cultural sites and traditional festivals.

**Strategic Suggestions on Public Opinion Noise Management and Urban Image Building**

*Strengthen Information Monitoring and Early Warning*

Establish and improve the public opinion monitoring mechanism, timely detect and identify public opinion noise that may affect the image of Xi'an. Using the combination of big data technology and manual monitoring, the information on the new media platform is monitored in real time, and the event that may cause negative public opinion is warned in advance (Meng et al., 2022). For example, a special public opinion monitoring team can be established to use professional public opinion monitoring tools to conduct 24-hour monitoring on Weibo, WeChat, Douyin, and other platforms to timely discover and deal with potential negative information.

*Enhance the Interaction and Flexibility of New Government Media*

New media platforms for government affairs should strengthen interaction and communication with the public, respond to concerns in a timely manner, and enhance the public's sense of participation and identity. In the face of negative public opinion, it is necessary to flexibly use a variety of communication strategies, such as issuing authoritative information, guiding positive public opinion, and carrying out online and offline activities to effectively resolve public opinion crises. For example, "Xi'an Publishing" can regularly hold online interactive activities, such as Weibo sweepstakes, topic discussions, etc., to increase interaction and stickiness with fans.

*Optimize the Content and form of Communication*

According to the public demand and the city image communication goal, optimize the communication content and increase the information about Xi'an's scientific and technological innovation, modern industry, ecological construction, and other aspects. At the same time, innovative forms of communication, the use of short video, live broadcast, virtual reality, and other new media technologies to enhance the attractiveness and appeal of communication (Mansoor, 2021). For example, a series of short videos about Xi'an's scientific and technological innovation enterprises can be made and promoted through platforms such as Douyin to demonstrate Xi'an's modern scientific and technological strength.

*Establish and Improve the Long-Term Mechanism of Urban Image Communication*

Strengthen the cooperation between the government, enterprises, social organizations, and the public to form a joint force for urban image communication. Establish and improve the public opinion management mechanism, communication effect evaluation mechanism, and public feedback mechanism to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of urban image

communication. For example, a city image communication working group can be set up to hold regular meetings, coordinate resources of all parties, and jointly promote the shaping and communication of Xi'an's city image.

### **Conclusion**

This study explores the strategies and effects of Xi'an city image communication in the new media era. The major findings are as follows. Firstly, public opinion noise on new media platforms has a dual-edged-sword effect on Xi'an city image communication. While it can cause information distortion and public cognitive bias, it also increases Xi'an's visibility, presenting new opportunities for urban image dissemination. With effective guidance and management, these challenges can be transformed into opportunities to enhance the city's image. Secondly, the new government media platform "Xi'an Publishing" has implemented specific strategies in urban image communication. In terms of content planning, it emphasizes the integration of Xi'an's history, culture, economic development, and urban construction. In terms of communication strategy, it enhances the dissemination effect through multi-platform linkage and interactive activities. However, there are also some shortcomings in its communication strategies that need to be improved. Thirdly, there is a positive correlation between the public's satisfaction with the content of Xi'an's urban image communication and their perception of the city's image. Different groups exhibit varying levels of satisfaction, underscoring the importance of optimizing communication content and form to boost public satisfaction and perception of the urban image.

Based on these findings, the research proposes four recommendations. First, establish and improve the public opinion monitoring mechanism by combining big data technology with manual monitoring, enabling real-time monitoring of new media platform information and early warning of events that may cause negative public opinion. Second, enhance the interaction and flexibility of new government media. They should strengthen interaction with the public, promptly respond to concerns, and flexibly use various communication strategies, such as issuing authoritative information, guiding positive public opinion, and organizing online and offline activities, to effectively address public opinion crises. Third, optimize the communication content and form according to the public's demand and the goals of urban image communication. This includes increasing information on Xi'an's scientific and technological innovation, modern industry, and ecological construction and innovating communication methods through new media technologies such as short videos and live broadcasts. Fourth, set up a long-term urban image communication mechanism. This requires strengthening cooperation among the government, enterprises, social organizations, and the public to form a united force for urban image communication. Relevant mechanisms, such as public opinion management, communication effect evaluation, and public feedback mechanisms, should be established to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of urban image communication.

This study has made some discoveries but with limitations like small sample size and qualitative - dominated approach. Future research should expand the sample, combine quantitative and qualitative methods, and conduct long - term tracking to fully explore urban image communication rules in the new media age. Also, the application of emerging media technologies like AI and big data in urban image communication is an important area for future exploration.

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