

# Theoretical Cognition and Implementation Paradigm Change of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Digital Economy Era

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**Abstract:** With the booming development of the digital economy, all walks of life are accelerating digital transformation and upgrading. In this context, if enterprises want to efficiently fulfill their due social responsibilities, they should explore the relevant theories of corporate social responsibility in the era of digital economy, and find the implementation paradigm suitable for the needs of enterprise development. Based on this, this paper will briefly analyze the relevant discussions of strategic social responsibility and endogenous social responsibility strategy from the perspective of the industrial revolution, and discuss the implementation mechanism of corporate social responsibility strategy in the digital economy era, as well as the transformation of corporate social responsibility implementation paradigm from the perspective of endogenous strategic view.

**Keywords:** Digital economy; Corporate social responsibility; Implementation paradigm

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## 1. Introduction

In the era of the digital economy, the connotation and implementation mode of corporate social responsibility are constantly changing. In the current complex and changeable market environment, the transformation of the implementation paradigm of corporate social responsibility based on the endogenous strategic view has brought new development opportunities for enterprises to fulfill their social responsibility. Therefore, enterprises should actively explore how to clarify social responsibility and how to fulfill it in the era of digital economy, so as to inject fresh power into the improvement of corporate economic benefits and social and economic development.

## **2. Discussion on strategic social responsibility and endogenous social responsibility strategy from the perspective of the Industrial Revolution**

### **2.1. Corporate social responsibility theory from the perspective of the Industrial Revolution**

The Industrial Revolution is a historical process in which general technology dominated the social economy and was subsequently replaced by new technology. The diffusion of technology brought about by each industrial revolution promoted the transformation of the production organization mode, and then influenced the reform of the social system and social culture change. Specifically, the Industrial Revolution was first characterized by major breakthroughs in technology. New innovative technologies attracted large amounts of investment in key industries, introduced new commodities, and rapidly expanded profit points to all links of economic production <sup>[1]</sup>. Secondly, it is the change of production organization form, from big factory system, mass production line, machine manufacturing, mass customization production and personalized customization, bonuses, and release of technology revolution. With the change of production and lifestyle, new problems and social thoughts come into being. Corporate social responsibility is affected by the corresponding management system, which is a kind of deep enterprise, the institutional environment, and the social and cultural interaction, and important means of implementation. It is a form of the history of corporate social responsibility, the various factors in the process of the industrial revolution, and the adaptation process <sup>[2]</sup>. Therefore, to analyze the social responsibility of the enterprise will need to put it in the place of the industrial revolution era background and the specific situation of understanding and judgment, enterprises should fulfill social responsibility, should how should perform what kind of social responsibility, responsibility, etc., are related to technical change, production organization, the social ideological trend closely linked. At the same time, it is also embedded in the development of the Industrial Revolution in a certain way. In short, the theory of corporate social responsibility and the process of the Industrial Revolution showed the characteristics of synchronous development.

### **2.2. Analysis of endogenous social responsibility strategy in the era of digital economy**

Customized order production promotes the integration of consumption and production in an increasingly wide range of production methods. With the application of digital technology and the establishment of emerging infrastructure such as the Internet of Things, it is possible for enterprise production to move to the era of digital economy based on personalized customization. In practice, enterprises carry out personalized design and modular production according to customer orders, forming production modes such as intelligent manufacturing process, flexible production line, intelligent logistics and warehousing, improving production efficiency, reducing rejection rate, shortening new product development and inventory turnover time, and realizing the state of “zero inventory.” This production mode with personalized customization as the core promotes the reorganization of consumption and production in the era of digital economy, from the “separate” value transaction of production and consumption to the co-creation of value, and the economic benefits of enterprises and people’s value pursuit are increasingly unified <sup>[3]</sup>.

In terms of organization, organizational boundary-less communication is conducive to open interaction. With the change of production mode, the operation mode of enterprises in the digital economy era has changed from the single linear binary mode facing consumers to the diversified network cooperation mode that includes enterprises, suppliers, customers, and even competitors to create value together. Due to the organization and between organizations, the organization and between individuals, between individuals and individual relationships, such as frequency, speed, size, and range, have been constantly changing, so their relationship and the connection must

also change. Enterprise organization form has been shifted from the traditional hierarchical network to a platform without boundaries. This is conducive to the interaction, sharing, and win-win cooperation between various organizations and individuals, thus forming more diversified value attributes <sup>[4]</sup>.

In terms of business model, the digitalization environment ushered in the era of win-win cooperation. In the big data environment, the business model of most modern enterprises mainly uses platforms to reach transactions, and extends their value chain through the external influence of cross-border networks on people, forming a business ecology of coexistence and interaction. This flexibility and openness have greatly changed the way enterprises acquire and generate value, and have also changed the competitive relationship between enterprises. Whether for technical pressure or financial pressure, the strategy of “going it alone” has long been ineffective, and the future business competition has become the competition of “business ecosystem” <sup>[4]</sup>. Therefore, the enterprise should have inclusive and open communication with other organizations and individuals actively, give full play to the differences and complementary between members of different ecosystems, dig deep and meet the needs of each member, balance the interests of all parties in society, in the enterprise management.

### **3. The digital economy era requires the implementation of a strategy for a corporate social responsibility mechanism**

#### **3.1. Internal driving level**

On the one hand, in terms of values, the practice of corporate social responsibility should be transformed from traditional “formalism” to being integrated into corporate culture. Through orientation training, corporate training, and other forms, companies should cultivate the awareness of social responsibility among all employees and guide them to actively practice it in their daily work. This can make social responsibility reflected in product design, after-sales service, and so on each link, fundamentally promoting the implementation of the strategy of corporate social responsibility. On the other hand, at the level of strategic integration, enterprises should closely integrate social responsibility strategy with business strategy <sup>[5]</sup>. For example, when making development plans, e-commerce enterprises should consider their responsibilities to suppliers, consumers, and the local social economy. When selecting suppliers, they should consider whether the raw materials or products they provide meet environmental standards. In this way, the company’s due social responsibility will be fulfilled naturally. In addition, in the era of digital economy, artificial intelligence and big data technology have become important new quality productivity to promote the development of enterprises <sup>[6]</sup>. In the process of fulfilling social responsibility, enterprises can use big data technology to collect and analyze the actual performance, so as to achieve fine management and comprehensively improve the efficiency and effectiveness of corporate social responsibility strategy implementation.

#### **3.2. External co-governance**

First of all, the implementation of a corporate social responsibility strategy cannot be separated from the participation and support of various organizations and individuals. Therefore, enterprises should strengthen communication with suppliers, employees, customers, and other organizations and individuals to understand their needs. For example, through customer feedback, enterprises can understand the current market consumption trend and then develop a more targeted and effective business plan, so as to improve the economic benefits of enterprises, while implementing corporate social responsibility. Secondly, relevant government departments should also issue relevant policy documents on corporate social responsibility, and guide enterprises to understand their

own social responsibility and implementation methods in the digital economy era through policies<sup>[7]</sup>. For example, relevant government departments should issue laws and regulations on enterprise data security, environmental protection, and other aspects, clarify the social responsibility that enterprises should fulfill, and give tax incentives and policy support to enterprises with good performance in this aspect to encourage them. Enterprises that fail to fulfill their social responsibilities should also be punished accordingly to create an orderly market environment. Finally, social media supervision also plays an important role in external co-governance<sup>[8]</sup>. For example, both traditional media and we-media should pay attention to the performance of corporate social responsibility. If an enterprise is found to violate its social responsibility, it should make good use of public opinion to supervise the enterprise to rectify itself in time.

## **4. The implementation paradigm of corporate social responsibility from the perspective of endogenous strategy should be changed**

### **4.1. Digital consumption period**

With the rapid development of the Internet economy, the paradigm transformation of corporate social responsibility should be based on stable business development, relying on the experience and demand of consumers, and fulfill the due social responsibility of enterprises while obtaining economic benefits. In this context, some start-ups do not need additional activities to fulfill their social responsibility behaviors, but only need to borrow the internal drive of the digital economy and carry out a series of business model innovations according to “consumer experience”, so as to quickly generate economies of scale<sup>[9]</sup>. With the development and maturity of digital consumption, there have been a large number of beneficial practices of social responsibility based on the digital economy environment, such as shared bicycles and other sharing economy models. This is a consumer-centered interactive crowdfunding model under the guidance of innovation, environmental protection, and sharing value concepts, while promoting the sustainable and healthy development of enterprises. At the same time, online crowdfunding is also a business model for enterprises to fulfill their social responsibilities. For example, public welfare crowdfunding projects such as Waterdrop can achieve the unity of corporate development and social responsibility by means of flow kilometers and the scale effect.

In addition, with the increasing maturity of digital consumption, more and more leading enterprises in the ecosystem have gradually formed a good external co-governance state of social responsibility implementation paradigm. On the one hand, from the perspective of endogenous strategy, the implementation paradigm of corporate social responsibility should follow the principle of mutual benefit and symbiosis, so that enterprises and society, present and future, develop in harmony. For example, Didi Chuxing, as a mature leading enterprise in the industry, actively cooperates with traffic police departments in the era of big data, excavates massive data in the field of agent driving, co-develops a drunk driving query system for traffic police departments, and practices social responsibility by taking advantage of industry advantages<sup>[10]</sup>. For example, ByteDance, as one of the leading enterprises on the Internet, has a huge user base and data flow. On this basis, ByteDance launched the public welfare project of “Toutiao Find People”, which promoted more people to participate in the public welfare activities of finding missing groups in daily life, and took up the good function of the enterprise to serve the society<sup>[11]</sup>. On the other hand, some enterprises perform corporate social responsibility for the risk prevention of business ecology, which is also conducive to enterprises to actively participate in the transformation of the social responsibility implementation paradigm. For example, with the rapid development and wide application



of information technologies such as artificial intelligence, how to balance the relationship between artificial intelligence technology and social ethics has become one of the hot issues in the current society. Many enterprises in the Internet field have realized the importance of resisting technology abuse and protecting data security, and have established industry alliances and other organizational forms to discuss how to find the optimal application mode of artificial intelligence technology from the aspects of technology and ethics.

## **4.2. The digital industry period**

Intelligent manufacturing technology can actively serve the green and low-carbon production and lean management of enterprises, and effectively optimize resource allocation through the industrial Internet platform. It has a high degree of fit with the implementation of ESG investment and the establishment of resource-saving and environment-friendly “two societies.” Facing the “double carbon target” proposed by China, manufacturing enterprises to actively implement the construction and application of intelligent integrated factory equipment to push forward the intelligent manufacturing services for leading the way, the low carbon economy development of responsibility to bear <sup>[12]</sup>. On the one hand, the application of intelligent manufacturing technology, such as distributed numerical control systems and flexible manufacturing systems, can transform the production and manufacturing process and reduce unnecessary consumption. For example, a Shenyang machine tool factory applied the underlying data modeling and visual processing of the I5 system to realize the production process reengineering and improve the coordination degree of resource allocation. On the other hand, the application of digital technology in high-energy-consuming industries can improve the efficiency of energy production, thus promoting the development of energy conservation and emission reduction. In addition, industrial digital transformation and upgrading are important manifestations of the era of digital industry. It is also a way to support the efficient sharing and application of various industrial resources, so as to promote the in-depth allocation of resources and form collaborative innovation of all parties. For example, Xugong HanCloud has realized cross-equipment, cross-system, and cross-time and space connectivity, and formed the Xugong index reflecting production and construction through data mining. While helping with industrial digital transformation and upgrading, Xugong Hancoud is used as one of the guiding data sources for national macroeconomic decision-making.

At present, with the further improvement of the breadth and depth of the development of the digital industry, the connection between all walks of life and all kinds of social roles is getting closer and closer, showing a situation of functional symbiosis, complex coupling, and collaborative progress. At the same time, under the conditions of 5G+cloud+AI and other new technologies, the Internet of Things has become practical and feasible, and the living environment of enterprises is further intertwined with the environment they depend on <sup>[13]</sup>. At this stage of the maturity of the intelligent manufacturing industry, it is more necessary to actively maintain and maintain contact with all stakeholders to create a win-win environment. Corporate social responsibility in the new era is mainly about how to make use of the advantages and characteristics of intelligent manufacturing to meet the needs of social development. For example, one of the impacts of intelligent manufacturing on traditional manufacturing enterprises is the need to eliminate the old technology and productivity mode on a large scale, so as to properly solve the problem of employee interests caused by “machine replacing labor”, and avoid new and invisible social and economic problems caused by involuntary laid-off or structural laid-off caused by mechanical replacing labor. It has become a key issue of corporate social responsibility in the new era <sup>[14]</sup>. In this regard, enterprises should optimize human resource management based on long-term development, pay attention to

the training of employees' career planning, improve employees' digital skills and adaptability, so that they can adapt to the new work content in the intelligent manufacturing environment. These trainings also help traditional production line employees to achieve career transformation and relieve employment pressure caused by intelligent manufacturing. In addition, enterprises should also make long-term staffing plans and set up reasonable employee compensation and placement policies to ensure that employees replaced by intelligent manufacturing can be properly relocated and financially compensated.

## 5. Conclusion

To sum up, corporate social responsibility has a long way to go. Enterprises should correctly understand the transformation and development of social responsibility in the era of digital economy, and take multiple measures to meet the corresponding opportunities and challenges. In the future, with the continuous changes of social economy, the implementation paradigm of corporate social responsibility will also evolve, which requires enterprises to maintain keen insight to adapt to the digital economy market, and fulfill their social responsibilities, make greater contributions to the sustainable development of enterprises and society, and realize the common prosperity of enterprises and society.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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