

Research on the Sustainability of Chinese Emerging Social Media Marketing

Jiayin Hu^{1,a,*}, Zeyi Li^{1,b}

¹*Taylor's University, Malaysia*

a. jiayinh80@gmail.com, b. lizeyitaylors@gmail.com

**corresponding author*

Abstract: This article examines trends in social media marketing strategies within the framework of Chinese enterprises, highlighting the interplay between emerging digital marketing and sustainable development in a dynamic economic environment. By examining current emerging social media marketing trends in China and incorporating case studies, this article demonstrates how Chinese companies are effectively incorporating sustainable practices into social media marketing, highlights the potential offered by China's beneficial economy and environment, and explores in depth Potential and issues in China's specific consumer and regulatory environment. The findings indicate that sustainable social media marketing strategies are increasingly important for Chinese companies. This research provides a reference for how to incorporate sustainable development into the new trend of digital marketing of Chinese enterprises.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Sustainability, China

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background and objectives

In an era of booming global digital connectivity and environmental awareness, the global social media marketing landscape is undergoing major shifts and innovations, especially in China. China's emerging social media market is characterized by a large digital user base, unique social media platforms, and an increasing emphasis on sustainability. The intersection of these elements presents an emerging and untapped research area: emerging social media marketing strategies for Chinese enterprises sustainability research. There is currently not much research content in this field, but its importance to a company's marketing value, strategic value, and financial value is increasingly prominent.

Against this background, this article aims to analyze emerging social media marketing trends in China and emphasize the integrated application of sustainable development in practice. At the same time, this article will also combine existing literature to study the cases of Chinese companies that have successfully implemented sustainable social media marketing strategies, and explore the challenges and opportunities faced by these companies in the field of sustainable marketing. Based on key points such as technological progress, changes in consumer attitudes, and ethical considerations in marketing strategies, this article will further analyze the future trends of sustainable social media marketing in China and provide value references.

1.2. Methodology and Framework

In order to present a thorough analytical viewpoint on the research issue, this article employs a thorough literature review, the case study analysis approach to examine current industry trends and practices, and the most recent findings and examples from the field. This article's main body is structured into five sections based on content and framework: case studies, emerging trends, sustainability and user participation, future development direction, and ethical issues. This article, which combines theoretical and practical viewpoints, focuses on the changing social media marketing scene in China and looks at trends including influencer marketing, video content, social commerce, integrated social networking platforms, and social commerce. The research delves into the ways in which China's distinct cultural and legislative landscape influence marketing tactics, offering valuable perspectives on how Chinese enterprises are incorporating sustainability into their social media endeavors.

1.3. Research Significance

As China is a key player in the global economy and digital innovation, the country's sustainable social media marketing strategies will make a significant contribution to research on a global scale. This research will fill a significant gap in the international marketing literature by examining the unique interplay between cultural, technological, and regulatory elements in China and the sustainable shifts in customer behavior and marketing strategies of Chinese firms. In a context where companies and customers are placing greater emphasis on environmental and social responsibility, this study provides insights into how sustainability strategies can be integrated into overall social media marketing strategies. At the same time, the research also provides a roadmap for scholars and practitioners to help them navigate the complex and ever-changing Chinese social media scene. The research further enhances the global business and academic community's understanding of digital marketing strategies in corporate environments that value sustainability and cultural diversity by revealing new marketing trends including technologically advanced, culturally aware and sustainability-focused future marketing strategies. understand.

2. Literature Review

The literature shows that the research by Zhao, Li, Copeland, Shan et al. emphasizes the unique impact of social media on consumer behavior and company engagement, especially in terms of sustainability development. [1][2]. Studies on the subject of the integration of sustainability in marketing by Chatterjee et al. and Xiong & Luo emphasize the significance of environmental concerns on corporate social responsibility as well as the leadership role in this regard [3][4]. He and Pedraza-Jimenez and Zhou and Wang, who address the strategic significance of an integrated and participatory social media strategy in the Chinese market, observe that this environment is full with potential and problems. [5] [6] Future developments in social media marketing, according to studies by Huang et al. and Wibowo et al., will be shaped by advancements in technology and shifting customer expectations, especially with regard to sustainability. [7][8] Case studies by Wu and Chen, Song, & Yao show how important ethical factors are to the effectiveness of these marketing methods [9][10], including transparency and cultural sensitivity. The research emphasizes how social media marketing is dynamic in China and how integrating ethical principles, customer preferences, and sustainability is essential to navigating this ever-evolving environment.

2.1. Emerging Trends in Chinese Social Media Marketing

In the dynamic Chinese social media marketing landscape, the confluence of various trends is changing brand engagement, including integration trends, social commerce trends, live video trends, KOL-driven trends, and more. He & Pedraza-Jimenez highlighted the rise of integrated platforms such as Wechat and Weibo, which blend social networking, e-commerce and entertainment, reflecting the blurring lines between online shopping, social and content consumption [5]. This trend of consolidation caters to the mobile-centric nature of Chinese Internet users, as highlighted by Zhou and Wang, with the need for content and activities optimized for mobile devices and mobile lifestyles [6]. Social commerce, on the other hand, is the integration of social media with e-commerce on platforms such as Taobao and JD.com, further shortening the customer's journey from product discovery to purchase and enriching consumer data for personalized marketing. More importantly, video content and live streaming, especially on platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou, have become the most attractive forms of content, providing real-time interaction and immersive experiences. And influencer marketing, driven by key opinion Leaders (Kols), plays an important role, with brands leveraging these influencers for recognition and collaboration. Adapting to China's regulatory environment presents both challenges and opportunities, affecting the content and scope of marketing campaigns and requiring compliance for brand success. Together, these trends shape China's unique and evolving social media marketing environment, which also presents significant opportunities and challenges for sustainable social media marketing.

2.2. Case Studies of Sustainable Practices in Chinese Social Media Marketing

Customer-driven value creation is one of the key trends in sustainability marketing. Mafengwo, China's leading travel portal, is known in the industry for its creative use of user-generated content. Wu stated in a 2022 study that Mafengwo has more than 130 million registered users, with 95% of its content coming from user-generated travel guides and reviews [9]. In addition to building a strong community, Mafengwo's marketing strategy focuses on encouraging sustainable tourism practices, focusing on promoting authentic travel experiences and responsible tourism. User engagement on the Mafengwo platform continues to rise, and active users are said to have increased year-on-year. 30%. Mafengwo provides an interesting example of continuous social media marketing, with Wu outlining the three main components of the Mafengwo approach: consumer loyalty based on interaction, regular content updates, and effective human resource management [9]. Leveraging social media, the business provides forums, travel guides and user-generated materials, Mafengwo has effectively built a community of travelers that is unique in its commitment to producing authentic, high-quality travel information. Mafengwo's approach demonstrates how to use social media to build communities based on common interests and ideals, thereby achieving long-term sustainable business expansion and beneficial social impact.

Focusing on the practical aspects of the global market, green and low-carbon marketing is also one of the core trends in emerging social media marketing. Leading companies in China are placing increasing emphasis on sustainability activities, according to research by Chen, Song, and Yao, which provides a more comprehensive view and analysis of how these companies use social media for global engagement. For example, Huawei, which has 112 million Weibo fans, has reduced the carbon emissions of the company's sales by 21% since 2019 by promoting green activities on its website. In addition to improving brand reputation and image, smart use of social media also addresses consumer demand for environmentally friendly products and services. For example, companies in the consumer goods and technology sectors use social media to communicate their dedication to corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability. These companies share their sustainability strategies such as using renewable energy, reducing carbon footprints, and participating in community

development projects through platforms such as Weibo and WeChat, thus attracting audiences around the world. This strategy not only enhances brand reputation, but also Inspiring other businesses to adopt similar sustainable practices. [10]

2.3. Sustainability and Consumer Engagement

In China's rapidly developing and emerging social media marketing environment, the importance of incorporating sustainability into consumer engagement marketing strategies is becoming increasingly apparent. Xiong and Luo emphasized that due to environmental issues, companies will strengthen the implementation of corporate social responsibility plans. In addition to improving the company's reputation, the implementation of this initiative will also attract customers who are concerned about environmental protection and enhance customer loyalty to the brand [4]. Chatterjee et al. emphasized the critical role that social media marketing plays in the long-term development of SMEs, especially in developing countries like China. Through the customized consumer connections facilitated by these platforms, companies can showcase their environmental efforts and build communities based on shared principles, an approach that is particularly effective for young people who are more concerned about social and environmental issues. [3] Collectively, the results of these studies indicate that actively demonstrating a social and environmental ideal on social media would greatly raise the possibility of building a more involved and devoted clientele. This marketing trend emphasizes how crucial it is to match consumer values with marketing techniques that support sustainable growth. It also essentially demonstrates how Chinese businesses prioritize social growth and moral culture in their social media strategy. may improve client interactions and facilitate market expansion for long-term, profitable company growth.

2.4. Future Directions under the influence of multi-modules

The multi-module dynamic between advanced technological development, greater consumer participation and the changing regulatory environment is shaping the trend of sustainable social media marketing in China. Building on the ideas of Huang et al., combined with those of Wibowo et al., artificial intelligence, big data analytics and machine learning will play a crucial role in developing customized, sustainability-focused activities. Technological connections will help brands better understand and respond to consumer preferences in real time [7][8]. In addition, in the future, Chinese companies will place more emphasis on providing engaging sustainability education through interactive platforms such as virtual reality and live broadcasts to establish lasting connections with customers, and consumer engagement trends will continue to rise. At the same time, as China continues to improve regulations controlling digital content and marketing, companies must be adaptable and compliant, and customers demand true supply chain transparency and sustainability measures, so marketing communications also need to attach great importance to openness and authenticity. Social media platforms are expected to become a powerful breeding ground for environmental and social activism, and companies will need to take stronger stances on relevant issues to cultivate brand loyalty among ethically aware consumers.

2.5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues such as privacy protection, transparency, cultural sensitivity, environmental awareness and consumer protection must be considered in order to maintain customer trust and meet regulatory requirements when promoting sustainable social media marketing strategies in the Chinese market. The core of ensuring effective processing of customer data and ensuring data security and privacy is to strictly abide by the Personal Information Protection Law, Network Security Law and other relevant laws and regulations. Under the background of sustainable development, enterprises should

always adhere to the principle of openness and transparency, accurately and comprehensively communicate their sustainable development concept, so as to establish a good corporate image. When formulating marketing strategies, it is imperative for businesses to carefully take into account the distinctive elements of Chinese culture and avoid any misunderstandings in cultural comprehension. Additionally, enterprises should prioritize the ecological impact of their marketing activities, continuously enhance promotional techniques, ensure precise transmission of information, and honor consumer preferences by encouraging environmentally conscious consumption behavior. Chinese consumers pay more and more attention to the protection of their rights and interests, which leads enterprises to fully understand the importance of cultivating consumer trust when formulating sustainable development strategies. At the same time, establishing a sustainability marketing program requires a comprehensive and diverse consideration of ethical issues. These factors play an important role in establishing brand image and maintaining stable customer relations. But with the changing market environment, the relationship will continue to deepen.

3. Conclusion

3.1. Main Findings and limitation

The intricate and intricate relationships between developing social media marketing and sustainable development was revealed in the article, as well as the broad and in-depth trends of sustainable social media marketing tactics in China. A review of case studies, analysis of current trends and potential future directions shows that integrating sustainability into social media marketing is becoming popular and critical in China, an integration driven by a complex regulatory framework, changing consumer awareness and With the dynamic trend of multi-modularization driven by technological progress, while companies pursue integrated marketing, they also face a series of challenges, such as examining ethical and environmental issues related to consumers and culture. However, although this article provides valuable information and trend analysis, there are certain limitations. First, the focus on Chinese enterprises cannot fully convey the nuances of global social media marketing sustainability. Another issue is the use of case studies, which is helpful, but does not fully represent the situation of Chinese companies. The experience of smaller or less successful businesses may be overshadowed by the success of larger competitors, which may not give a complete picture of the results for the market as a whole.

3.2. Future Research

The importance of this study and its current limitations illustrate the need for further related research. In the future, the direction of this research could focus on more types of case studies, including summaries of small business and failure cases as well as case comparisons around the world, to obtain more balanced conclusions and results. In addition, in the future, this research will further focus on experiments and primary data collection to prove the research point of view through quantitative relationships to enhance the verifiability of the research.

References

- [1] Zhao, L., Lee, S.H.N. and Copeland, L., 2019. Social media and Chinese consumers' environmentally sustainable apparel purchase intentions. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*.
- [2] Shan, Y., 2021. Social Media and Brand Integration Marketing in China. In: *Proceedings of the 1st International Symposium on Innovative Management and Economics (ISIME 2021)*.
- [3] Chatterjee, S., Chaudhuri, R., Sakka, G., Grandhi, B., Galati, A. and Siachou, E., 2021. Adoption of Social Media Marketing for Sustainable Business Growth of SMEs in Emerging Economies: The Moderating Role of Leadership Support. *Sustainability*.

- [4] Xiong, G. and Luo, Y., 2021. *Smog, media attention, and corporate social responsibility—empirical evidence from Chinese polluting listed companies*. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 28, pp.46116-46129.
- [5] He, X. and Pedraza-Jiménez, R., 2015. *Chinese social media strategies: communication key features from a business perspective*. *Profesional De La Informacion*, 24(2), pp.200-209.
- [6] Zhou, L. and Wang, T., 2014. *Social media: A new vehicle for city marketing in China*. *Cities*, 37, pp.27-32.
- [7] Huang, Q., Lynn, B.J., Dong, C., Ni, S. and Men, L., 2022. *Relationship Cultivation via Social Media During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Evidence From China and the U.S*. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 60(4), pp.512-542.
- [8] Wibowo, A., Chen, S.C., Wiangin, U., Ma, Y. and Ruangkanjanases, A., 2020. *Customer Behavior as an Outcome of Social Media Marketing: The Role of Social Media Marketing Activity and Customer Experience*. *Sustainability*.
- [9] Wu, J., 2022. *Analysis of Mafengwo's Social Media Strategy*. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*.
- [10] Chen, O., Song, S. and Yao, M.Z., 2020. *Brands as a nation: An analysis of overseas media engagement of top Chinese brands*. *Global Media and China*, 5(1), pp.22-39.