Research on the Impact of Social Media on Brand Cognition and Consumer Behavior

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Abstract: In today's rapidly developing internet age, everyone's life is inseparable from the presence of the internet. Nowadays, social media exists as a new form of entertainment in people's lives. Through mobile phones or computers, consumers can easily obtain brand information and evaluations of new products from various self-media, forming new perceptions. This article will use a comprehensive approach to study how media attract people and change their perceptions. The final research reveals that some major manufacturers attract fan groups by releasing videos related to current hot topics, adapting to internet trends, and actively interacting with fans to build close relationships and customer loyalty. Additionally, sponsoring leagues and collaborating with internet celebrities are also important methods they use to enhance their brand image and establish their fan base. The study on the impact of social media on brand perception and consumer behavior shows that social media plays a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions of brands and influencing consumer behavior. Social media is also highly flexible, allowing for targeted reporting and introductions of specific products to achieve desired branding effects. The research also reveals how some media combine new factors to expand their fan base, providing directions for future academic research.

Keywords: Media influence, brand marketing, social media, consumer behavior

1. Introduction

This study focuses on how contemporary self-media changes consumer behavior and brand perception. It aims to provide a better understanding of how related media in the digital age influence people's cognition and shape brand image. The research primarily delves into the significance of social media and current marketing strategies. Utilizing the literature analysis method, the study involved searching for and reading relevant materials and documents. The advantage of this method lies in its ability to effectively analyze how social media gradually changes users' perceptions through establishing interactions with customers, which is beneficial for the research. The ultimate goal of this study is to explore the impact of social media on consumers. To achieve this goal, relevant literature searches and readings were conducted, leading to the final insights.

2. Background

2.1. Classification of Media

Media refers to the means of disseminating information. Generally speaking, any platform that can provide a medium for information dissemination can be called media. Traditionally, media is classified into four categories: newspapers, television, radio, and magazines. Additionally, there are outdoor media, online media, and new media, such as mobile text messages. With the advancement of science and technology, new media have gradually emerged, such as IPTV and electronic magazines. These have developed on the basis of traditional media but have qualitative differences from them. Today, with the continuous development and expansion of media, more people are also beginning to use it to disseminate information.

2.2. The Influence of New Media

The influence of modern media is undeniable, especially in brand marketing and promotion, where it significantly shapes public opinion. Media's influence mainly stems from the communities it encompasses. Traditional media, such as newspapers and magazines, guide their audience's views through reports and advertisements. Emerging media like Netflix and YouTube influence consumer behavior and opinion transmission through personalized services and content recommendations, thereby increasing their visibility in their respective fields. Additionally, self-media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram have become integral parts of contemporary young people's lives. These platforms primarily attract more brands through promotions to achieve better commercial goals.

Social media advertising and promotional activities are crucial for enhancing brand awareness. Brands can leverage social media advertisements and promotions, using visual appeal and engaging content to attract their target audience and increase brand recognition. For example, Adidas posts photos and videos of fashionable sports gear on social media and interacts with fans to create discussions. One of the advantages of social media is the ability to establish ongoing interactive relationships with the target audience. By actively responding to user comments, participating in discussions, and hosting interactive events, brands can build close relationships with their audience, increasing their recognition and loyalty to the brand [1]. Advertisements not only aim to promote products but also to influence people's thoughts and concepts. Moreover, healthy advertising plays a crucial role in societal development [2].

3. Literature Review

Self-media marketing has a direct impact on consumer purchasing behavior. The research by Balakrishnan etc. indicates that social media marketing has transformed traditional marketing activities, resulting in more efficient communication. The two-way and three-dimensional flow of information in marketing changes consumer attitudes, which in turn influences their purchasing behavior. However, some scholars argue that social media marketing does not directly impact consumer purchasing behavior but rather affects it through other mediating variables [3]. Through better communication and interactive behavior, consumers can generate better interest and attention. In today's world, people are extremely concerned about the practicality of products and the similarity in promotion and use. Therefore, relatively authentic communication and attractive discounts have a positive impact on brand reputation expansion. Erlangga's research indicates that in the process of social media marketing, the higher the practicality of the product and the more obvious the offered discounts, the more likely it is to attract consumer attention and promote the association between the product content and the consumers. In other words, the practicality of the product in social media

marketing has a positive impact on the relevance of the marketing content, and the economic benefits of social media marketing also have a positive impact on the relevance of the marketing content [3].

Usually, on the internet, brands can be seen spreading the popularity of their new products through the attire of internet celebrities in some well-known places on social media in order to expand their visibility. Hiring influencers to endorse products has become a choice for many brands due to the positive impact they can have on the brand, which is reflected in both subjective and objective aspects. Subjectively, influencers' attractiveness, expertise, and credibility positively influence social interactions, further enhancing brand evaluation and strengthening brand identification. The authenticity of influencers makes consumers feel a stronger sense of social presence when engaging with them, which in turn positively influences brand attitudes. Objectively, influencers and their interactions with consumers can enhance e-commerce sales performance [4]. Additionally, there is a large amount of content marketing on social media today. Brands increase consumer engagement by posting attractive content, such as beautiful images and compelling stories, thereby enhancing brand awareness and credibility. Social media activities are also a crucial part of brand marketing. By organizing activities like giveaways, challenges, and Q&A sessions, brands create opportunities for interaction and engagement with users. Moreover, innovative points that align with current trends can further enhance users' identification with and loyalty to the brand. With the development of society, many young people attach great importance to personalized customization. This exclusive product feature, tailored to individual preferences, aligns with the current fashion trend. Therefore, major product manufacturers have introduced series like Nike by You to broadcast their care for each user on social media platforms.

4.   The Influence of Media on Consumers of Different Age Groups

Under this topic, age groups are divided into three categories: the elderly (50-99+), adults (18-49), and minors (0-17). Minors, lacking a comprehensive understanding of the world, are more susceptible to online marketing scams and addictive content due to their limited experience. This can potentially impact their future values, consumption habits, and behavioral development. Hence, in some countries, social media platforms often include age restrictions for users under 18. Regulatory authorities and parents typically pay close attention to the content accessed by minors to prevent exposure to harmful marketing practices and deter them from veering off course.

The second category comprises a large group of adults. There are some differences in perspectives between newly-turned 18-year-olds and those approaching retirement age. Newly-turned adults face similar challenges to minors, while older adults have accumulated significant life experience in this regard. However, they are generally the primary targets and consumers of social media marketing, with media influencing their brand awareness through personalized advertising, films, and TV shows. Additionally, the information they encounter on social media shapes their understanding and viewpoints. Moreover, social media amplifies the influence of this generation. Most video creators and bloggers on the internet belong to this demographic, and their personal opinions on brands, including related comments, also influence the consumption decisions of different generations.

Young people tend to prefer accessing news and information anytime, anywhere, rather than being confined to specific times or locations. Additionally, advertisements typically occupy a significant portion of television programs, causing young audiences to be easily distracted. Furthermore, news content produced by local stations often does not align with the aesthetic preferences of young people, leading to a lower status for local stations among young audiences in the new media environment [5]. The elderly population spends less time on social media and has lower internet penetration rates. Despite the rapid dissemination of various advertising messages in the digital age, many of them still hold onto their long-held values, placing more emphasis on product quality and utility rather than

flashy promotions. They rely on their years of life experience to evaluate products, thus their impact on social media is relatively minimal.

Most manufacturers have their own social media accounts on major mainstream media, occasionally launching new products and incorporating brand core values and contemporary mainstream views on certain issues in promotional videos, using this as a form of publicity to spread their awareness and awareness. For example, sports brands like Adidas have official accounts on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube, where they regularly post brand-related information and original content. For instance, Adidas collaborates with football players to launch a series of environmentally themed events on social media platforms, enhancing the brand's environmental image [6].

Additionally, brand collaborations, such as co-branding, have long been used as a means to enhance consensus between companies and boost visibility, thereby increasing profitability. Through cross-market and cross-type collaborations, brands leverage previously independent operating models to achieve unprecedented positive outcomes. For instance, brands like Supreme engage in cross-platform collaborations, which strengthen inter-company agreements and increase visibility.

From the consumer's perspective, if co-branded products exhibit good compatibility and complementarity, consumers can better understand the essence of the brands involved, making it easier for them to appreciate the value of the collaboration, thus making such co-branded products more readily accepted. However, if consumers perceive that the co-branded brands do not align with each other's images, they may expend more effort to establish connections between the brands, potentially resulting in negative effects from the co-branding [7]. In terms of exposure, manufacturers also leverage sponsorship activities to bring a positive brand image and extensive exposure. For example, Nike's sponsorship of the NBA league allows them to gain visibility by leveraging the NBA's influence in the basketball section of social media platforms. Additionally, in line with current trends, manufacturers collaborate with artists. For instance, they collaborated with Eason Chan to launch the "Stan Smith" series, which received widespread acclaim from fans. Each product in this series incorporates elements of Eason Chan's music and Adidas's classic design, offering a unique fashion style. Furthermore, Adidas has collaborated with other celebrities to launch co-branded products, which have also been well received by consumers. [6]. Collaborating with artists is also aimed at expanding the brand's fan base and audience through the artist's network and establishing a different style image for the brand.

5. The Influence of Media on Brands

The influence of media on brands is profound, with both advantages and disadvantages. Major manufacturers can use the media to establish their commercial image, utilize marketing techniques to connect with customers and enhance consumer engagement. In this process, consumers develop emotions and inherent thoughts about the brand, reaching a consensus with the brand's philosophy. Consumers continuously receive marketing content directly or indirectly from brands and companies on social media platforms. Through long-term exposure to informational, entertaining, and emotional content, consumers gradually increase their loyalty to these brands and companies [8]. Brands aim to achieve the desired level of profitability and market reach. However, it's important to note that any issues related to the brand can be magnified by the media, especially through the proliferation of IoT (Internet of Things) media, where small problems can escalate into targets of public scrutiny. The positioning of comprehensive media with a think tank approach may not always be clear. Currently, the establishment of some media think tanks still exhibits tendencies to follow trends. While they may bear the label of a think tank, they lack substance and continue to operate as they did before. The focus and development direction of these think tanks are not clearly defined, making it difficult for such models to sustain themselves in the long run [9]. Social media has the power to alter consumers'

initial perceptions of brands. In the age of intelligence, consumers can directly engage with brands and discuss them with other consumers through social media. Influential remarks about a brand can significantly attract new fan bases because more consumers are willing to listen to others' recommendations and try new things. Their live broadcasts are more relaxed, often collaborating with many individuals, such as high-charisma celebrities, hosts, and anchors, which can give consumers a greater sense of participation and enjoyment [10]. For example, if fans see a blogger expressing personal opinions on a certain brand, they are likely to make a new evaluation of the brand in their minds. For the blogger, it can inspire fans to participate in brand endorsement tweets, such as liking, commenting, or forwarding.

6.   Conclusion

The research result of this study is that social media has a significant impact on brands and consumers. From the perspective of establishing brand packaging and building relationships with customers, media constantly influences people's views on brands. Especially in today's Internet era, there are more ways to promote and establish good relations with fans. Effectively packaging oneself to cater to the current mainstream market and capture traffic through social media, maintaining absolute respect and care for one's own users. These seemingly ordinary changes will directly affect a merchant's consumer group, whether online or offline. On the other hand, manufacturers on social media can turn some offline promotional and advertising expenses into online discounts, allowing consumers to better enjoy the purchasing process without leaving their homes, ensuring that both parties benefit and provide more convenient services to consumers. Another aspect is the big data analysis of social media, which brings users the products they want through more accurate algorithms. In addition, the characteristics of social media and direct communication with manufacturers also provide consumers with better product quality assurance and a more transparent consumption chain. Therefore, the conclusion is that social media has a great influence on consumers not only the diversity of choices but also the simpler consumption process. This study provides valuable reference significance for future research in this direction, mainly affecting how media promotes consumer views and how to change consumer behavior Future research should focus more on exploring the direction of cooperation and development between media and brands in the future.

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