

The Psychological Mechanism and Marketing Strategy Behind "Impulse Consumption": A Case Study of Hey Tea

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Abstract: In today's fast-paced living environment, impulse spending has become a common phenomenon. Faced with various products, consumers are often driven emotionally to make irrational purchasing decisions. This consumption behavior not only impacts an individual's financial situation but also profoundly affects marketing strategies. This paper takes Hey Tea as an illustrative example to explore the psychological mechanism of impulse consumption and analyze how to stimulate and guide this consumption behavior through marketing strategies. The results of this study aim to reveal the intrinsic drivers of impulse consumption and provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the development of more effective marketing strategies.

Keywords: Impulse Buying, marketing, consumer decision-making.

1. Introduction

In today's fast-paced life, impulse spending is becoming increasingly common. With the advancement of digitalization and globalization, coupled with the development of online e-commerce live streaming, consumers are faced with more and more stimuli of goods and information, and this environment often easily stimulates consumers' desire to improvise purchases, leading to the emergence of impulse consumption. Unlike traditional rational consumption, impulse consumption is an emotionally driven purchase behavior that has a profound impact on consumers' personal economic status and marketing strategies[1]. The popularity of this phenomenon has not only changed the shopping habits of consumers but also posed new challenges to merchants and brands.

The self-control theory of Baumeister et al.[2] proposes that when consumers experience emotional fluctuations, they may lose self-control, leading to impulse buying behavior. Another study showed that environmental stimuli, such as visual and auditory elements of a store, also influence consumers' propensity to make impulse purchases[3]. In addition, research by Inman et al.[4] showed that marketing strategies such as limited-time promotions and special offers can effectively motivate consumers to buy impulsively. Taken together, these theoretical and empirical studies reveal multiple influencing factors and psychological mechanisms of impulse consumption. Hey Tea, a well-known tea brand, has successfully attracted a large number of young consumers with its innovative product design, attractive brand image, and unique consumer experience.

In this study, we will delve into the role of Hey Tea's marketing strategy on impulse spending, aiming to understand how it can stimulate consumers' impulse to buy through specific marketing activities and branding. By analyzing Hey Tea's marketing methods and their impact on consumer

behavior, this paper aims to reveal the specific mechanism of impulse consumption. The results of the study not only help to reveal the psychological motivation of impulse purchases but also provide a valuable reference for other companies when formulating marketing strategies.

2. Case study: How Hey Tea attracts consumers?

The food safety, product diversity and unique packaging design are the major reasons for Hey Tea to attract consumers. Firstly, Hey Tea attaches great importance to food safety and the quality of raw materials so that consumers can drink with peace of mind. Hey Tea insists on using fresh fruits, and the raw materials are purchased from the origin of the fruits to ensure the freshness and quality of the products. According to Sina's financial data, Hey Tea has been certified as a "Quality Golden Shield Case" for two consecutive years, becoming a quality benchmark in the tea industry. Secondly, Hey Tea has been carrying out new product research and development to launch unique and diversified tea drinks. For example, Hey Tea has launched a new tea "Jinfeng Tea King", a blend of several tea leaves produced in Taiwan, with a unique taste and high recognition. In addition to making milk tea, Hey Tea has also launched a variety of options such as coffee, juice, and smoothies. In some cases, limited products are released according to seasons and festivals to meet the diverse needs of consumers. Thirdly, Hey Tea's unique packaging design has left a deep impression on consumers. The logo of Hey Tea is a stick figure holding milk tea, which is very simple but highly recognizable. In addition, Hey Tea's in-store experience is also a major reason for being widely praised by consumers. The store style is minimalist and incorporates Chinese aesthetics to create a comfortable buying environment. Hey Tea also focuses on providing high-quality services, which has won wide acclaim from consumers.

Furthermore, Hey Tea also often co-branded with some brands and games across borders, launching new packaging and peripherals, which enhances the brand's fashion sense. In Hey Tea's marketing practice, cross-border cooperation is one of the key strategies for its success. In particular, co-branding with pop culture and well-known brands, such as anime brands and fashion brands, has become an important means of enhancing brand appeal and awareness. Through these collaborations, Hey Tea can leverage the partner's brand effect and fan base to attract more target consumers and stimulate their desire to buy impulsively[5;6]. For example, Hey Tea's co-branding with well-known animation brands not only brings consumers a novel visual experience but also satisfies their love for animation culture by designing limited-edition teas with animation elements. This collaborative approach effectively enhances the attractiveness of the product and makes it stand out in the market[7]. In addition, Hey Tea has also collaborated with fashion brands to launch special edition teas, which integrate fashion elements into product design, making the brand more fashionable and trendier, and further increasing consumers' desire to buy[8]. These marketing cases show that cross-border cooperation can not only increase brand awareness but also increase consumers' brand engagement. Consumers are more likely to have the urge to buy when they see their favorite anime characters or fashion elements combined with Hey Tea products. This collaborative model has successfully promoted impulse spending by eliciting emotional resonance and visual appeal from consumers[9;10].

Although Hey Tea has left a deep impression on consumers, there are still consumers who do not buy Hey Tea based on various factors. The most obvious factor is the pain of paying. According to the data of People's Daily Online, Hey Tea has carried out product price reductions, and the product prices of Hey Tea's mainstream stores have been lower than 30 yuan, and the products priced at 15-25 yuan have accounted for more than 60% of all Hey Tea's products. (2020) Despite this, the price of Hey Tea's products are still relatively high, and many consumers will have the pain of paying due to the price when purchasing. Secondly, some consumers are concerned that tea may contain additives or excessive sugar and fat, which will pose a certain risk to human health. Hey Tea makes freshly made milk tea, and there are great differences in the sugar content, caffeine, and tea polyphenols

content in each cup of milk tea. Consumers may choose not to buy Hey Tea out of concern for their health. In addition to Hey Tea, there are many other brands in the market for consumers to choose from. These brands may do better than Hey Tea in terms of price and taste, and consumers choose their favorite brands based on their subjective preferences.

3. Psychological mechanisms of impulse spending

The concept of impulse consumption was first proposed by United States scholars at the end of the 20th century and defined as a sudden, intense desire to buy, often accompanied by the pursuit of instant gratification. The psychological drivers of this consumption behavior are complex and diverse, including affective factors, social influences, and environmental factors [11,12]. Emotional factors play an important role in impulse spending, and consumers are more likely to make impulse purchase decisions when they are emotionally stable than when they are emotionally stable [13]. The social environment also influences consumers' purchasing decisions. For example, when consumers see others buying a product or are influenced by their social circles, they will increase their desire to buy. In terms of the environment, store style and product display can also influence consumers' purchasing decisions.

In the case of Hey Tea, the phenomenon of impulse consumption is particularly prominent. Hey Tea has established a modern and fashionable brand identity by carefully shaping the brand image, which has attracted the attention of many consumers. This strong brand image not only boosts consumers' perception of the brand but also stimulates their desire to buy[14]. Hey Tea often introduces new and unique products, such as limited-time new products or seasonal teas, and this freshness and scarcity make consumers have a strong impulse to buy[15]. In addition, Hey Tea's in-store atmosphere design also greatly promotes impulse spending. Their in-store environments often have a modern, comfortable design, combined with a Chinese Zen aesthetic, accompanied by a good music and visual experience, providing consumers with a pleasant place to consume, this environment can enhance the shopping experience of consumers and make it easier for them to make impulse purchase decisions[16;17].

However, to further optimize these marketing strategies to better meet consumer needs, it is recommended that brands optimize from the following aspects. The first is not only to collaborate across borders on products but also to fully incorporate elements of collaboration in brand campaigns and social media marketing. For example, consumer engagement and experience can be further enhanced by holding co-branded product launches or pop-up stores[18]. In terms of interactivity, social media platforms can be used to engage consumers more, such as co-branded design competitions or fan voting activities, so that consumers can participate in the design and promotion of products, which can effectively increase consumer engagement and brand loyalty [19].

4. Marketing Strategies and Impulse Purchases

Marketing strategies play a vital role in motivating impulse spending. Specifically, by creating a sense of urgency, offering limited-time offers, or emphasizing the scarcity of a product, brands can effectively motivate consumers to make purchasing decisions quickly. The effectiveness of these strategies has been confirmed in multiple studies. For example, a sense of urgency and scarcity can significantly increase consumers' purchase intent and speed[20,21]. In the case of Hey Tea, the brand cleverly uses a variety of marketing strategies to stimulate consumers' impulse buying behavior. Hey Tea regularly launches seasonal products and special edition drinks, such as a winter-limited hot drink series or a special edition tea for the Spring Festival, which successfully stimulates consumers' desire to buy by emphasizing uniqueness and scarcity[22]. In addition, Hey Tea has further amplified the brand's reach through social media marketing and partnerships with key opinion leaders (KOLs).

Beautiful ads and interactive content on social media platforms, combined with KOL testimonials and reviews, increase consumer awareness and interest in brands, thereby boosting sales[23;24].

However, relying too much on a single marketing approach, such as relying solely on price promotions, can lead to over-price sensitivity among consumers, which can undermine the long-term value and loyalty of the brand. Studies have shown that consistent price promotion may make consumers dependent on price, thereby reducing the overall sense of value of the brand[25]. Therefore, brands should consider a combination of multiple means, such as brand storytelling, emotional marketing, and experiential marketing, to enhance consumers' brand loyalty and reduce excessive focus on price when developing marketing strategies[26;27].

Therefore, it is also necessary to regularly collect and analyze consumer feedback on co-branded products, and adjust cooperation strategies and product designs promptly to better meet consumer needs and preferences.

5. Conclusion

This paper employs an in-depth analysis of the Hey Tea case to investigate the influence of psychological mechanism and marketing strategies on consumers' impulse purchasing behavior. Among these factors, integrated marketing methods, including brand building, product innovation, and multi-channel marketing, have been identified as playing a pivotal role in stimulating and guiding impulse consumption. By developing a carefully crafted brand image and innovative product design, businesses can effectively capture consumers' attention and motivate them to make purchases. Finally, this article provides strategic recommendations for Hey Tea in product innovation, customer interaction, and customer feedback to achieve long-term market success and enhance the brand's ongoing competitiveness.

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