The Impact of Key Terms in Business Marketing on Corporate Marketing Strategies: A Case Study of McDonald's

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Abstract: In the context of increased competition in the fast food industry, enterprises need to continuously optimize their marketing strategies to maintain a competitive edge. The paper examines the role of corporate marketing key terms in corporate marketing strategies, using a case study approach to analyze the practical application of key terms in the brand positioning and marketing strategies of McDonald's as an example. Moreover, in this paper, the emphasis is placed on the impact of these key terms on consumers' attitudes, behavioral choices, brand awareness and loyalty, and McDonald's competitive advantage in the global marketplace. As such, the study demonstrates how McDonald's utilizes these concepts for effective market segmentation, cross-cultural marketing and advertising communication, which may provide a reference for other brands to optimise their marketing strategies. The results suggest that a deeper understanding and flexible use of these key terms can assist enterprises in maintaining competitiveness in a swiftly evolving market landscape. Further research can investigate the potential for the application of key terms in emerging markets and digital marketing.

Keywords: Key Terms in Business Marketing, McDonald's, Marketing Strategies, Brand Awareness.

1. Introduction

Driven by the wave of globalization and digitalization, the business marketing landscape has been experiencing rapid changes, especially in the fast food industry, where competition among brands is becoming more intense. In this environment, the use of key terms not only affects consumers' brand perceptions and attitudes, but directly relates to the effectiveness of companies' market positioning and marketing strategies. Taking McDonald's as the research object, this paper aims to explore the importance of key terms in corporate marketing strategies and their practical applications. Therefore, the paper defines and categorizes key terms in commercial marketing and analyzed their profound impact on consumer behavior, brand image and market competition. And how these key terms play a role in McDonald's advertising communication, product positioning and market segmentation is investigated in the context of its brand positioning and marketing strategy. Through an in-depth analysis of McDonald's marketing strategies, it seeks to reveal the substantial contribution of key terms in boosting brand competitiveness, promoting consumer loyalty, and creating a positive brand

image. In short, the paper supports the understanding of McDonald's successful marketing, but also provides useful insights into the application of key terms in the development of marketing strategies for other firms. In an intensely competitive marketplace, enterprises should demonstrate flexibility and effectively incorporate key terms into their marketing strategies to adapt to changing consumer needs and market environments.

2. Overview of Key Terms in Business Marketing

2.1. Definitions and Classifications

The key terms in business marketing encompass a number of aspects relating to attitudinal functions, self-monitoring and related concepts, efficacy, threat and perceived vulnerability, cross-cultural effects, as well as media influences. In particular, attitudinal functions include knowledge functions, instrumental functions, and ecological defenses that influence how consumers process and respond to information. In contrast, self-monitoring, such as self-modeling and self-impedimentation reveals consumers' sensitivity to self-image and social feedback in their purchase decisions. And efficacy aspects, including response efficacy and self-efficacy, reflect consumer confidence and expectations that a product or service will meet their needs. Also, the introduction of the concepts of threat and perceived vulnerability enables companies to better understand the psychology of consumers, thus developing coping strategies. With regard to cross-cultural influences, factors such as individualism versus collectivism, fatalism, and non-linguistic cultural differences show the profound impact of cultural context on consumer behavior. These cultural dimensions can affect the message content and style of brand communication, as well as the selection of target markets and product positioning. The influences of the media are also not negligible, including source factors, such as credibility, attractiveness, and similarity, message factors, such as the number of arguments and sequential effects, and audience factors, such as level of intelligence and issue engagement [1]. Together, these factors determine the impression and effect that a message produces in the minds of consumers.

2.2. The Importance of Key Terms in Corporate Marketing

Key terms play an integral role in corporate market positioning, as they serve as the basis for the development of a brand image. For example, Apple has successfully positioned itself as a high-end electronics brand by highlighting the innovative and high quality of its products. This strategy not only appeals to consumers seeking a high-end consumer experience, but reinforces its leadership position (key terms for product effect category) in the technology sector [2]. This clear brand positioning allows consumers to quickly recognize and remember the Apple brand when faced with a multitude of choices. Besides, key terms are equally crucial in branding. For example, Coca-Cola has successfully built a contagious brand image by emphasizing positive values such as happiness, sharing and togetherness (key terms for attitude functional category). This emotional connection not only enhances consumer brand loyalty, but increases the brand's competitiveness in the marketplace. It can be said that the purchase of a product is not merely a transaction, but an emotional experience and a lifestyle choice. In addition, key terms may provide guidance to companies in their target market selection. For example, Nike has developed a targeted product promotion and marketing strategy by accurately identifying its target group, sports enthusiasts (key terms for target market segmentation category related to consumer behavior) [3]. This segmentation strategy has enabled Nike to more effectively meet specific consumer needs and enhance the brand's market penetration.

3. McDonald's Corporate Marketing Strategies

3.1. Brand Positioning

McDonald's is perceived by consumers as a brand that offers convenient, tasty and affordable food with core values such as family-friendliness and sharing happiness. In order to adapt to the cultural characteristics of different regions, McDonald's has adopted a flexible brand positioning strategy in the global market. In Western individualistic culture, it emphasizes personal choice and customized service. And consumers can choose different burgers, beverages and side dishes according to their own tastes, and this flexibility meets the demand of western consumers for personalization. At the same time, it reinforces the image of "fast and convenient" in these markets to meet the busy pace of life. In contrast, in Eastern collectivist cultures, it places greater emphasis on family and group dining experiences. It offers family meal deals and children's meals to attract family customers and create a sharing and happy dining environment. This strategy not only meets the needs of families, but also makes McDonald's well recognized in the local culture [4]. It has also responded positively to the healthy eating trend by introducing low-calorie and healthy menu choices to appeal to health-conscious consumers. Through these flexible brand positioning, McDonald's has maintained strong competitiveness in the global market.

3.2. Practical Applications of Key Terms in McDonald's Marketing

McDonald's has successfully advanced its brand positioning, market strategy, and cross-cultural communication in its global marketing efforts via the flexible use of key terms. These terms have helped McDonald's establish a deep connection with consumers and enhance its market influence.

3.2.1. Attitude Functions

McDonald's utilizes various attitude functions globally to strengthen its brand image and influence consumer attitudes. Through the knowledge function, McDonald's adopts a consistent brand image and promotional approach, enabling consumers to quickly recognize and understand the brand. For example, its golden arch logo, standardized restaurant decor, and extensive advertising reinforce consumer recognition of McDonald's. In terms of the instrumental function, McDonald's meets consumer needs by offering convenient and affordable products, such as value meals and family meal deals . This aligns with consumer price expectations and also helps the brand maintain a broad customer base. Consumer choices are often influenced by the ecological defense function, as they justify their purchases by emphasizing McDonald's affordability, solidifying the brand's economic image [5].

3.2.2. Self-Monitoring Functions

McDonald's advertising strategy leverages self-monitoring to appeal different types of consumers. High self-monitoring consumers are more likely to be drawn to ads that feature trendy and social scenes, such as modern restaurant settings and social interactions in its commercials. In contrast, consumers with lower self-monitoring skills focus more on food quality and service efficiency, which McDonald's highlights by promoting its fast and reliable service [6]. For health-conscious consumers (self-concept), McDonald's also meets their needs by offering healthy options such as salads and low-calorie drinks. Besides, time-poor consumers may use McDonald's takeaway service as a self-protective justification for their inability to prepare a healthy meal due to their busy work schedules, which McDonald's convenient service addresses.

3.2.3. Efficacy and Threat Perception

McDonald's successfully incorporates the concepts of response efficacy and self-efficacy into its advertising. By showcasing scenes of consumers enjoying meals, the ads emphasize the delicious experience and immediate satisfaction of McDonald's products [7]. Besides, McDonald's extensive store network and efficient services instill confidence in consumers that they can easily enjoy its products anytime, anywhere. And this sense of self-efficacy further increases consumer purchase intentions. McDonald's also employs threat perception strategies, particularly by creating a fear of missing out on limited-time offers, triggering a sense of urgency among consumers. For instance, limited-time promotions make consumers feel they might miss a great opportunity if they don't act quickly, effectively boosting purchase intentions.

3.2.4. Cross-Cultural Influences

McDonald's global marketing strategy is highly attuned to cross-cultural influences, particularly the cultural differences between individualism and collectivism. In individualistic cultures, McDonald's highlights personalized choices and self-service, while in collectivist cultures, the brand emphasizes family and group dining experiences. By adapting to different cultural contexts, McDonald's has successfully built broad brand resonance across the globe. Additionally, McDonald's considers non-verbal cultural differences, such as the varied meanings of colors, symbols, and body language. For example, in some cultures, red may have special symbolic significance, prompting McDonald's to adjust its advertising strategies according to local cultural traits to ensure the brand message is correctly understood and received by the target audience [8,9].

3.2.5. Media Effects

In media effects, McDonald's enhances its credibility and attractiveness through source factors. The brand has built a strong reputation by consistently delivering stable, high-quality service over the years. Ads that showcase real consumer experiences further strengthen trust in the brand [10]. The visual appeal of the food and modern restaurant settings in advertisements also boosts the brand's attractiveness, drawing in a wide target audience. McDonald's advertising messages are simple and clear, with key selling points in the message factors often focusing on convenience, affordability, and the enjoyable food experience, making them easy for consumers to remember and understand [11]. This straightforward yet effective communication helps McDonald's establish a distinct brand image in the competitive fast-food market.

4. The Impact of Key Terms on McDonald's Marketing Strategies

4.1. Consumer Attitudes and Behaviors

The use of key terms is a significant factor in affecting consumer attitudes and purchasing behavior, particularly in terms of how consumers perceive and respond emotionally to brands. McDonald's effectively established its brand identity by leveraging the instrumental and ego-defensive functions of the attitudinal function, which are consumer-oriented traits that foster positive brand attitudes. These core values, such as convenience, affordability, and family-friendliness, have become integral to the brand's identity. Consumers generally perceive McDonald's as not only a quick dining option, but also a family-friendly place to gather [12]. By emphasizing these attributes, McDonald's fosters a favorable emotional association with consumers, particularly through the portrayal of scenarios in advertisements, which in turn enhances consumer loyalty. In addition, it is adept at utilising key terms related to threat and perceived vulnerability. Through promotional tactics such as limited time offers,

McDonald's has succeeded in generating a sense of urgency and desire to buy, prompting consumers to speed up the decision-making process for fear of missing out on the offer [13]. These strategies capitalize on consumers' perception of missed opportunities, making them more inclined to choose McDonald's when faced with a choice, thus increasing the frequency of purchases.

4.2. Brand Awareness and Loyalty

Key terms play a key role in building McDonald's brand awareness and brand loyalty. Through the knowledge function in the attitude function, McDonald's gained high brand awareness with its iconic golden arches and unified store image. This visual symbol has become an important tool for consumers around the world to quickly recognize the McDonald's brand, enhancing the depth of brand awareness in consumers' minds. In addition, the message factor related to media influence also plays a crucial role. McDonald's advertisements are effective in planting the brand image in consumers' minds through concise and clear core messages, such as "fast, affordable, and fun". In terms of brand loyalty, McDonald's utilizes key terms related to market segmentation and target market selection. For example, the promotion of family meal deals effectively consolidated its positioning among family consumers, while the introduction of toys and children's meals for the children's market further increased brand loyalty. These strategies have not only made families and children a key customer segment for McDonald's, but have also increased their frequency of repeat visits [14]. McDonald's continues to build brand loyalty in the global marketplace via its emotional connection with consumers and unique market positioning.

4.3. Market Competition and Advantage

The key terms play an important role in enhancing McDonald's market competitiveness and differentiation advantage. McDonald's has established a unique competitive advantage in the highly competitive fast food market by utilizing the instrumental functions in the attitudinal function and key terms related to market segmentation. Its brand qualities of convenience, affordability and family-friendliness have helped it maintain a steady consumer base in the global market. Compared to some premium restaurant brands, McDonald's has won over a large number of value-for-money conscious consumers with its price advantage and extensive market penetration [15]. Compared with some small fast food brands, McDonald's has established higher market barriers and competitive advantages by virtue of its globalized brand recognition and extensive store network [16]. Also, McDonald's utilizes key terms related to cross-cultural influences, such as individualism versus collectivism, to flexibly adapt its marketing strategies in different markets around the world. For example, in Western individualistic cultures, McDonald's emphasizes personalized choices and convenient services, while in Eastern collectivistic cultures, it focuses more on family and social experiences. This differentiation strategy enables McDonald's to better meet the needs of consumers in different cultures across the globe, thus increasing its competitiveness in the international market.

5. Conclusion

Key terms in business marketing play a key role in McDonald's marketing strategy. By precisely understanding and flexibly applying these terms, it has successfully constructed a distinctive brand image and effectively influenced consumer attitudes and behaviors. While building brand awareness and loyalty, McDonald's has also used these terms to maintain a significant advantage in a highly competitive market. Specifically, McDonald's has successfully attracted different consumer groups and ensured that the brand continues to be competitive in the market through the application of key terms such as market segmentation, product effectiveness, and attitudinal function. However, as the market environment and consumer needs evolve, McDonald's should continue to optimize the use of

key terms to further enhance market adaptability and innovation. In the future, further studies should explore how other brands use these terms and how they respond to the increasingly complex global marketplace with innovative marketing strategies, thereby providing additional marketing insights for companies.

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