Psychological Path Analysis of Social Media Grass Planting Behavior on Consumer Purchase Decisions - Taking Rednote as an Example

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Abstract. The term planting grass originally originated from Internet buzzwords, meaning that the desire to buy is stimulated by sharing by others, and has gradually become an important phenomenon in social media marketing. With the development of social platforms such as Weibo, Douyin, Bilibili, etc., content sharing, real experience and recommendation between users have become important ways to influence consumer decisions, promoting the popularization and commercialization of planting grass behavior. Rednote enhances consumers' trust in products and influences their purchasing decisions through real user sharing and KOL and KOC planting grass content. The platform's community interaction and intelligent recommendation mechanism further amplify the word-of-mouth effect, making it an important reference channel for consumers before shopping. This study analyzes the planting grass content and user interaction behavior on the platform to explore its influencing mechanism on consumer purchasing decisions. Using a combination of content analysis and questionnaire survey, the role of factors such as KOL/KOC, content authenticity, and platform recommendation mechanism in the planting grass process was systematically sorted out. The study found that grass-growing content significantly improved users' trust and willingness to buy, especially among young consumers. The platform's social attributes and personalized recommendations further enhanced the communication effect of grass-growing. This study helps brands optimize social media marketing strategies and provides a reference for consumers to make rational decisions.

Keywords: Grass-Growing Marketing, Consumer Purchase Decisions, KOL/KOC Influence, Content Authenticity and Recommendation Mechanism.

1. Introduction

Social media's explosive growth in the current digital era has drastically changed how information is disseminated and how people behave as consumers. Social media sites like Douyin, Weibo, and Rednote have grown rapidly. Content sharing, real experience and recommendations among users have gradually become keyways to influence consumer decisions. Planting grass, which originally originated from Internet buzzwords and means the behavior of stimulating the desire to buy due to the sharing of others, has also become an important phenomenon in social media marketing.

Many scholars have conducted in-depth research on the mechanism by which social media influences consumer purchasing decisions. Purchase intentions will be significantly impacted by consumer - social media influencer interaction, which some scholars contend is a necessary precondition for influencing those intentions [1]. Some scholars focused on the mechanism of social media influencer marketing, emphasizing that quasi-social relationships and authenticity play a key role in it [2]. Some scholars used Rednote as a case and used the SOR model to study the purchasing intention of users on social media [3]. From TikTok's point of view, some researchers looked into how social media influencers affected customer satisfaction and purchase intent [4]. Other researchers looked at how social media influencer marketing shapes consumers' intentions to buy [5]. Several experts examined the influence of marketing methods employed by influencers on the purchase behavior of the post - millennial generation customers [6]. Research explored how influencer marketing shapes consumer purchase intentions [7]. A study that examined the way characteristics of social media influencers interact with consumers' purchase - related intentions found that perceptions about brand familiarity and legitimacy served as a moderate mediating function [8]. Researchers looked studied how social media influencers affected consumers' intentions to buy as well as how brand viewers acted as a mediator [9]. According to a study that examined How marketing efforts by influencers affect consumers' inclination to buy products, opinion leaders and word-of-mouth were crucial [10].

However, existing research on the psychological path of planting grass behavior affecting consumer purchase decisions, especially the specific mechanism of the platform represented by Rednote, still has room for in-depth research. Based on this, this paper takes Rednote as an example to analyze the psychological path of consumers' purchasing decisions by focusing on the grass planting behavior on social media. On the one hand, this study helps brands to deeply understand the internal logic of social media marketing and optimize marketing strategies; on the other hand, it can also provide a reference for consumers to make rational decisions when facing "grass planting" information, which has important theoretical and practical significance.

2. The mechanism of planting grass in Rednote

2.1. Platform characteristics

The user profile of the platform is mainly concentrated on young women aged 18-35. This type of user generally pays attention to quality life and personalized expression and tend to focus on value orientations such as "exquisite life" and "self-growth". This user characteristic is consistent with the consumer self-concept theory (Self-concept Theory), in which the tension between "ideal self" and "actual self" (Actual Self) prompts users to build an ideal life state and strengthen their sense of identity through consumption. This user psychological characteristic not only affects the dissemination style of platform content but also provides a clear and operational positioning basis for brand marketing.

In terms of content presentation, the platform supports diversified content carriers such as graphic notes, short videos, live streaming and community interaction, providing users with rich self-expression and information sharing channels. Diversified content types can stimulate consumer needs at different levels and meet their psychological demands in multiple dimensions such as cognition, emotion and behavior. According to the Media Richness Theory, diversified media forms help to enhance the efficiency of information transmission and the psychological participation of users, thereby promoting cognitive processing and emotional resonance.

In terms of building a community atmosphere, the platform emphasizes real interaction and high-quality content ecology to strengthen the emotional connection and trust building between users. Based on the Social Identity Theory, users gradually form a consumer recommendation circle with group identity in the long-term interaction process. This "circle effect" not only improves users' recognition of platform content but also provides a reference basis with social attributes for consumer decisions, thereby effectively influencing users' consumption behavior.

2.2. Core strategy of planting grass

At the level of planting grass strategy, the platform adopts the collaborative marketing model of Key Opinion Leader (KOL) and Key Opinion Consumer (KOC) . KOL relies on its professional background and social influence to play the role of authoritative information source and enhance the persuasiveness of information. According to the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), for users with high attention, the professional content output by KOL helps them form a stable attitude recognition through central path processing. As ordinary consumers, KOCs enhance the authenticity and intimacy of content through real feedback in a life-like and detailed manner, satisfying the needs of ordinary users for perceived authenticity of information in the cognitive stage. The two complement each other, forming a dual psychological influence path of authoritative endorsement + real word-of-mouth, thereby effectively enhancing users' trust and cognitive acceptance.

At the same time, the platform emphasizes the planning and push of scenario-based precise content and carries out content design around the specific life situations of users. For example, themes such as "Must-haves for lunch breaks for urban white-collar workers" and "Good things for college students to save money" use scenario implantation strategies to strengthen users' psychological sense of substitution, thereby enhancing situational resonance. According to the Situational Cue Theory, consumer behavior is often triggered and guided by specific life situations. Scenario-based content can effectively arouse users' purchasing motivation and realize the logical chain of situation-motivation-behavior.

At the technical level, the platform relies on the intelligent algorithm recommendation mechanism to achieve highly personalized content push by analyzing data dimensions such as users' interest tags, browsing behavior, and social relationship networks. This mechanism fits the "perceived behavioral control" in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), that is, by optimizing content presentation and matching, users' perception of the controllability of consumer behavior is enhanced, thereby improving the conversion rate of purchase intention. In addition, based on the Information Processing Theory, accurate recommendations can reduce users' information search costs and cognitive load, and further promote the formation of a logically closed loop of "content-interest-consumption".

In summary, the platform has achieved full-process guidance of consumer cognition-emotion-behavior through multi-dimensional psychological strategies and improved the dissemination efficiency and consumption conversion effect of seeding content.

3. The path of planting grass affecting consumers' purchase decision

3.1. Cognitive level

From the perspective of consumer psychology, the cognitive level mainly involves consumers' perceptual processing and cognitive judgment of product information. The platform reduces the cognitive load of users in a massive information environment through the strategy of concise

information extraction, enabling users to efficiently obtain the core selling points and advantageous attributes of products in a short time. This process is in line with the bounded rationality theory, that is, consumers tend to rely on simplified cognitive paths to make judgments when faced with complex information.

At the same time, the platform strengthens consumers' identification with information through the trust building mechanism. According to the attitude formation theory, consumers' acceptance of information is affected by the credibility of the information source. KOC shares details based on their own real experience, effectively alleviating users' resistance to commercial advertisements, improving the perceived authenticity of content, and thus promoting the formation of positive cognitive attitudes.

3.2. Emotional level

The emotional level is mainly reflected in consumers' emotional reactions and motivational arousal. According to the emotional resonance theory, consumers are more likely to have emotional identification with content that is highly consistent with their own values and lifestyles. The platform's content is generally centered around ideal life scenarios, such as "Nordic minimalist home" and "healthy light food expert". Constructing psychological projection scenarios, it satisfies consumers' psychological expectations of their ideal selves, thereby stimulating their desire to consume.

In addition, the platform also uses Mental Accounting Theory and Scarcity Effect to create a sense of urgency. Through strategies such as "limited-time discounts", "out-of-stock warnings", and "grass-seeking lists", it stimulates users' loss aversion, prompting them to accelerate purchase decisions in order to avoid potential losses, and achieve emotionally driven consumption conversion.

3.3. Behavioral level

The behavioral level focuses on consumers' decision-making behavior and purchase paths. Based on Social Proof Theory and the Herd Effect, the platform provides consumers with reference standards for "other people's choices" through social clues such as the number of likes, comments, and so on. When faced with uncertainty, consumers tend to follow the choices of the majority to reduce decision-making risks, thereby forming group consumption behavior.

At the same time, the platform effectively optimizes the "cognition-emotion-behavior" conversion path by integrating embedded e-commerce links and live streaming functions. According to the TPB, purchasing behavior is not only affected by attitudes and subjective norms, but also depends on the convenience of behavioral intention to behavioral execution. The convenient shopping experience provided by the platform lowers the threshold for action, allowing consumers to quickly complete the conversion after forming a purchase intention.

In summary, the platform's "grass planting" mechanism achieves a systematic impact on consumers' psychological cognition-emotional response-behavior conversion through a refined layout at the three psychological levels of cognition, emotion and behavior, thereby improving the overall marketing effect.

4. Two-sided effects, challenges and opportunities of grass planting model

4.1. Positive impact

From a positive perspective, the grass-seeding mechanism has a significant positive effect on consumer behavior and market ecology. First, accurate recommendations and content shopping guides effectively reduce consumers' information search costs and improve the efficiency of consumer decision-making. Relying on big data and algorithm recommendations, the platform can push highly matching product information according to users' personalized needs, thereby prompting consumers to make rational and efficient purchase choices. This process is in line with the cognitive savings principle (Cognitive Miser) in consumer psychology, that is, consumers tend to choose a path with lower cognitive costs when faced with complex decisions.

Second, the grass-seeding mechanism is outstanding in helping niche brands break through. With the help of real word-of-mouth communication, niche or emerging brands can quickly accumulate user attention and market influence and achieve a leap from "cold start" to "breaking the circle of communication". Especially in a content environment based on interesting communities, grass-seeding content provides these brands with a differentiated competitive advantage, enabling them to gain a place in a market with serious homogeneity.

4.2. Potential risks

However, the widespread application of the grass-seeding mechanism is also accompanied by certain potential risks. First, information overload and difficulty in choice have become prominent problems in user experience. A large amount of homogeneous and repetitive seeding content can easily increase users' cognitive load (Cognitive Overload), which in turn triggers irrational consumption behaviors such as choice anxiety (Choice Overload) or blindly following the trend (Bandwagon Effect), affecting the scientific and rationality of consumer decisions.

Secondly, false seeding and trust crises pose a threat to the platform ecology. With the increase in the degree of commercialization, some content has advertising disguise, false evaluation and order-brushing hype, resulting in a decrease in the authenticity of platform information. According to the Consumer Trust Theory, once consumers have a trust crisis in the platform, it will not only reduce their acceptance of recommended content but also may cause damage to the brand image and user loss, thereby destroying the overall content ecology and commercial sustainability of the platform.

Therefore, the platform needs to find a balance between promoting content commercialization and maintaining ecological health and achieve a virtuous cycle of development by strengthening the content review mechanism, improving information transparency and improving the user feedback system.

5. Conclusion

This study focuses on the "grass planting" mechanism of platform and systematically analyzes its operating logic in social media marketing and its impact path on consumer purchase decisions. Through content analysis and user behavior observation, this paper finds that has formed a three-stage consumer influence model of "cognition-emotion behavior" through the hierarchical content output of KOL and KOC, scenario-based product recommendations, and precise distribution driven by big data. While users are attracted by real sharing, they are more likely to establish trust in the product, thus realizing the conversion of the closed loop from "grass planting" to "grass pulling". In

addition, the community atmosphere and interactive mechanism of the platform strengthen the herd effect, so that highly interactive and hot content invisibly shapes consumption trends. Especially among young women, the ideal lifestyle constructed by the content is very easy to arouse emotional resonance and stimulate the desire to buy. At the same time, the embedded e-commerce portal, live streaming and recommendation algorithms have greatly shortened the consumer's decision-making chain. However, the rapid commercialization of the grass planting model has also brought many challenges, including the decline of content authenticity, information overload, and the proliferation of soft advertising. Users are becoming more sensitive and more discerning about content, and platforms are in urgent need of strengthening content supervision and transparency management to maintain the sustainable development of the ecosystem.

With the continuous evolution of artificial intelligence and personalized recommendation technology, planting grass will become more intelligent and customized. Platforms and brands should focus on building user value and trust relationships to promote the development of "rational planting grass"; consumers need to improve their media literacy and enhance their ability to discern advertising content.

Overall, planting grass is not only a reflection of user content sharing, but also an important strategy for social media to influence consumer behavior. In the ecosystem, it has become an important bridge between brands and consumers and has played a far-reaching role in promoting consumer decisions.

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