

Research on Marketing Strategy of Lawson Convenience Store Brand from the Perspective of New Media

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Abstract: Lawson is a well-known convenience store brand, and marketing certainly uniquely shapes Lawson's brand image. Whether new media marketing, as a new marketing method, plays a great role in Lawson's brand-building process is what people need to study. This paper mainly takes Lawson's publicity methods on new media platforms, such as live broadcasting and online animation platforms, as examples. This paper also focuses on the analysis of Lawson Convenience Store's disregard for new media marketing, the adverse consequences brought by its overemphasis on animation, as well as its over-belief in the limitations of offline marketing. To solve these problems, the suggestions given in this paper mainly include recruiting many young people who know the Internet, communicating with large enterprises with experience in new media marketing, and opening a new online marketing platform. After analyzing this paper, Lawson should be able to improve the level of new media marketing, which has a demonstration effect on the whole convenience store industry.

Keywords: network platform, animation, young customers

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

Lawson Convenience Store is a well-known business in Japan. The development in China is also perfect; in order to better occupy the convenience store market, Lawson has begun to expand, trying to establish its field in the central region of China. However, with the management of Lawson Convenience Store for so long, does it still meet the current development stage? Nowadays, the essay will look at Lawson Convenience store marketing strategy analysis, from what aspects to improve the management? And what can Lawson's marketing approach inspire other businesses?

About 27% of customers said the products of Lawson are slightly more expensive, especially convenience products [1]. Ryohei Yoshida, general manager of Lawson's China business promotion headquarters, said the number of stores in China exceeded 5,000 [2]. Imagine that if Lawson used an efficient advertising method, consumers would even be willing to spend money in Lawson convenience stores. If the price goes up, The scale of Lawson convenience stores in China is not only the current more than 5,000 stores. In addition, can good publicity make consumers feel that spending a little more money in a Lawson convenience store is worthy of the value of the Lawson brand so as not to arouse consumer anger over high prices? Is Lawson's experience typical and universal among

many convenience store brands? Therefore, analyzing Lawson's marketing methods can help us make fewer detours in new media marketing methods and avoid making the same mistakes as Lawson has made.

As people all know, the accurate positioning of convenience stores has always been to consider the convenience requirements of customers and do a good job of the usual operation services; this kind of thinking sometimes makes convenience stores stand still. However, the full range of technical professional operation services is the key. Still, the novel and interesting marketing promotion violence can maintain the mystery of customers and satisfaction and stimulate consumption impulse. Is there such a problem at Lawson Convenience Store? How can other brands avoid it?

In recent years, more and more companies have given great importance to the operation of new media platforms to achieve effective marketing. Looking back, although Lawson is also involved in social network service platforms, he does not attach great importance to the role of new media, lacks understanding, and does not understand the crucial effect of Internet media in marketing promotion and brand culture construction.

1.2. Literature Review

While people searched for marketing strategy information for Lawson Convenience Store, some articles were very enlightening. For example, Pu saw the link between Lawson's marketing approach and its international approach, especially the great success of anime, which combined marketing strategy and localization with young people [3]. In addition, Jiang also found that Lawson attaches great importance to brand effect, especially good at linking with popular animation such as 'Love Live', and launched related derivative products such as backpacks, water bottles, etc., and then achieved the purpose of promoting the brand through media publicity [4]. Lu also discovered the role of new media in Lawson's brand building, analyzed new media and big data together, and concluded that new media played a crucial role in Lawson's transformation of its service and sales [5]. Liao discovered the meticulous marketing methods of Lawson Convenience Store. Lawson focuses on the preferences and consumption concepts of young people in their 20s and actively creates an anime-style publicity method. Lawson found that young people are a huge potential market, so in the marketing process to cater to young people's preferences. Lawson even promotes itself through online games or anime [6].

As seen above, most scholars have studied popular cultural means catering to young people, such as anime and games, in Lawson's marketing style. Only a few people could connect Lawson's marketing methods and high technology, such as big data analytics. Lawson's online marketing and offline publicity cooperation and the effect are also few people to analyze.

1.3. Research Framework

First, this essay will outline the current situation of new media marketing at Lawson Convenience Store. Secondly, this essay will analyze a series of problems in Lawson's marketing. This part will be composed of three parts: analysis of current situation, analysis of problems, and analysis of causes of problems. Third, this article will give reasonable suggestions for the problems analyzed and give solutions or optimization schemes according to the different problems. This section will give each specific solution for each specific problem. Each solution strategy forms a text. At the end of the paper, a summary of the paper's content and the significance and enlightenment of the research will be written down in this essay.

2. Case Description

Lawson pays special attention to the publicity method of linkage with famous IP in the marketing method. The collaboration of themed shops through 2D cultural IP has become one of the most effective marketing methods for brands to appeal to young audiences. Since 2012, the company has been developing themed convenience stores in Japan in tie-ups with Ultraman, Detective Conan, Naruto, and Teddy.

Lawson does not like to promote himself on new media platforms such as TikTok directly. Lawson uses the most common marketing method to link with famous animation and game IP offline, then publish it to online social platforms. A typical example is the online promotion of a newly opened anime co-branded store.

Lawson also launched a theme store with the animation app Bilibili. At the same time, Bilibili also plans to cooperate with Lawson in multiple channels in 2018, giving more possibilities for cross-brand cooperation. Among them, introducing more stores in the Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Shanghai areas has also been included in the plan of cooperation between the two sides [7].

It is worth noting that Lawson not only focuses on offline and online publicity but Lawson also opened online sales services. Selling online through the Internet is also a marketing tool. Lawson was a pioneer in this regard.

The sales of Lawson convenience stores on the online platform also maintained a high growth rate. Taking Meituan as an example, more than 4,000 Lawson convenience stores are currently online on the platform, covering more than 69 cities across the country, and the order volume from January 2022 to July 2022 increased by 183% compared with the same period of 2021 [2].

As of July 25, 2022, Lawson announced that the number of stores in China has exceeded 5,000. Yoshida Ryohei revealed that by 2025, the company's goal of opening stores in China is 10,000 [2].

Public reports show that in recent years, the proportion of convenience stores opening a related online business has shown a gradual and steady upward trend, and the epidemic has further catalyzed online business development. Online + offline to become the new leading model.

3. Analysis of the Problem

3.1. Lawson New Media Marketing Status Analysis

Lawson doesn't pay enough attention to new media operations compared to offline publicity. Most of Lawson's marketing methods are offline publicity, such as new store opening activities, convenience stores selling products of the brand, and so on. Lawson hasn't used a lot of new media to market her brand.

From a series of examples mentioned above, Lawson's new media marketing methods are mainly reflected in the cooperation with well-known games and animation and the launch of online games and animation-themed activities on online platforms to market its brand. The specific ways are to promote the newly opened theme convenience store of Lawson and popular animation interaction on Bilibili, open an online purchasing platform, and live broadcast large-scale animation-themed activities sponsored by Lawson. Through this series of promotional activities, Lawson Convenience Store will certainly attract the attention of many young people who love animation culture. Lawson is trying to create a consumer environment for anime immersive experiences and transfer this sense of animation atmosphere to online sales. This is a major feature of Lawson's current new media marketing strategy.

Lawson has noticed emerging marketing strategies that combine offline and online campaigns and the benefits of linking up with popular new things like anime and new media. Some results have been achieved. However, on the whole, Lawson's network marketing scale is small at this stage, and there

is no stable new media platform, but it only publishes videos on multiple platforms, and there is no fixed partner. Lawson's new media marketing is still in its infancy. This is the general state of Lawson's new media marketing.

3.2. Analysis of Problems in Lawson's Marketing Methods

In recent years, more and more companies have placed great importance on operating new media platforms to achieve effective marketing. Looking back, although Lawson is also involved in social network service platforms, he does not attach great importance to the role of new media, lacks understanding, and does not understand the crucial effect of Internet media in marketing promotion, publicity planning, and brand culture construction.

Perhaps mainly because consumers buy goods directly at convenience stores, Lawson may think that online publicity does little to expand the influence of the brand. Compared with online publicity, expanding the number and scale of convenience stores may play a more effective role in publicity and expanding the consumer market. But then came the problem: the rapidly expanding convenience store scale did not bring Lawson high returns. Lawson China only reached 2,000 stores in January 2019, less than two years to achieve the goal of 1,000 new stores. However, the rapid expansion has not masked a dilemma: Lawson has yet to make a profit in the 24 years it has been in China [8]. Focusing on just one way of doing business often leads to failure.

Lawson has also launched an online app to sell his products, and the app has registered nearly 15 million users. But Lawson went no further by developing his independent online platform to promote himself. Lawson chose other well-known social platforms such as SNS, Weibo, WeChat, etc. As a result, Lawson's fans are too scattered to come together and form a cohesive force. Therefore, the result is that the total number of fans on Weibo and WeChat is less than the number of registered users of the Lawson app (5.2 million on Weibo and 1.11 million on WeChat). This shows that there is a huge problem with Lawson's Internet propaganda. In addition, nearly 9 15 million users registered in Lawson's app are in Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Shanghai. Lawson still has a long way to go in expanding its regional influence.

3.3. Cause Analysis of the Problem

As a Japanese brand, it is natural for Lawson to associate its brand with anime. The advantage of this is that the brand image can be more distinct. But the downside is that it greatly reduces the number of regular customers. Lawson's target audience is naturally dominated by young people who love animation. This greatly limits the role of Lawson's online marketing. Second, Lawson may have put a limited amount of money into the opening of the new store and no more money into the online publicity, let alone the formation of a complete publicity chain.

People can see that in recent years, Lawson has also begun to try to enter the web platform. However, as long as Lawson's action on the network platform is to open an official app as a platform for selling products, it is not a new media marketing platform in the real sense. This may be due to Lawson being content to open official accounts on other social platforms. In short, Lawson's online marketing is now in a fragmented state. Many people believe that the real reason for this status quo is that Lawson does not have a deep understanding of new media marketing methods and responds too slowly to the rapid development of new media.

4. Suggestions

4.1. Lack of Interest in New Media Marketing

The fundamental problem of Lawson's new media marketing is that Lawson does not attach importance to new media marketing.

From the examples above, Lawson has no interest in new media marketing. This will be the fundamental question in Lawson's propaganda strategy. The fundamental solution to this problem was to make Lawson aware of the enormous potential of online media. Take TikTok, today's largest self-media platform, as an example. Global monthly active users are more than 500 million, daily active users 150 million, deeply loved by young users. The number of users continues to grow, and the user time is also gradually increasing [9]. That is to say, if you choose TikTok as a publicity platform, you have at least 150 million potential customers. Relying only on the previous approach to expanding the number of convenience stores neither advertised cheap on online platforms nor advertised wide range on Tiktok. These are the things Lawson needs to pay attention to and think about.

How to change Lawson's backward propaganda concept is not very difficult. Lawson needs to get many young people into Lawson's propaganda department. Contemporary college students love the Internet, and many are happy to use it to show their views. When these thoughtful, willing young people are brought into the company and given the power to develop its online publicity efforts, they will surely come up with many novel ideas and put them into practice. In this way, the company's online publicity achievements must be greatly improved.

Secondly, more and more enterprises are beginning to realize the great promotion role of new media for the company's publicity work. Many companies are using online platforms to announce new products and ideas. Companies can do many things through online platforms that they previously had to do separately, such as offline conferences, fan meetings, the release of new policies, and so on. Moreover, compared with traditional offline publishing, these works can be spread quickly on the Internet, with very high timeliness and a large audience range. That is to say, there are many advantages and advanced nature of new media that people have not yet explored. If Lawson can communicate and cooperate with a large number of well-known brands, he will surely realize the great potential of new media and gain valuable experience.

4.2. Unrigid about the Identity of Anime

As a typical Japanese convenience store, Lawson has a close relationship with anime. Lawson has also linked his brand to anime, creating an anime image of the brand. This distinctive brand image has brought Lawson a stable group of young customers and has also attracted a lot of animation companies willing to cooperate with Lawson. However, over-emphasizing animation features will narrow the customer base, which is not conducive to expanding potential customers.

If Lawson wants to expand the brand's influence, he does not need to give up the original brand positioning - animation. Lawson can consider adding other popular factors in the new media marketing based on animation. Combining with animation can consolidate old customers and positively impact other customer groups. Some people think combining two seemingly unrelated things - anime and other popular culture- is difficult, but this is overthinking. Lawson could try to link the latest pop culture to his original anime persona, such as organizing an online campaign. Or launch a joint gift with the brand, and set how much money consumers can get the gift and so on. As long as Lawson is willing to make efforts to study the combination of new culture and new media, it will certainly achieve results.

Finally, and perhaps in a new venture, Lawson could look for a new brand positioning while promoting online. New media marketing is new, and there are many new ideas from the new media operation. Lawson can choose to build an online sales platform using the Internet platform. Lawson is likely to become the new online shopping platform. Lawson can even open up new ideas and build the online marketing platform into a pop culture platform with a completely different style from the original animation culture, which will enrich the brand image of Lawson and break consumers' inherent concept of Lawson, but will not hurt the original animation brand image. In this scenario, the Lawson sales platform on the Internet is a new brand image, which can be based on other popular cultures, such as hip-hop culture. It's like Disney, dominated by fantasy style, has a Marvel franchise subsidiary dominated by hero culture. Marvel is a subsidiary of Disney, which produces most of its films [10]. Lawson's web platform could take a new path, emulating Disney's Marvel franchise. Thinking outside the box is always good for brands.

In summary, Lawson's biggest obstacle to reaching new potential users is sticking to the anime image. The way to break this image is not to abandon the original brand positioning but to establish a new online image that does not conflict with the original brand positioning.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Key Finding

In summary, Lawson's main problem is that he does not pay attention to the publicity role of network platforms and is too rigid in the brand image of animation. Lawson can solve these problems by recruiting a large number of Internet-savvy young people, communicating with other well-known brands, and opening accounts on new online platforms.

5.2. Research Significance

This article finds the reason for Lawson's long history of low publicity and offers a new approach for other brands with similar problems.

In addition, Lawson Convenience Store is one of the most developed and well-known big brands among convenience store brands. However, as a first-class convenience store brand like Lawson lags behind well-known brands in new media marketing, the convenience store industry generally has problems like Lawson. The study of Lawson's Internet marketing of convenience store brands positively impacts promoting the convenience store brand effect.

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