The Impact of Traditional and Digital Media on Brand Marketing Strategies

-- A Case Study of the Liuliu Mei Brand

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Abstract: With the rise of multiple digital media such as social media and the continued presence of traditional media outlets, brand advertising strategies across multiple mediums have become increasingly diverse. This paper takes Liuliu Mei brand as a research subject to explore its marketing strategies and the resulting marketing outcomes such as user engagement on both traditional and digital media platforms, and briefly analyses the difference between its strategies and their outcomes. Through the use of literature analysis, case study methodology and comparative research, this paper aims to examine the specific strategies adopted by brands for marketing on both media, the results and the reasons for the differences. This paper finds that in traditional media, brands chose TV ads, ladder media, metro media ads and other channels to achieve high exposure and coverage; while in digital media, they chose to differentiate and promote different features of social media to achieve precise targeting and high participation marketing results.

Keywords: Traditional media, Digital media, Marketing strategy, Liuliu Mei

1.   Introduction

By definition, traditional media can usually be identified as some old media that have been phased out in the context of the big data era, or those that are not as widely used as in the past [1]. The traditional media studied in this paper mainly refers to newspapers and books, films, and television. Digital media, on the other hand, are often identified with communication technologies related to computing and numbers and include computers, smartphones or e-books [1].

In the ever-changing media consumption landscape, through a variety of strategies, many brands are utilizing both digital media platforms and traditional media channels to promote their products. It is widely acknowledged that the emergence of new digital media has caused a paradigm shift in academic circles and a significant upheaval in the advertising industry [2]. Existing research shows that, In essence, advertisers are discouraged from relying on traditional media, especially if such advertisers are serious about selling their products or services [3]. Moreover, there are also studies that suggest that only original and timely marketing is effective [4].

Therefore, in order to explore the differences in the marketing tactics and ultimate effectiveness of advertisers in these two mediums, this paper adopts a combination of literature analysis, case

study and comparative research methods, and chooses Liuliu Mei as the main research brand to conduct a specific case study. The study analyses how the brand adopts marketing strategies to promote its products through traditional media channels as well as on mainstream social media software, in an attempt to reveal the specific tactical approaches and assess the effectiveness of the differences. By examining these aspects in depth, the study aims to provide valuable analytical insights for advertisers and the marketing industry in the current dynamic landscape of media development.

2.   Traditional Media and Digital Media

2.1.   Communication Characteristics of Traditional Media

With the development of online as well as digital media in recent years, some scholars have stated that the emergence of new media is often accompanied by phenomena about the possible disappearance of old media [5]. However, the fact is that despite the growth of online media, traditional media have not died out and still play an important role in the field of communication [6]. 2024 data indicated that as the top traditional media in China, television is firmly in the lead with penetration rate. Despite the rapid growth of Internet advertising revenue, radio programmes have a loyal audience, so the power of traditional media still exists [7].

Traditional media is fundamentally different from digital media in the way it is disseminated. In the early definitions, the defining characteristic of this mass media i.e., it can reach a large number of people through communication. Secondly, almost all forms of old media communication maintain a specific unidirectional flow of information--top down [8]. As a result, the masses in most cases become the end of the information dissemination pathway and passively receive information. But at the same time, this unidirectional communication also means that, as receivers, they are unable to give direct feedback, resulting in less timely information feedback.

2.2.   Characteristics and User Groups of Digital Media Platform

As the Web 2.0 era has evolved into increasing access to various forms of Internet content through proprietary social media platforms and apps, social media platforms, as well as other mobile apps, have also become indispensable vehicles of entertainment in the daily lives of most people [9]. In addition, studies have shown that digital and social media marketing enables companies to achieve their marketing goals at a relatively low cost [10]. Many brands are now also opening accounts on mainstream social media platforms, relying on big data technology to target advertisements to users and increase the probability of making profits.

Unlike traditional media communication, digital communication can be interactive in addition to unidirectional, which means that consumers can reflect their attitudes and preferences directly with brands [11]. On the other hand, according to Statista data, China's social media penetration rate is as high as 74% in 2023, and as of September 2022, Weibo serves as the dominant social media in China, with more than 55% of the social networking site's users under the age of 30, and 66% of them are female [12-14]. Despite Facebook, YouTube and Twitter being blocked in China, local social networking sites such as WeChat and Weibo continue to attract millions of users, making China the largest social media market in the world [15].

3.   Marketing Strategy and Effectiveness Analysis of Liuliu Mei Brand in Traditional Media

3.1.   Analysis of Specific Marketing Strategies

Liulium Mei brand, a well-known plum snack brand in the Chinese market, has been increasing its brand awareness and exposure through advertising and brand campaigns. In recent years, Chinese advertisers have gradually reduced their advertising spending on traditional media, but in contrast, traditional advertising still maintains a significant market share. in September 2013, the brand shot its first advert, launching it into the TV advertising market, and succeeded in catching fire with the phrase "Are you okay? In the advertisement, the frequently appearing advertisement phrase "Are you okay?" reflected the brand image in a lively and humorous style, and attracted many young people and consumers who like humorous style. In 2016, the Liuliu Mei brand promoted new products and new packaging, and took the "Farmer Spirit" as the new development goal. As a new development goal, the brand launched a new advertisement of "CHINA MEI" Chinese plums.

In addition to traditional TV advertisements, out-of-home (OOH) advertisements, especially ladder media and metro advertisements, have also become a product promotion channel for the Liuliu Mei brand. Between December 2023 and January 2024, the brand also put up posters on the Shanghai metro to promote the products of its newest spokesperson and the company's offline trade fairs [16]. In other OOH advertising, the Liuliu Mei plum brand opened a "caravan national tour", covering Sichuan, Jiangxi, and Shandong, in the form of direct offline outdoor publicity, and marketing [17]. In addition, from December 2023 to January 2023, the brand also cooperated with RT-Mart superstores, through the form of large screen play spokesperson promotional videos, in seven major cities across the country, including Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang and other regions, more than 40 outdoor shopping areas for advertising full-screen placement.

According to the brand's official data, as of January 2024, its brand advertisements have been published in the ladder media in 57 cities across the country, and the promotional video has been played more than 1,000 times per day on each screen, directly turning its advertisement "okay to eat Liuliu Mei together with 666" into a kind of brainwashing mode of publicity method. At the same time, the brand's advertising video was also placed in 706 Wanda cinemas nationwide in more than 5,700 cinema halls to promote the film before the screening. During the New Year of 2024, the brand cooperated with Hunan TV and successfully achieved the effect of consistently hitting the Chinese family cinema scene through high-frequency syndicated advertisements [18]. Thus, taken together, the brand has already joined forces with local TV stations, ladder media and cinemas to push the product it markets through a trinity of formats in late 2023 and early 2024 alone.

3.2.   Analysis of Marketing Results

Considering the brand awareness aspect, Liuliu Mei has enhanced the brand's visibility through the traditional placement of television advertisements. On the other hand, outdoor advertising and other placements undoubtedly further expand the brand's exposure. Considering that subways and lifts are characterized by high traffic volume and very high mobility, and due to the low signal strength of these places, there is a great probability that passengers will not be able to swipe their collection to kill time, so they are more likely to be attracted by these repeated display of advertising campaigns, which will then have a wide range of impact on them and eventually become the target audience. In addition, the above mentions the collaboration between brands and supermarkets, a marketing approach that can directly stimulate the shopping consumer base and help increase the willingness to purchase their products.

4. Marketing Strategy and Effectiveness Analysis of Liuliu Mei Brand in Social Media

4.1. Analysis of Specific Marketing Strategies

In terms of digital media, online advertising is also booming in China's advertising market as more and more Chinese consumers are spending more time on online media. Many brands have also turned their marketing attention to the social media space, posting content on platforms such as WeChat and Weibo.

Firstly, Liuliu Mei brand, like many other brands, has turned its marketing market to the WeChat platform, establishing its public account, which operates with live streaming, video number promotion, and sharing of daily activities. In terms of content, the operator launched a new column with a harmonic effect of "Mei Hao 666" fan day [19]. A vertical poster was drawn in the form of a combination of graphics and text to share the process of its product, Chinese plums, from picking to making and tasting the finished product. In addition, the brand took advantage of the communication characteristics of social media and also encouraged users to share their photos or videos of moments such as picking plums to the WeChat Moments or other platforms, and to submit their works to the public account, which ultimately resulted in a gift.

Secondly, Weibo, another major marketing platform for the Liuliu Mei brand, has an official Weibo account with 560,000 followers and nearly 50 million comments and likes data. With an average frequency of one post per day, the account pushes out different content, including spokesperson advertisement videos, lucky draw benefits and new product promotions. The brand has also switched to a new spokesperson compared to 2013, choosing traffic stars and lovebirds with more of a fan base following. Considering the current data on Weibo's user base, this approach has, to some extent, made the product more attention-grabbing in terms of marketing, with a stronger ability to carry goods. However, brainwashing adverts are still retained by the brand, and as a result, double-hashtags and slogans in both videos and posts continue to frequently refer to phrases such as "Are you okay?".

Of course, different online platforms have different characteristics, so the brand also looked to Bilibili, another major Chinese website, which distributes content in the form of videos and, unlike WeChat, Weibo and TikTok, where videos are usually short, allows longer videos to be uploaded on Bilibili. As a result, the Liuliu Mei brand has also uploaded some long videos such as a documentary about the origin of Chinese plums on the platform.

4.2. Analysis of Marketing Results

According to the 2023 survey, adverts on social media platforms can have a huge impact on purchasing decisions in China, with more than 90 percent of respondents choosing to buy an item after seeing an advert [20]. Considering that WeChat is currently the most popular social media platform in China, with more than 1 billion active users per month and more than 54% of WeChat users spending up to 1 hour and 20 minutes on the app [21]. Based on this, the Liuliu Mei brand has successfully captured the largest online market of Chinese consumers and, referring to the principles of User-generated Content (UGC) which means that content posted on a web platform by users, the Liuliu Mei brand successfully integrates users into the campaign to increase user engagement, it plays the role of users as content creators, and expands the brand's exposure and publicity through this spontaneous promotion [22]. In addition, the connection between the user and the brand also leads to interaction with the user, and this interaction not only deepens the user's knowledge of and engagement with the brand, but also provides the brand itself with more opportunities to communicate directly with the user.

According to Statista 2023 research, more than 43% of respondents confirmed that Chinese internet users are more interested in social media ads with personalized content, and that Chinese internet users are more likely to click on entertaining social media advertisements [23-24]. Exactly in line with this, in terms of the marketing content of this brand, whether it is creative and entertaining jingles, or attractive spokespersons and branded online campaigns, it successfully meets the personalized needs of its users and increases their attention and engagement with the brand's content, which in turn effectively improves the conversion rate and effectiveness of the advertisements.

5. Discussion

This paper attributes the reasons behind the large differences in marketing strategies between the two mediums for the Liuliu Mei brand to the following: audience reach, personalized needs, cost-effectiveness, and timeliness of feedback. Firstly, as a snack brand, it does not have a significant bias in target consumers, so its marketing process in traditional media focuses on audience coverage, including children and the elderly, so it is difficult to quantify and accurately control the degree of exposure in traditional media. Digital media, on the other hand, tends to have younger users, achieve precise positioning, and can place advertisements according to the interests and behaviours of the users, thus attracting the younger generation of users in terms of both content and form of marketing. Secondly, digital media offers more interactive possibilities and can meet the personalized needs of users. Compared with traditional media, although the audience coverage of digital media may be relatively narrow, the exposure and influence in these groups may be greater. In addition, the advertising cost of digital media is much lower, and brands can save money or guide users to participate in brand activities through online voting and lucky draws, etc.; they can also achieve timely positive and negative feedback of information, so brands can understand the needs of users more quickly and use data analysis tools to analyse the marketing situation in terms of exposure, click-through rate, conversion rate, etc., so as to quickly adjust their marketing strategies. Adjustment of marketing strategy.

According to the current status of the study, in the future, Liuliu Mei and other brands should be based on their own product characteristics, the choice of traditional media and digital media platforms in the initial screening, in order to match more suitable for their own product promotion media. In addition, although digital media has become mainstream, TV and OOH advertising are still important traditional media, especially during large-scale events or festivals, the exposure rate and conversion rate of placing advertisements are likely to get a huge boost. In addition, brands can take user data into account in their digital media marketing strategies and work with influential celebrities or bloggers, leveraging them to boost brand influence and word-of-mouth.

6. Conclusion

This thesis focuses on the marketing strategies adopted by the Liuliu Mei brand in traditional and digital media and their effect analyses, and briefly discusses the reasons behind the differences in their marketing methods and results. This paper finds that traditional media and digital media have their own advantages and disadvantages in brand marketing: brand marketing in traditional media can obtain a more comprehensive coverage of the audience and a wider area of dissemination of the effect, but the interactivity and marketing results of the feedback tracking are relatively weak; while the digital media in addition to reducing the cost of investment, but also to help the brand in the marketing of the target group to lock a more accurate, and the use of personalized means of product promotion to enhance the effectiveness of their marketing methods and results. In addition, digital media can help brands target more accurate target groups when marketing, adopt personalized

means of product promotion to enhance participation, and ultimately obtain advertising effect evaluation based on big data. Therefore, brands should flexibly choose the combination of traditional media and digital media according to their market positioning and target customers to achieve better results. This paper has not delved into the link between the strategies brands adopt on different traditional or digital media and marketing effectiveness. Future research could also focus on evaluating the effectiveness of cross-platform marketing strategies and analyzing how brands can synergise their marketing across multiple platforms to improve marketing conversion rates.

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