

The Impact of Promotional Content on Social Media Platforms on Brand Spreading in the B&B Industry: Taking the Promotion of Moganshan B&Bs on the Red as an Example

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Abstract: In recent years, the B&B market in China has been developing rapidly. 2021 saw the turnover of the B&B industry reach 20.1 billion yuan in the first half of the year, which is on par with the figures for the whole of 2019. In 2022, the scale of B&B growth reach even more than 61%. Since the rural revitalization strategy was proposed in 2018, the development of the rural B&B industry has become an important initiative to revitalize the rural economy. And with the increasing prosperity of the Internet economy, it is inevitable that the branding of B&Bs will be promoted online using social media platforms in order to further broaden the market. Based on this current situation, this study selects two popular promotions of Moganshan B&Bs on the RED platform, analyzes the attributes of the platform, the characteristics of the content, etc., and summarizes the positive effects and existing problems of social media platforms for B&B brand spreading: such as the single-dimensionality of the content, the highly similar characteristics and the overly broad user push. To improve these shortcomings, there is a need to establish efficient online platforms to communicate the B&B experience, enhance the promotion of the B&B's human characteristics, and multi-platform graphic promotions.

Keywords: B&B, Social media, Brand communication strategy

1. Introduction

The rural revitalization strategy was first proposed at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, with "thriving industry" as one of the general ideas guiding the further development of the countryside. In the Strategic Plan for the Rural Revitalization (2018-2022), the requirement to "promote deeper integration of rural industries" has ushered in a positive period for the B&B industry with favorable policies, which also establishes the importance of this industry in revitalizing the rural cultural tourism. In this new era, how to use internet technology and social media platforms to promote the development and upgrading of the B&B industry and improve its competitiveness has not only become a much-discussed topic in the academic sector, but also a potential direction for the

industry to explore the future development of the industry, as well as one of the themes related to the future achievements of rural construction in China.

The emergence and development of the B&B industry is closely related to the development of the experience economy and the phenomenon of counter-urbanization. At present, the consumer base of tourism is showing a trend of youthfulness, meaning that the consumers are more demanding in spiritual pursuit. Due to the stressful urban life, the spiritual yearning of young people for the slower pace of the countryside are increasingly valued. For the operators, the main source of rooms in B&Bs comes from the vacant rooms of the B&B owners, and through the renovation and redesign of the rooms, natural elements and rustic sentiments can be well blended to attract consumers.

In recent years, China's B&B market has grown rapidly, with the turnover of online B&B trading market reaching 20.1 billion in the first half of 2021, already on par with the annual turnover of 20.95 billion in 2019. In 2022, the number of domestic B&Bs in China exceeded 1.6 million units, with an average growth rate of 61% in volume. With cheaper prices than traditional hotels and personalized accommodation experiences, B&Bs have become popular in the accommodation services market. In the post-epidemic era, short trips to neighboring cities are becoming the travel choice of more people, which is a shift that has made the future of the B&B industry more promising.

Traditionally, the combination of the B&B industry and technology usually existed only in the area of management. Administrators often used technology to improve the quality of service and operational efficiency of B&Bs. However, with the advent of the internet and the rise of social media platforms, the relationship between the B&B industry and technology has been taken to a whole new level: social media platforms have broken the previous model of one-way promotion from operators to consumers, allowing consumers to use the platforms to provide feedback to operators and other consumers. The importance of social media platforms is therefore essential for the future development of the B&B industry. In order to study in this topic, it is necessary to analyze how specific promotional content has had a positive impact on B&Bs by analyzing examples of popular B&B promotions on online social media software, the RED, and exploring the characteristics of the content from these examples. The selection of these examples is based on the on the number of followers, views, likes and comments, in order to filter out popular and typical examples. In these two examples, both of the bloggers have relatively large followings, which is 433,000 and 36,000 respectively, as well as they both have gained more than 50 likes and more than 30 comments. Method of literature review is applied in this research to explore the current status of domestic research on Chinese B&Bs on online platforms. Sources of material include Chinese government data network, China Knowledge Network, etc.

2. Literature Review

Domestic research on B&Bs of attractions, in relation to online promotion and marketing, is currently centered around customer feedback and has yielded a lot of research results. These results, for the most part, emphasize the role of digital marketing in the promotion of B&Bs in the new era by analyzing the importance and shortcomings of digital marketing.

Ji Yongwei, in 2022, pointed out in his article countermeasures for the Development of Home stay Network Marketing in China that there exist defects in the development of network marketing in China, such as development disorder, single means of promotion, insufficient innovation, large difference between actual experience and promotion, and put forward measures such as focusing on planning, strengthening overall publicity, improving the validity of information, quality of service and safety assurance [1].

In Research on Digital Marketing Strategies for the Development of Rural B&B Industry - Wuhan Mulan Huaxiang as an Example, Wan Xinbo 2022 takes Wuhan Mulan Huaxiang as an example, combining 4R and 4C theories to analyze the role of digital marketing in promoting the development

of rural B&B industry, focusing on the role of digital marketing and proposing specific marketing strategies with the case of Wuhan Mulan Huaxiang [2].

Chen Biyu, in his study on Brand Spreading of Moganshan B&Bs, takes Moganshan B&Bs as the research object [3]. Through analysis of data, media reports and field visits, the research depicts the current situation and characteristics of brand spreading of Moganshan B&Bs, and gives out suggestions for the construction and promotion of B&B brands. However, social media platform marketing, as one of the means of brand communication, is highly summarized and less discussed.

In Research of Marketing Strategies for Quality B&Bs in Nanning in the New Media Era by Jiawen Rao, the short video platform is taken as the main aspect to explore, analyzing how the platform pushes B&Bs to the potential customers through algorithms to achieve online promotion of B&Bs [4].

In the researches above, digital marketing, as a general concept, covers a variety of approaches such as text promotion, video promotion, websites promotion, customer feedbacks, and advertising. Based on these results, this paper aims to analyze the specific effect of text and graphic promotion on platforms based on these former results and tries to give out suggestions on how digital marketing of B&Bs in attractions on graphic-based social media platforms can have a positive impact on the industry in terms of specific promotional content.

3. Case Study on Moganshan B&Bs

3.1. Recommendation of a B&B Featuring Glass House in Bamboo Forest

3.1.1. Yangjiale Attracting International Coverage

The Luoxinxiang Village B&B (Bed and Breakfast) founded in 2007 should be seen as the origin of Moganshan homestay. The originator Grant Horsfield is a South African who works in the media field in Shanghai. His B&B has attracted huge amounts of high-consumers from surrounding cities. The new economic form called Yangjiale has been put forward and been strongly supported by the local government. It represents the homestay opened in China by foreign entrepreneurs. Because of the foreign nature, Yangjiale attracted coverage from foreign media such as The New York Times and CNN. In 2012, Moganshan was featured in The New York Times for the second time. It has been named one of the top 45 places to visit in the world for its beautiful scenery and Yangjiale B&B. Moganshan B&B becomes internationally famous.

3.1.2. With the Help of Traditional Media

Integrated marketing communication for brands requires a purposeful process of dialogue[5]. Traditional media have been helpful in promoting Moganshan B&B. Newspapers and magazines are an important part. Both international and local newspapers gave a blaze of publicity. Journalists from Forbes, the Financial Times, Yomiuri Shimbun, Korea Economic Daily and other media outlets have also visited Moganshan for home-stay Tours. What is more, Moganshan has appeared many times on CCTV, the top state television outlet in China since 2014. These traditional media have huge audiences, making B&B in Moganshan increasingly famous. However, with the rise of social media, these traditional ones could hardly reach all people, especially the young. Some homestay operators have started we-media to keep up with the development.

3.1.3. The Point of Contact

The point of contact is an important concept in modern brand communication. It refers to the place or carrier where the end customer of the product is exposed to the relevant features of this product.

In order to achieve effective brand contact point communication, it is necessary to use appropriate media and carriers to spread brand value and appeal in the time and space acceptable to the audience [6]. In this way, the information carried by the brand contact point could be integrated into the actual life of the audience and be accepted by them. Social media could be a good point of contact in current situation. Through social media, brand messages can quickly splinter and go viral. This is because the communication on social media is conceptualized as a network where the platforms and other users with many connections serve as hubs. So information can be personalized and pushed to more people who need it in a very fast way [7]. Therefore, brand communication should focus on consumer demand and use the diversity of social media to deliver personalized brand communication strategies. In this way, consumers could be attracted to participate in the interaction with the brand actively, and finally promote the purchase behavior.

3.1.4. Red

RED is a social media and e-commerce platform. It has been described as Instagram of China. RED has more than 300 million registered users and more than 85 million monthly active users. RED's earliest user orientation was young women, although now male users are also gradually increasing, but women are still the backbone of RED to attract traffic. They focus on the pursuit of good things and high quality of life, and are willing to share. Many Moganshan B&B operators share personalized and distinctive B&B services on RED to expand their influence and grab the eyes of these certain groups of female consumers. This is a case. A B&B is recommended on RED by Xiaojuminsu. It is a glass house surrounded by forest of bamboos located in Moganshan. Pictures and words introducing the features of this B&B were attached. For example, the bamboo forest and the 270 degrees floor window. What is more, the price per night was labelled (at least 1280 yuan). The number of fans of Xiaojuminsu is more than 434000. It is a commercial account that attracts consumers by sharing content related to homestay services and products on RED.

At the same time, the product pre-order service is offered. This recommendation has been viewed for 5200+ times and has 1250+ notes. About 80% of these comments were asking the blogger for details about this B&B services and particulars of prices. The blogger responded to most of these comments. These people have a high willingness to buy homestay services, and according to the data provided by the platform, quite a number of them successfully complete the transaction with the bloggers. The other comments were describing this homestay. Some of them were sent by consumers who have already visited this B&B. Most of these people described their experiences in detail in their comments, sharing their experiences. Beside of these, a few comments were given by people viewed the recommendation only. Some of them expressed their desire for this B&B surrounded by the bamboo forest through the comments, but did not have a strong intention to buy the service. They probably just saw the recommendation while surfing on RED. Although these interactive information does not realize direct consumption behavior, the brand impression of Moganshan B&B has been established and deepened in their mind invisibly.

3.2. A Blogger's Recommendation of the Moganshan B&B 'Yingshishan'

3.2.1. Introduction of Moganshan

Moganshan, located in Zhejiang Province, China, is an important part of Hangzhou. With a fitness location, Moganshan is only less than two hours to drive in cities like Shanghai and Nanjing. In terms of environment, Moganshan is known as the most beautiful wetland in China, and it is close to a thousand-year-old canal [8].

Moganshan Scenic area is located in Moganshan Town. In 1994, it was established as the national scenic area by the state. Soon after, in 2011, it was officially becoming a national 4A tourist attraction.

Next, under the leadership of the county and district government and the town and district government, the development of Moganshan B & B is growing continuously, and it is also more and more often mentioned in people's mouth.

The government defines this scenic spot as a B&B which has a beautiful environment and then vigorously promotes tourism. They lead the villagers to build many b & B facilities and improve the surrounding environment to attract tourists, thus promoting the local economic development.

In 2014, Moganshan had only 186 B&B rooms, with 2,604 rooms. But by 2015, that number had soared to 426 B&Bs and 6,390 rooms. This increasing rate is good enough to reflect the gradual prosperity of the B&B economy, and also further reflect the public praise for it. However, as B&B was a derivative service industry which led by tourism in the past decade, it was often labeled as cheap in the early years and used as a cheap substitution to hotels.

3.2.2. Promotion from a Network Platform

As one of the most popular media platforms among contemporary youth groups, Red Book mainly provides a publicity platform for video creation, picture and text creativity. As of October 2022, there are over 40,000 posts about Moganshan B&B. As the number of promotions increased, more and more people have great interest in B & B in Moganshan. In the questionnaire survey of people's understanding of B&B ("Research on Moganshan B&B Development Countermeasures"), it was found that the difference adjustment questionnaire collected valid data from 359 people. Among them, 262 people, or 72.98%, learned about B&B through the Internet, and 227 people, or 63.23%, were recommended by others to know about B&B, and 93 people learned about B&B through media publicity. This promotion method has also brought enough guests to Moganshan B&B. After a certain period of publicity, the operating income of Moganshan B&B is becoming more rapidly, and the number of tourists is also increasing rapidly.

Therefore, we can judge that social media has a certain degree of economic promotion effect on the promotion of Moganshan B&B.

3.3. From the Blogger 'Follow the \$ to Travel' Promotion

Through the analysis of the little mangrove blog "travel with dollars" recommended Moganshan B&B "Yingshishan" post. We found that the blogger helped businesses promote B&Bs by sharing the homes he lived with consumers. B&B, on the other hand, uses the power of social media platforms to advertise its B&B units to expand their popularity.

In this type of post, the blogger will describe the surroundings from the consumer perspective to interest travelers. It also shows a trend for consumers to share where they want to go [9]. This kind of communication is not between merchants and consumers, but between consumers and consumers. In addition, this way of sharing can better grasp the psychology of consumers, thus promoting consumption.

Moreover, this approach can not only promote the development of local tourism, but also promote competition among large-scale tourists. This competition between merchants will make the whole industry eliminate the poor service attitude and the B&B without characteristics, and thus make the service of the whole industry more professional. Therefore, media platforms to help B&B publicity will also make businesses pay more attention to service awareness and build brand awareness. At the same time, it shows a completely different way from the hotel publicity.

4. The Summary of Two Cases

4.1. The Advantages

Both two recommendations have qualitative statements about homestays, especially the second one. These descriptions are detailed, giving people the chance to know the recommended B&B in depth. What is more, the second case is based on the own experience of the blogger. When it comes across the readers, they can easily understand the benefits of the B&B and are more likely to believe the text. In addition, the labelled prices could help people decide whether they choose the service or not. Thanks to the big data, people who get these recommendations on RED usually love travelling or have the intention to experience a B&B in Moganshan. Therefore, these illustrated introductions can enable people to have a comprehensive and targeted understanding of B&B services as well as increase their willingness to purchase.

Through the above analysis, the media push to Moganshan B&B brings roughly three advantages listed below:

Before the establishment of large-scale B&B, Moganshan's overall economic income was not high and there was no special output, so it brought huge profits to the local residents after the development of B&B.

(1) As one of the first B&B development areas in China, Moganshan has attracted great attention from the outside world. Media dissemination of B&B can attract more people to explore B&B by themselves. Travelers can also find something special about the Moganshan B&B by watching the reports and promotion of the Moganshan B&B on social media. These special points will become a selling point among the people, just like the Moganshan B&B that can make the tourists more natural life close to the nature environment. Therefore, after the successful promotion of B&B, Moganshan B&B will become a brand in people's hearts.

(2) Due to the different needs of tourists, more and more B&B merchants attract guests by getting close to nature and experiencing the warmth of home. Because of this publicity, more and more young people tend to choose B&B. For example, these B&B merchants often organize tourists to have barbecue parties in the yard, or gather all the tourists to go out to explore and pick mushrooms. By example, it is clear that these activities clearly distinguish between the definition of home stay and hotel. That is, B&B is active and full of interest, while the hotel only provides process services. Therefore, those who want to be closer to nature will be more willing to choose B&B rather than hotels.

4.2. Problems Existing and Future Improvement

These two recommendations can reflect the current situation of most similar types of recommendations, that is, too few readers could be attracted in a single recommendation. The RED will not send these recommendations to people who do not regularly browse the B&B introductions. Only the fans of the blogger might be successfully recommended. If vlogs or videos could be used, the RED will send them to more people.

Here, the quality questions are roughly divided into two types as described below:

(1) In real life, some of the B&B decoration style is very similar, as the net red style. Perhaps at some time, this web celebrity decoration will be very popular, but after a few months, this type of sales is significantly reduced [10]. In addition, the web celebrity style b & B often ignore the needs of passengers. In the long run, this time weakened the profitability of the local B&B.

(2) In a traditional cultural place like Moganshan, most travelers often prefer to see local equipment, but many B&Bs are still full of a rejection of the environment. In other words, humanistic features are not outstanding enough. Moganshan is rich in human history, which is what makes the

B&B here different from similar services in other places. These introductions only include very common entertainment facilities. If the characteristic services reflecting the cultural heritage can be supplemented, the irreplaceability of Moganshan B&B will be improved, and readers will be more easily attracted to it and are more willing to experience it.

5. Conclusion

For the B&B industry, which is characterized by personalized accommodation, it is inevitable to take full use of social media platforms to promote their services to appropriate consumer groups in order to adapt to the new market demand. In this paper, the two examples chosen differ in their motivation: one is a promotion of their own B&B, and one is a recommendation to the followers of a B&B she have stayed in. The latter, however, is more descriptive of the blogger's personal experience of staying there than the former. By analysing the platform properties and content characteristics of social media demonstrated by the two cases of Moganshan B&B promotion on RED platform, following conclusions can be concluded: Social media platforms have a positive and active effect on B&B brand spreading, not only in terms of promoting the personalized services of B&Bs, but also in establishing a good B&B brand image and recognition, combining personalization and specialization together, thus promoting the development of China's rural cultural tourism industry.

The Moganshan branded B&Bs are promoted on the RED with detailed descriptions of rooms and basic information such as environment, prices and features. Although the motivations for the promotions differ, most are based on the publishers' own personal experiences, as well as combined graphic and texture to describe in details in order to create a sense of immersion. However, this paper finds that the promotion of B&Bs still suffers a range of problems, such as a single dimension of promotional content, highly similar characteristics, and overly broad user push.

This paper therefore argues that the B&B industry can be boldly innovative in both content and format on social media platforms. If the positive impact of social media platforms on the construction of B&B brands wants to be further enhanced, it is firstly necessary to pinpoint the target consumers by establishing an efficient online platform for the exchange of B&B experiences; secondly, using consumers' personal experiences as the main part of promotional content should be prioritized, with combining multiple dimensions of experience and using a variety of media tools for promotion; In addition, it is important to highlight the humanistic characteristics of B&Bs in relation to the surrounding attractions and environment, in order to strengthen the personalized experience of B&Bs and establish a unique brand image perception.

Due to the limitations of the research method and sample used in this paper, we aren't able to focus on the quantitative benefits of social media platform promotion for specific B&Bs. In order to further clarify the positive effects of social media platforms, future research could investigate the dynamic tourist flow brought to B&Bs by the promotion of social media platforms, as well as the feedback on the content of the promotion; or introduce new B&B characteristics, such as combining with artificial intelligence and blockchain technology, to focus on how the changes brought by industry innovation to B&Bs are reflected in the feedback on social media platforms.

In the future, the connection between the B&B industry and social media platforms will inevitably deepen, and with the development of technology, the B&B industry is bound to open up a wider market with one innovation after another.

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