

Digital Marketing of Museum: How UCCA Achieves Audience Strategy on Red and Tiktok in China

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Abstract: Over the last decade, the continuous development of network technology contributes to prosperous digital marketing. At the same time, the advancement of network technology has also revolutionized the lifestyle of the public. The relationship between business and audience has transformed into a more interactive nature through social media in the era of digital marketing. Therefore, this report aims, by using one of the most esteemed museums in China UCCA as a model, to conduct research about how the museum industry practices its audience-oriented strategy in Chinese social media platforms, Tik Tok and Red Book. After analyzing UCCA's approach on Tik Tok and Red Book, this report gives out some recommendations based on the findings.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Social Media, Museum Industry, Art Industry

1. Introduction

With the continuous development of network technology in the last decade, the limits of time and space are dissolved, the scope of communication has become infinitely wide, the time of communication is between the snap of a finger, and there is no distance for information dissemination. All these new elements emerging from the internet era have a profound influence on the museum industry's marketing strategy. Nowadays, museums are constantly updating and evolving in the wave of networking, developing novel online marketing models, and taking advantage of the ever-developing online ecosystem. Following that, museums have gradually transferred their operation and decision mode from object-oriented to audience-oriented. Lewis also defines museum marketing as: "the management process of effectively identifying expectations and meeting the needs of museum users in order to achieve the museum's mission. Therefore, as the main tool in the digital world to connect audiences and business, social media starts to play an increasingly significant role in the museum world.

There are two reasons for this huge transformation. Firstly, and most importantly, technology development. Radar Networks, a web technology development company, compiled a chronology of

web development in 2007. 2000 to 2010 was the second phase of web development, known as the Web 2.0 era. In the Web 2.0 era, the way of understanding consumer needs and message dissemination has changed from the centralized website operation of the past to the democratization and collective sharing of user creations. The web 3.0 phase is from about 2010 to 2020. This stage is when the web becomes a large repository of available data in the form of needs and the freedom to explore the information available on the web. The transformation of Web2.0 to Web3.0 totally shifted the participation method of internet users. The audience is no longer a passive recipient of all the information released by companies, but an active participant and inter-active sharer of market information. They will use social software to spontaneously search for information about the business or share their own experiences related to it. This is the emphasis of web 3.0 on "using" the web instead of "browsing" it. Therefore, it is more practical and commercialized to form a web era determined by "content users".

The second reason is the change of audiences' mindset resulting from rapid technological development. This ideological change is actually the most direct reason for the museum's marketing shift since it changed the cultural communication framework from "one to one/one to many" to a "many to many mode". This change creates an interactive cultural dialogue between the museum and audiences. This has also substantially increased audience engagement in the museum marketing process and has contributed to the formation of an audience-centered strategy for museums.

The report aims to examine museum's audience-oriented digital marketing practice. The report specially analyzed the digital marketing strategies of UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, in terms of its social media use in China. Then, this report conducts two specific case studies UCCA applied on two different social media platforms, Tik Tok and Red Book, to make a further analysis on their audience-centered strategy. At the end, this report lists three recommendations for museum digital marketing approaches on social media based on UCCA's experience.

2. Background Information & Literature Review

UCCA is a prominent China institution for modern art. The primary museum of UCCA is housed in a historic factory in Beijing, constructed in 1957 in the center of the 798 Art District, and will be renovated in 2019 under the direction of OMA (Dutch Metropolitan Architects). It covers an area of roughly 10,000 square meters. On the Bohai coast of Beidaihe, the UCCA Dune Art Museum, designed by OPEN Architects, is situated in the Anaya neighborhood. In Shanghai's Jing'an District, the UCCA Edge, designed by SO IL Architects of New York, will open to the public in May 2021. The UCCA was established in 2007 by Belgian collectors Baron Guy Ullens and Baroness Miriam Ullens [1]. With the help of national and international directors, the organization underwent restructuring and reinvention in 2017, and the UCCA is still committed to advancing cultural interchange via contemporary art that touches people's lives and makes them better. The UCCA Group also includes other businesses such as UCCA Kids, which offers art instruction to kids at museums, the UCCA Store, which handles the sale of artists' works and exhibition derivatives, and the UCCA Lab, which focuses on investigating various international partnerships between art and brands. Through contemporary art, UCCA is dedicated to encouraging China's expanded engagement in the international conversation.

UCCA's curator and CEO Philip Tinari explained the museum's mission as "continue to bring good art and share the most forward-looking art and culture to more and more audiences", which has been in place since the day of establishment [2]. The institution noticed the changes in Chinese contemporary art over the past decades presented by increasing diversification in art and public recognition. This inspired UCCA to further contribute to this trend through its campaigns and push contemporary art influence in China forward to the next level. Art is a globally spoken language. As a Chinese-based international institution, UCCA has not only taken part in the systematic

interpretation of native contemporary art but also built itself to form global connections by introducing foreign artists to the Chinese audience, promoting Chinese artists to a bigger stage, both through collaborations and interactive campaigns (China Foundation Development Forum, 2019). This global vision allows UCCA to continuously provide powerful fuel for the public recognition of art as the institution expands its sites throughout different countries.

As a non-profit organization for the arts recognized by the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Culture Art Museum, the UCCA raises money for its operations and programs through a variety of means, including ticket and membership sales, individual and corporate sponsorships, institutional grants, and annual fundraising events like the UCCA Gala (UCCA's most important annual fundraising event) [3]. The spectacular exhibitions are only possible thanks to the generous support of the UCCA's sponsors, who are from a variety of societal sectors, including financial institutions, technological firms, luxury brands, embassies, foundations, hotels, and travel agencies. The Development Exhibitions Department at UCCA has created a variety of business perks just for sponsors. The Ullens Art Foundation Beijing and UCCA both benefit greatly from yearly donations and cash for special projects. The UCCA Gala, which takes place on the first Sunday in November, is both a highlight of the social calendar for the Beijing art scene and UCCA's most significant annual fundraising event. It brings together prominent figures from the worlds of art, culture, business, and entertainment. The 2018 UCCA Gala raised more money with more than 650 guests and supporters in attendance.

The epidemic had an impact on UCCA in 2020, which saw nearly nine thousand times media coverage, more than six billion times reached, 82 million exposures offline, more than 80 million online participation in public programs, and nearly 45 million overall visitors. The organization co-hosted the online event "'Garden Sound' Online Concert. A total of 3 million individuals saw this incredible live performance, which spread warmth via art at a particular time. In comparison to other art museums, the longer the UCCA's marketing front, the more time and money are needed. Ltd. was chosen from a large pool of bids and was awarded the strategic partnership with UCCA. As a top domestic expert in integrated intelligent marketing, Nebula Technology combines the data from UCCA's online and offline marketing matrix, unlocks the user ID system, provides clean data and a unified user system to business and marketing scenarios, and increases the group's output efficiency through a comprehensive data platform and data construction guidelines. For instance, the head of UCCA stated that it is crucial to develop young curators through the creation of libraries and research facilities. He also said that "We also hope that these actions will one day be the subject of investigation and study, as this will directly demonstrate the quality of the information we provide and its contribution to society. I also intend to further develop such a system of content creation and promotion by figuring out how to connect these outputs with the audience, how to launch them more successfully, whether through traveling exhibitions, branch libraries, or different collaborations." [4]. Now that UCCA is prepared to go into a new phase, its layout and planning go beyond simply following the development of Chinese contemporary art. Instead, they take into account operational management and brand IP [5].

3. Case Study 1: How UCCA Achieves Audience Strategy on Red Book in China

3.1. What is Red Book

Red Book is an app that was developed in 2013. Mengru Chen & Xiaoyun Li gave a logical description of the functions of Red Book. In this app, users upload pictures, videos or text content of their offline consumption to the community, thus triggering "community interaction", which in turn to drive other users to go offline to the spot, forming a closed-loop process from consumption to sharing. This forms a closed-loop process from consumption to sharing and then to consumption.

3.2. UCCA in Red Book

In Red Book, UCCA has three official accounts. 'UCCA Official' has 25,000 followers, and 'UCCA Lab' and 'UCCA Store' both have about thousand followers. 'UCCA Official' mainly introduces the recent exhibitions by videos and the average likes each posts is about 40. 'UCCA Lab' focuses on introducing their corporation with different IP, like Disney. 'UCCA Store' shows some of the products made by UCCA, which use artworks and exhibitions as inspiration, for example they developed series of products based on the artwork 'Murder the Banana' which was done by Maurizio Cattelan, including T-shirts, bags and carpets.

3.3. Audience Strategy

In this case, the audience-to-audience strategy is more important and effective in Red Book. First, when people search 'UCCA' on Red Book, the first to appear is not the official account. Instead, audiences' first vision will be content posted by KOL and bloggers. Though the popularity of these contents varied: the highest number of 'like' of the post can be up to 60,000, yet the average number of 'like' is about hundreds, it still outreaches the data of 'UCCA Official' can receive. As Red Book is not born to be an advertisement platform, instead, it is more likely to reflect the audience's lifestyle. The platform was designed as a community of audiences and provide places for audiences to exchange ideas, so there are greater amount of contents which are post by audiences but not officials. This also makes Red Book a platform which has strong users' interactions. The feeling of interactive always bring more flow in the platform. For example, the content post by an audience—'Friends! Remember! The banana on 'Cattelan Banana Packet' must be taken down when you are in crowded subway!'—won 4,645 likes and 1,073 collect due to its day-to-day language use and funny feeling. Differently, a content post by 'UCCA Official'—'UCCA Sade Dunes|Collect everyday landscapes, reveal the inner connections of the world'—with professional and literary language only got 172 likes and 108 collect. Recently, UCCA has found some KOL to share their feelings about the museum and the exhibition. Since the moment flow of visitors in the museum in weekends can reach from 500 to 1,000, the strategy can be seen as effective. Also, UCCA always interacts with KOL's and bloggers' posts that is related to their exhibitions or activities to express their positive attitude these contents, whatever it is subjective or objective, professional or amateurish. This audience-emphasized strategy stimulates more and more people posts their experience on the platform which can bring a large amount of flow. For UCCA, they can gain a lot because most of the flow is free of charge. They only need to pay for the contents which are posted by the KOL and bloggers they found, but the audiences who were affected by these contents, some of them will also post some contents after they go to the museum. These contents are free of charge to UCCA.



Figure1: Screenshot of the content posted by 'Ouyang Nana' on Red Book

4. Case Study 2: How UCCA Achieves Impose Digital Marketing Strategies on Douyin?

4.1. What is Douyin (TikTok)?

The Chinese version of TikTok is called Douyin. It is now one of the most popular short video platforms in China. According to statistics, Douyin has accumulated one billion users, while the average daily active users have 600 million people. Therefore, Douyin has a huge traffic. Companies that can plan successful marketing campaigns on this platform have the opportunity to quickly increase the brand awareness and target more potential audience.

4.2. UCCA on Douyin

UCCA is conducting its marketing campaign on the Douyin platform from several dimensions. First, UCCA has created an official account on Douyin, but the number of followers is only 36,000. The content of the account is mostly focused on promoting the museum's upcoming events. From this aspect, UCCA only plays the role of exporter. This communication process is not a symmetrical two-way communication between UCCA and its audience. Therefore, the traffic and attention gained are limited. UCCA's most prominent marketing campaign is the official partnership with the Douyin platform. Through the cooperation with the platform, UCCA has successfully launched several campaigns. For example, the entire process of viewing the exhibition was recorded on video by the staff and edited into a short video for publication. For those who cannot be present at the exhibition, they can open Douyin and enjoy the exhibition anytime from anywhere.

In specific, as in figure one, one of the recent collaborations between the UCCA and Douyin was for promoting the exhibition "Becoming Andy Warhol". UCCA hosted a livestreaming of the

exhibition through the platform and launched a video creation campaign which related to the hashtag "Everything Pop".

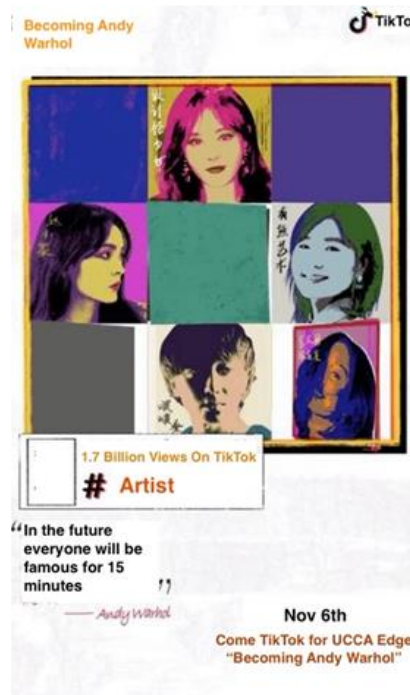


Figure2: Screenshot of the campaign “Becoming Andy Warhol” on Douyin

The event received a lot of notable attentions. For example, many of the best bloggers on Douyin also participated in the "Everything Pop" campaign. Since they themselves have already accumulated a certain quantity of fan base, their videos got a lot of retweets. The whole cam-paign spread virally.

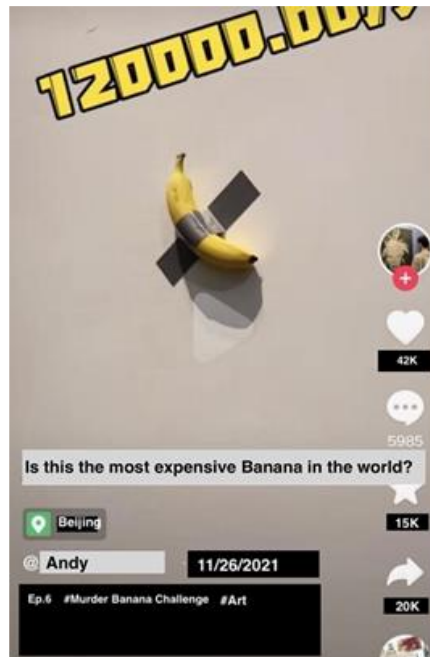


Figure3: Screenshot of video with hashtag “Murder Banana Challenge

Another notable activities held by UCCA on Douyin was for promoting an Italian artist Cat-telan's exhibition. UCCA provided information and video tours of the exhibition that are availa-ble for

offline viewing and it also co-launched several activities to drive audience participation on Douyin. UCCA and Douyin co-launched another video creation challenge related to the hashtag "Murder Banana Challenge". The activity invited Douyin users to post short-videos that follow Cattelan's directions, which is 'try to hit bananas with as many darts as you can', and share their thoughts on the artists' aesthetic. Fortunately, the campaign was also really successful. It had spurred huge growth on UCCA's Douyin account and the hashtag "Murder Banana Challenge" was mentioned more than 100 million times. As shown in Figure 2, this piece of short video received more than 420000 times of likes from audience.

Through these online activities, UCCA transforms the identity of the viewer into a communicator. And with the huge traffic of Douyin platform, it promotes more interaction and communication between potential viewers and UCCA. By running occasional video challenges around specific hashtags, UCCA's audience is helping to increase UCCA's exposure while participating in the event. The process of video creation, in turn, strengthens the audience's identification with UCCA's brand image. These activities are all about turning the audience as spectators into participants and creators. Ultimately, they can successfully build an intimate relationship between UCCA and potential users.

4.3. Recommendation

UCCA's two social media campaigns have demonstrated different online marketing approaches centered around the audience. Below are two recommendations that summarize UCCA's accomplishments for those who come after and want to use and learn from its marketing model, along with one suggestion that will further help with UCCA's online social media campaign.

4.3.1. Use KOL as the Primary Source of Attraction and Weaken the Sense of Authority of the Official Account

In reality, UCCA's Red Book's official account has garnered far less attention on the internet than its hashtags. For instance, the post with the most likes among the posts published by official accounts received 968 likes, but the post with the most likes among the content published by KOLs as well as individual users (visitors) generated approximately 25,000 likes. UCCA's social media campaign achieved two objectives by eagerly promoting KOL while weakening the authority of the official account: 1. Since KOL promotion is more relatable and is created from the audiences' point of view, it enhanced the franchise's credibility and approachability. 2. A positive audience promotion cycle has been established. Through KOL promotion, more potential audiences are drawn to visit the museum. These audiences, later on, re-join as KOLs and subsequently generate supplementary promotional content, involving even larger audiences while keeping the buzz going for an extended period.

4.3.2. Create Topics That Connect Critical Issues with Art Creatively to Engage the Audience

The UCCA exhibition featured Maurizio Cattelan – The Last Judgement provides an example of this strategy. The exhibition featured 29 installations, sculptures, and performances, while the UCCA also featured this campaign online on Douyin, a trendy Chinese social media platform. With an ironic and absurd style, this exhibition brings a flirtation with the art world, challenging the traditional perception of art as superior and esoteric, and engages every audience, online and offline, to participate in the process of creating artworks through a metaphoric way. This program successfully provokes audience discussion presented by millions of views and hashtags online [3].

UCCA can further use art to connect with more themes, such as promoting the interests of minority groups in society, promoting cultural customs that are disappearing, presenting complicated social issues regards to morality, etc.

4.3.3. Launch Interactive Projects That Link Physical and Digital Activities to Translate Social Me-Dia-Derived Online Popularity into Actual Museum Traffic

There is much room for improvement in the number of actual museum visitors compared to the museum's online buzz. Billions of involvements on Douyin's the Murder Banana challenge prove that UCCA's online outreach attracts a lot of potential viewers, but many were solely engaging in discussions and activities on the web [3]. As a result, it is crucial to convert the online audience into museum visitors through interactive design both online and offline. Detailed examples include but are not limited to: 1. Create offline photo booths where physical customers can upload photos to social media to attract new traffic 2. Give out museum tickets/discount coupons as prizes in social media campaigns 3. Give museum visitors digital privileges such as virtual commemorative badges, achievements, and limited virtual filters. Even though the rewards are applied to social media, they must be obtained by visiting the offline museum.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to examine the importance and influence of digital marketing in the development of the art museum industry and to demonstrate how digital marketing can achieve its unique engagement, interactivity, immediacy, diversity, and creativity through social networks. Although UCCA's audience-oriented digital marketing model has reached its early stage on Tik Tok and Red Book, there are still many aspects that need to be improved in the future, which is also the current situation of digital marketing for the museum industry in China. We hope that this paper can stimulate discussion, inspire people who want to apply the same model and contribute to the development of the Chinese art museum industry in terms of communication - to "build a platform where contemporary arts are globally connected, and offer audience more possibilities through arts."

6. Contribution

Rachel completed the sections of abstract, introduction, conclusion, and reference in the research report. Rachel conducted comprehensive background literature research and provided academic resources. Rachel worked with the format. Rachel peer reviewed Yolanda's analysis part.

Julie completed the sections of background information of UCCA and literature review in the research report. Julie also conducted peer review with Karen.

Betty completed the strategy analysis of case study 2: How UCCA achieves impose digital marketing strategies on Douyin?

Karen completed the recommendation part and assisted Julie to complete literature review and background part and wrote the second paragraph.

Yolanda completed the case study of UCCA in Red Book, and also completed the peer review with Betty (UCCA in Douyin part).

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