

Adoption of Social Media Marketing Strategies in Automotive Industry

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Abstract. With the development of the Internet, more and more industries are using digital marketing to advertise, and the automotive industry is no exception. Digital marketing is effective because it finds the most suitable marketing method according to the user profile for accurate positioning, which greatly improves the sales of auto brands and enhances the brand image in users' minds. There are three frequently used marketing strategies in the automotive industry: content marketing, influencer marketing and event marketing. Each one of them can bring a certain amount of increment for the brand. By looking into the strategies, through customer expectations will be acquired, and the market potential will be discovered. However, the analysis of auto industry digital marketing is still to be explored, and the effect of marketing strategies needs to be improved. Based on the online marketing of today's car companies, this paper has made constructive suggestions including constructive suggestions are made in this paper.

Keywords: Automotive industry; digital marketing; social media.

1. Introduction

Marketing in the automotive industry has shifted from offline to online digital marketing more often than ever. Before the rapid rise of the Internet and social media, automotive advertising was mainly placed in newspapers, magazines and other media. But in those traditional forms, the content was relatively single, and the conversion rate was not high. Digital marketing, on the other hand, takes a very short time and greatly improves marketing efficiency. From another point of view, the effect of traditional marketing is more difficult to be measured. But in digital marketing, just check the traffic statistics code in the relevant program, it can be known how many people have seen the ad, how many people clicked and have viewed the ad in detail, these data are easily available. Compared with any other type of advertising, online advertising allows advertisers to better track the response of the advertising audience and keep abreast of users and potential users [1]. For car companies, different products are marketed differently depending on the target market and customers, and the right products are delivered to consumers at the right time. In the era of new media, different media platforms have their unique advantages. The diversified forms of advertising in social media can help auto companies improve their brand awareness and thus increase car sales. Through social media advertising and marketing, auto companies can promote their products to potential customers and increase sales revenue. In addition, automotive companies can use social media advertising marketing to improve their company image and build trust with their customers. Social media advertising marketing also helps automotive companies improve their car designs and provide better products and services to consumers. Social media advertising and marketing can help automotive companies better understand customer needs and meet them more efficiently and provide an increasingly rich marketing tool for automotive marketing that can increase communication between companies and their customers. Through good communication, automotive marketing teams can provide personalized services to further satisfy consumers [2]. Digital marketing can reduce the cost of delivery and increase the conversion rate compared to traditional offline marketing. In addition, car companies are doing digital marketing to improve sales and at the same time improve the image of the brand in consumers' minds. For consumers, digital marketing brings convenience to them, they can quickly learn information about different models, and the introduction or experience from different KOL (Key Opinion Leaders) could help them make the final consumption decisions.

Modern social media platform advertising can be spread through text cartoons as well as videos and other. Diverse forms of advertising, through hundreds of different forms, not only can enhance the strength and flexibility of advertising communication, but also let the target group of people gain access to advertising information anytime and anywhere, which strongly enhances the impact of advertising and marketing strategies [3]. Nowadays, there are three main forms of car placement on social media. Firstly, content marketing. Good content can inspire the click rate and watchability of netizens, and the combination of car companies and sitcoms can give users a new experience. Secondly, each netizen has their own favorite bloggers. KOL could have a significant impact on fans consumption, so it would be worthwhile to explore the KOL influence to enhance the brand image. Thirdly, event marketing, no matter it is the car company's own activities or co-branding with other self-traffic IP (Intellectual Property), can all increase the status of the brand in the hearts of consumers. But the effectiveness of those marketing strategies is yet to be deeply explored and the automotive industry could still benefit from a through theory break down. In this paper, the placement forms of the automotive industry on the Internet are taken as the research objects. Through market segmentation, the user profile of consumers is analyzed for accurate advertising and marketing, and constructive suggestions are put forward, which are important for the future digital marketing placement of the automotive industry on the new media platform.

2. Marketing for Car Companies in the New Media Era

Nowadays, more and more companies are using social media for advertising. The auto industry has also joined in, using social media to build a good image among auto consumers and promote auto sales. The main purpose of using social media for advertising in the auto industry is to increase car sales and enhance their exposure. Studies have shown that consumers tend to resent, resist and shield themselves from the new media compared to traditional advertising, but content marketing on social media does not simply implant product information. Information such as brand concept, brand value, and brand culture are naturally and reasonably embedded in the content to provide value to consumers while subconsciously influencing their perception of the brand and shaping the brand image, creating long-term value for brand owners in this way [4]. The automotive industry is becoming increasingly diverse in social media. Big data precision marketing methods include user profiling, on-demand programs, and multi-platform integration and linkage [5]. Obtaining user portraits refers to the procedure in the current era, enhancing a series of behavioral characteristics such as the interests of the target group through consumers' access records, Internet time, and geographic location, then conducting high-precision advertising according to the consumption characteristics of different groups of people. Under the premise of ensuring the effectiveness of advertising, the recognition is improved [3]. At present, car advertising on social media mainly adopts the following three strategies: first, short video implantation of car ads; second, test drive experience sharing or car event promotion by finding matching KOL; third, IP co-branding and developing customized strategies. The different forms of advertising presented in this paper have improved different aspects of marketing effectiveness, but there is still need for improvement.

3. Three Types of Marketing Techniques Used by Car Companies Today

3.1. Content Marketing--Content Is Advertising

The new trend of marketing communication in the digital era can be described as: "content is advertising", which means that the current marketing communication methods have made a new upgrade, completely applied to the new technological environment and new ecological communication channels. In today's digital era, users' attention is the most important and scarce resource. Firstly, there are a lot of advertisements now, but whether consumers are willing to accept the information delivered by advertisements has become a big problem. The second problem is that popular formats of information delivery has present the customer more choices and they are at their

will to accept or reject the information. In this context, companies in all industries are creating richer and more attractive content for consumers based on user profiles and preferences to enhance their click-through rates, and this form of digital marketing communication is content marketing [4]. People use social media software will be more inclined to short videos than long movies or TV series. Short video sitcom, also known as short film, is a brand image promotion presented in the form of a short film, which usually includes a storyline and uses visual elements and words to convey the brand concept and connotation. It can integrate the culture and concept of an automotive brand into the campaign, creating a novel and interesting way to promote the campaign. Therefore, the content of short videos has a great relationship with consumers' willingness to buy, where the comprehensiveness, interestingness and quality of the content present positive feedback. Consumers for these short video content marketing, want to get more comprehensive product information, and thus avoid missing information. As in the case of some tiktok's highly viewed situational short videos, car ads embedded. In the videos, Toyota invited users to participate in the "RAV4 Challenge" by posting photos of their own RAV4 models and receiving gifts from Toyota using the "Challenge" feature of ShakeYin. What's more, Mercedes-Benz released a series of videos on Jitterbug to promote its new GLC model. In the videos, Mercedes-Benz invited users to participate in the "GLC Challenge" by posting photos of their GLC models and receiving gifts from Mercedes-Benz using the "Challenge" feature of ShakeYin. The implantation of car ads into short video scenarios for daily viewing is more acceptable than traditional ads, and also increases the completion rate and income.

3.2. Influencer Marketing--KOL Drives Consumer Decisions

KOL (Key Opinion Leader), originate from social media, and they have high influence on social media and can promote brands. KOL advertising is a form of promotion with a strong sense of social responsibility, in which KOL establish partnerships with brands to promote car brands, advertise car products and related activities, as well as build consumer trust.

As an online opinion leader, KOL is the generator and disseminator of word-of-mouth information and an important main participant, having a significant impact on the online shopping behavior or product seeding of his followers and other consumers. KOL also has its own influence, and their followers will imitate their behavior and spontaneously promote the brand together with KOL. For example, Volkswagen zero ferry carried out the campaign "zero ferry hot girls at large" on Little Red Book and carried out it on Anfu Road in Shanghai, which attracted a super high flow of people. Little Red Book platform for the end of the campaign closure analysis shows that in this activity, more than 3,000 people participated in, and the official account of the brand increased by 2,000+ fans, which made the modified mobile car of the passenger jet into a small explosive model in the inner stage. Such a benefit drives users to spontaneously share their experience about the car to improve the UGC (user generated content), so that the brand gets more real reviews. Zeithaml believes that consumers determine their own consumption value, they perceive and evaluate the utility of a product or service before and after it is purchased according to their subjective perception. In addition, social media users tend to be younger nowadays. Young people like to receive new things. They may not really need the products they buy, but the products can bring their emotional value, make themselves happy or be praised and recognized by their peers. Then, the car brand can establish a distinct image by selecting KOL who have a certain fame and understanding of car goods and let them strengthen their knowledge of the brand and understanding of the brand concept through training [6]. In the subsequent content released by the KOL, each KOL has a different personality and can produce different content on the basis of the brand, creating a variety of forms to promote communication and interaction between the KOL and consumers, while the KOL can also actively respond to the product or service queries raised by consumers, enhancing their sense of existence and establishing a long-lasting social relationship with them, which not only increase their satisfaction and loyalty, but also enable them to ask KOL for advice when they make their final decision on the brand. By combining traditional automobiles with influencer marketing, the public can be reached more quickly.

3.3. Event Marketing: Increase Brand Exposure

Event marketing could improve the popularity and reputation of car industry rapidly. Event marketing, is a campaign to promote a brand, product or service, including IP co-branding. IP co-branding, also known as the practice of combining with platform hotspots, refers to the fact that auto brands can customize their strategy design to tailor a set of excellent campaign contents for corporate brands. Products according to the relevant hotspots and consumer concerns on social media platforms can achieve the effect of publicity and promotion. The advantage of event marketing is by jumping from public domain traffic to the topic page, customers are effectively into the private domain traffic. In this way, the event can expand the propagation of sound. For example, on a social media platform, brand promotion videos can be placed according to the hot spots that consumers are concerned about, to furtherly catch consumers' eyes, promote the brand concept and culture, effectively enhance the brand image and get more potential consumers. By analyzing the hot spots on the platforms, auto companies can better position their products and provide better services through the needs of consumers. The IP itself comes with its own exposure and has its own fan base. IP co-branding can increase brand exposure at low cost, harvesting fan economy, and co-branding with certain well-known IP marketing can also enhance the added value of the brand. For example, in 2022, the "camping" IP has become a popular trend on Little Red Book, volvo chose XC60 models and V90 models as the first choice of transportation to go camping also further launched camping and volvo co-branded peripherals such as camping tents, camping carts, camping waterproof canopy and trolleys, etc. In addition, Volvo has also sponsored golf, cultural events and marine competitions, all of which have increased the brand's awareness and contemporary status, as these sponsorships are now reflected on the internet, so they are more effective than traditional sponsorship marketing. Various co-branding campaigns, promotions and sponsorships can touch consumers to take follow-up actions. Each advertising platform cooperation communication program is based on different brands, different needs and objectives to develop different programs. The success of the follow up placement is also because of the actions of convincing consumers, building brand equity and driving sales at the same time. This creates a crossover effect: when a consumer is exposed to a communication program that is stronger than a similar program if he has not been exposed to it before. For car companies, their joint efforts with hotspots to create exclusive IPs, such as sports or art or even cosmetics that are particularly hot within the platform, can largely increase consumers' goodwill and awareness of the brand, and may increase their inclination towards the brand, giving them a better and deeper impression when they purchase cars in the future. Previously, McKinsey and other researchers have proposed a "consumer decision journey circle," in which consumers first consider a preliminary set of brands to form an initial consideration set, and then modify this consideration set as they collect and evaluate more brand information (which may add or subtract brands). As they collect and evaluate more brands, they will modify this consideration set (either by adding or subtracting brands), and in the final consumer decision, they will select from these filtered brands to form the final purchase decision [7]. By combining automotive and official account marketing, new hot spots for consumers to pay attention to are found, and it would be necessary to launch co-branded products to deepen the impression of the brand in consumers' minds.

4. Suggestions

4.1. Content Marketing: Immersive Content Can Attract More Customers

Car industry should make use of videos, pictures, articles and other formats on social media platforms to create interesting and attractive advertisements, improve the accuracy of user profile analysis and precise placement to attract more potential customers. Nowadays, the number of short videos is very large, and the content tends to be homogenized and lacking in innovation. When creating content, enterprises and media platforms should make use of materials for deeper research to create more attractive advertisements. For example, the production of automotive advertising into

a warm drama, increase the real sense of close to life shots, through storytelling to convey product information, so that consumers can be more immersive and the adhesion of consumers to the brand can be enhanced. Car ads should also highlight performance, brand tone, and product highlights to achieve the perfect integration of different content, so that consumers can quickly and intuitively understand the theme of advertising content through short videos. At the same time, we also need to enhance the perceived value of consumers to promote the video content and interaction with consumers, regular interactive update to enhance the user experience, influence consumers' mind perception and increase the willingness to buy.

4.2. Influencer Marketing: Interesting Ads Can Increase CTR

Practitioners should strengthen the audit of the ads shot by KOL, so that the ads are not too hard to be rejected by consumers but should be pushed to consumers with more powerful and attractive content. The original purpose of using social media is for daily entertainment and relaxation, and if we just add ads to it rigidly, consumers will resent such a form, and the advertising effect will show negative feedback. KOL should prepare more interesting stories before shooting ads, for example, they can use the voting function on the platform to easily achieve interaction, and also increase the click rate and completion rate of the video. Content to add more emotion so as to be more realistic. For example, KOL will drive the real feeling from the interior appearance to the performance of the car seat description, and then through a strong feeling of the strongest point to expand in detail and ask fans whether they are also full of expectations for such an experience, such a form can also improve the interactivity between consumers, increase more likes, comments, so as to achieve better advertising communication effect [8].

4.3. Event Marketing: Brands Enhance the Value of the Prize to Attract More Customers

For the event marketing, practitioners should focus more on the interests of partners and get a win-win situation. Today's marketing methods combined with hot spots are still too rigid. Many IP co-branding unite completely unrelated IP which leads to achieving negative effects. The current IP co-branding only focuses on online, but the offline consumer experience is lacking. Car industry should be more natural to integrate with hotspots. Use offline activities to enhance the marketing effect of IP co-branding, such as holding offline experience tubes, IP co-branded product launches, etc., to increase the fun and interactive experience so that consumers can enhance their personal experience [9]. What's more, the higher the value of bonuses and gifts for online activities, the more enthusiastic users will be to participate. Therefore, it is recommended that event organizers determine reasonable bonuses and gifts and the needs of user groups according to their own situation to attract more users to participate in the event. We can set the bonuses of more than 20 dollars and prepare some car models and after-sales services for consumers. Finally, reasonable use of existing customer resources should be used to attract consumers, such as issuing coupons and releasing relevant promotional activities [10].

5. Conclusion

This paper analyzes the three forms of digital marketing strategies in the automotive industry. The first one is content marketing by combining car ads with situational skits to give consumers more sense of immersion. The second one is influencer marketing, which analyzes the user profile of auto consumers and finds matching KOL to cooperate with them. KOL brings their evaluation of the driving feeling of the car and unique perspective of product into the content they release for personalized placement to help consumers make subsequent consumption decisions. The third one is event marketing, through the combination of activities in different fields and station hotspots on different platforms IP co-branding, brand exposure is boost and the brand image is improved. Further suggestions are made for these three marketing models. It is suggested that the content of the advertising should be carefully considered with interesting stories, while the cooperation with KOL

would benefit from a content with more real emotions. In terms of event marketing, the combination of hotspots should be processed in a natural way. This paper brings help to the future automotive industry and Internet media to develop the accuracy and effectiveness of the placement of automotive-type marketing. For future research, it is recommended that more forms of marketing strategies should be looked into to structure a through framework for the practitioners to refer to.

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