

Research on the Association Between Personal Brand Building and Social Media—Take Ohkaye as an Example of an Analysis

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Abstract. With the rapid development of social media, internet-related industries have become one of the most important sectors for sustained economic growth. Personal brands on social platforms are also increasing. Brand owners seize the dividends of the flow, utilize the stage of social media to fully present their values to the audience, and integrate them into the products they develop to push them to wider users. In order to show the relationship between personal branding and social media to the public more transparently and to understand the internal logic of the Internet economy development, the author takes the Internet brand Ohkaye as an example and utilizes the case study method, the interview method, and the SWOT analysis method to quantify the text and data in the case. It analyzes the generation and development of personal brands, the integration of personal brands and values, the realization of data in the flow era, and how to build a personal brand on social media platforms. It is found that personal brands on social media platforms embody the creator's values, brand recognition is the key to brand survival, and the creator has to establish a personal aesthetic field on social media platforms to guide consumers to memorize the brand. At the same time, it is necessary to establish a community, make consumers participate in brand building, and form a two-way interaction in order to make the brand realize sustainable development.

Keywords: Personal Brand, Social Media Platform, Personal Value, Community, Mass-communication.

1. Introduction

With the development of Internet technology and social media riding on the network technology quickly into the public eye, “netizen identity” is also known as the new label of the mass population. In the kingdom of Internet social media, everyone is to become the mainstream media information disseminators and receivers, but also the most powerful people. In the era of streaming media, where the speed of information dissemination is so fast that even the time and space barriers are disappearing day by day, social media has generated a large number of markets and business opportunities, and everyone has the opportunity to utilize the network's dividend to build and spread their brands.

In contrast to typical traditional mass media PR and advertising, the authors refer to the current era as the “Reverse Media Era”. In the past, brand communication required a large amount of financial support to achieve the purpose of publicity; the effect of communication is unknown, and there is a disconnect between the communicator and the audience. In modern social media, the cost of speaking is 0. Everyone can pick up the microphone and speak freely, breaking the shackles of the original “one-way communication”, and gradually converting to “interactive communication” mode. The audience group is also the producer and disseminator, and the user takes the initiative to speak out. The spontaneity and mobility of users' voices have also been stimulated, which to a certain extent has stimulated the group's innovation ability, and personal brands have sprung up in this environment.

In addition, in the era of social media, the ability of the Internet to break through time and space also allows personal views and brand communication to reach every user because the media's intelligent recommend system leads to the user in the “browsing” social media contact with the next piece of information is always unknown, such a mysterious makes every user become a prey exposed to the public eye. And even if the user blocks this information, the premise is that they have already been exposed to this, which invariably occupies the user's field of consciousness in a preconceived way. German philosopher Jürgen Habermas's concept of the Public Sphere emphasizes the high

interactivity and plurality of media [1]. American sociologist Stanley's Theory of Six Degrees of Separation, which suggests that "for every six people you pass, you get to know a stranger you want to know", is the basis for social media's existence and development [2]. On top of the social media network is the interpersonal relationship. The user is in the terminal position in the link relationship of receiving information. Then the received information will be spread to more audiences, and the user will become the beginning of the secondary dissemination of information. The continuity of this information dissemination and the rapidity of the Internet makes everyone a node, linking up a network of media dissemination. This means that once someone performs brilliantly, it will cause a network sensation and become a network hot spot in interactive communication, that is, "flow", and this feature also provides fertile soil for personal brands and communication.

In the research field of personal brand and social media relationships, the Chinese scholar Dong studied how to build a personal brand, and he pointed out that to build a personal brand, one should be responsive to the times, keep pace with the era, and focus on the commercial value of the product itself while paying more attention to humanistic care, reflecting the essence of "humanistic society" [3]. The Chinese scholar Hou studied building a personal brand in the flow. He analyzed, from the perspective of economics and management science in the era of flow, how to adapt to the flow at the same time, have their brand personality, stand out in the crowd, and not be wrapped up by the tide of people, the development of a successful business model in the market to compete for a place [4]. Indonesian scholars Wijaya Bambang Sukma and Nasution Asri Annisa studied the issue of social media and personal brand communication corruption, and they pointed out that in the process of personal brand communication, social media is abused to a certain extent, there are problems such as intentional manipulation, construction of false scenarios make some unethical scandals [5]. However, a few scholars have studied the development and dissemination of personal branding on social media in combination with individual specific cases.

Therefore, based on the research of previous scholars, this paper takes the personal brand Ohkaye, founded by the blogger Emma in North America, as an example, studies the interrelationship between personal brand and social media, refines to the creation of a personal brand, how to build an aesthetic field on social media, how to establish brand recognition and the author's thoughts on the dissemination of personal branding on social media.

The theoretical significance of this research topic lies in the fact that in the Internet age, brand dissemination in mass media has become a mandatory course for every brand manager. It is also one of the inevitable fields of research in mass communication, and the cases selected in this paper can be supplemented for personal brand dissemination.

The practical significance of this study is that the North American brand Ohkaye is the typical performance of the path of personal brand generation, development, and dissemination in the media. The conclusions of this paper also provide references for brand founders on how to realize sustainable development in the streaming media, which is conducive to further grasping the direction of the brand's development and creating outstanding personal brands.

2. The Creation of a Personal Brand

2.1. Concept Interpretation

A personal brand is a unique, distinctive, certain, and easily perceived collection of information conveyed by an individual's outward image and inward connotation, capable of demonstrating enough power to cause a change in the group's consumption perception or consumption pattern [6]. In this paper, the author believes that promoting or selling products by shaping personal image on social media, using distinctive features, symbols, or even personality as a special symbol or brand identity to differentiate their products from other products should be understood as a personal brand.

2.2. Personal Brand is the Embodiment of Personal Values

Object and consciousness have a dialectical relationship: object determines consciousness, consciousness is the object's reflection, and consciousness has a subjective effect on the object. According to this philosophical theory, it can be seen that the founder produces dynamic consciousness after contacting the objective world and then transforms the dynamic into material form, i.e., the brand he creates is the product of his ideology. The founder injects his ideology into the product to construct the brand gene. The brand he creates reflects his ideology, which embodies the founder's values. In this article, the author takes the example of Ohkaye, a personal brand created by YouTube blogger @oops_ohemma in North America, to support this view.

Ohkaye was officially launched in June this year and has three aromatherapy products. In a video about creating the products, Emma says, "I love to share everything, from makeup, skincare, clothes, to adding ice to water to make flowers grow better. I want to convey everything I know that is good to my followers. I began to experience a series of life events in 2019, and after the beginning of 2022, I suddenly realized what I wanted. I felt that the first few years of the experience of those things were OK. Moreover, being a blogger, it is easy to be influenced by some judgmental voice. Pain and unhappiness are in the moment, but so is being super happy. Life is always up and down, and I want to seal the mindset of IT'S OK in my body and spread it to you guys. Life may not be OK sometimes, but your mindset is OK. That's why I chose to create Ohkaye as a brand and opted for my favorite area of personal care for my products, and I hope that aromatherapy can bring you guys inner peace. 'Oh' represents @Oh Emma's 'Oh' 'Ohkaye' is a homophone for 'OK' and a recognizable name."

2.3. Brand Emotion Shaping and Communication

Yinuo Weng puts forward the idea that, in contemporary society, brands are more focused on "product + personalization", and brands with virtual elements are more like human beings with temperament, which make consumers feel friendly and win their love [7]. From the web information of the product's official account, the brand concept is "Embrace your moment". Positioning is an "everyday luxury self-care brand". The names of the three aromatherapy products are "20:17", "Satin Cloud" and "Isolation". In the details page of the three products, there are descriptions of aromatherapy and scene shaping. For example, the candle's description in "20:17" is "The sun's gone down. You look at the time- the creative flow is ebbing away, but it's still ever-present. A soft glow and floral rose fragrance enveloped with vanilla and patchouli accompanies you to guide you to the finish line." This scenario provides a visual concept for the product, making the originally flat product vivid and dimensional. Combined with the promotional video on the homepage, it creates an overall atmosphere of leisure, comfort, lightness, and relaxation, echoing Emma's persona presented on her account. It is as if the fragrance is synonymous with herself. Here, the author interviews two consumers who have purchased Ohkaye.

"I've been following Emma for more than a year. She brings me a lot of energy, whether the beauty videos or the pictures she poses on Instagram. I can feel her power, gentleness, and strength, and want to be like Emma. When I saw her doing her brand, I immediately bought them. Every time I shower, I light up Emma's aromatherapy, read a book or just trance for a while, and it's as if the chill feeling that Emma gives has also come to me. "

"A friend recommended this aromatherapy brand to me. After watching the blogger's promotional video, I feel it is a very good concept, also in line with my current mindset: everything is calm. I agree with the saying, 'It's OK that it's happening.' It's relaxing and casual, embracing the power of the moment, and everything will pass."

There is a consistency between a personal brand and the individual, meaning that an individual's image and behavior tend to synchronize the public's perception of the brand. Emma's image of "courage", "growth", "sunshine and health", and "delicate and beautiful" is internalized in her brand. The blogger's product reaches consumers through the static and dynamic interactions between social media and consumption. When consumers successfully accept this brand concept and positioning, the values and emotions of the brand's creator are also successfully conveyed.

3. Constructing a Personal Aesthetic Field in Social Media

3.1. The Rise of Followers Economy: Flow-based Realization

Whether in Weibo, Red, TikTok, YouTube, or Instagram, flow is the kernel of the survival and operation of modern social media. Thousands of accounts also rely on the number of views, clicks, likes, favorites, etc., provided by users to be active on the platform. The higher the flow, the more attention it receives and the more likely the account's content will be recommended. Individual brands have an official account and a buying channel, often depending on the blogger's account. For example, Ohkaye's official account is @ohkaye_official, with a direct link in Emma's personal ins account profile. As of September 4, 2023, Emma has 189,000 followers on Red and 265,000 on Ins. These followers can see her brand when they tap into the homepage, and entering her brand link may generate consuming behavior. The blogger's flow tide brings exposure opportunities for her brand, and most of Ohkaye's consumers come from her followers, but at the same time, those who originally did not know Emma's netizen may inadvertently see this aromatherapy product when browsing social media, linking it to exquisite life. The product's detail page shows potential consumers what the product looks like, making it easy for them to be impressed. According to the "Peak-End Rule" in psychology, if the experience is pleasant at the peak and the end of a period of experience, then the feeling of the whole experience is pleasant [8]. The product has a sense of ceremony packaging to create an elegant atmosphere, and those purchasing consumers' positive feedback can also hit the user's heart. After consumption, the "maximum common denominator of pleasant" is created, contributing to the product flow again. The brand's products often match the personal image. After consumption, Emma's homepage is clicked to know the information of the main manager, which in turn provides more flow for Emma. The social media's recommendation and the marketing of the brand's homepage create consuming behavior, so based on the realization of flow and the return after the realization of the blogger and her brand into a virtuous circle, and at the same time conducive to the development of the individual and the brand (as shown in Figure 1).

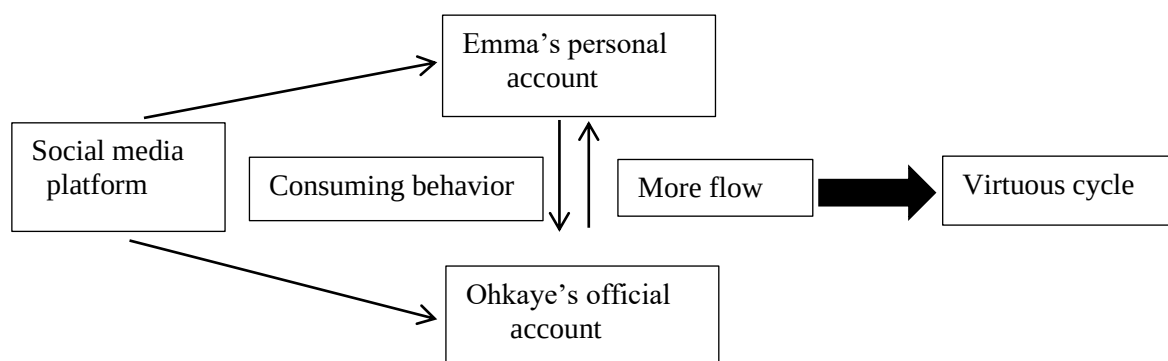


Figure 1. Relationship between social media platform and personal account and official account

3.2. Build Brand Recognition

Suppose a personal brand is intended to be built on the Internet and let it continue to develop. In that case, the key is to get flow, and the competition for flow on social media essentially competes for users' "attention". Herbert Simon pointed out that "in a world of information abundance, the abundance of information resources often means the lack of information consumption, so for consumers, how to rationally allocate their attention among the overloaded information resources is a question worth pondering [9]." In the face of flow and user groups, how to stand out from the crowd is a necessary topic for personal brands to be established in this era, and it is also a great challenge for managers. The authors conducted a SWOT analysis of the Ohkaye brand with the following results, as shown in Figure 2:

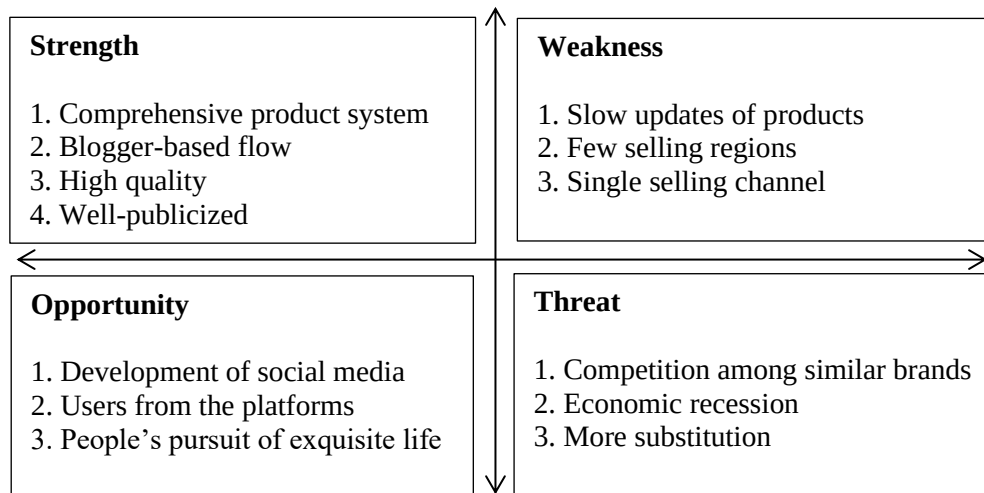


Figure 2. SWOT analysis of Ohkaye

The authors concluded that a successful personal brand should have three basic characteristics:

3.2.1 Uniqueness

In the information age, consumers are exposed to thousands of pieces of information every day. Suppose a brand acquires consumers' attention in the tide of information. In that case, the brand should have a unique positioning, the brand manager should create a persona label that has a distinctive external image simultaneously, and a simple and easy-to-remember slogan is also essential. For example, Ohkaye's positioning is a delicate personal care brand. Among the many personal care brands, Ohkaye's highlight is that the main color of its packaging is only black and white. In the promotional video, the three aromatherapies are made as a delicate dish from the kitchen to present to the table. Using this creative point to capture the audience's attention and the naming of aromatherapy also adopts the numerical method, which is different from the naming of other similar products, making the brand products easy to increase the memory of consumers.

3.2.2 Relevance

The cognitive bias pursuant to disproportionately favors information that supports or confirms our pre-existing views. Samuel L. Riggs put the "Stereotype Effect" in psychology, indicating that people are more willing to accept what they are already familiar with. When contacting a new brand, consumers are more inclined to choose what they already know because of their instinct to seek security and stability. If a brand wants to create a new consumer base, it needs to be able to associate itself with what others consider familiar and important. Ohkaye associates aromatherapy with quality of life and personal care and, at the same time, achieves a precise segmentation by targeting the "sophisticated stylist" as the main consumer group and choosing the North American market, where there is less competition to sell its products. This is in line with the fact that the North American people live a more fantastic life, and at the same time, it is also leading the consumers to get closer to the "comfortable life" promoted by the brand.

3.2.3 Continuity

For the personal brand, the development of the product should not only maintain the advantage in publicity, continuity development is also the power source of the brand to survive for a long time. In the network era of endless personal brands, they will experience the same cycle as traditional enterprises, from the rise to the decline. If a brand can't keep up with the times, can't innovate its products, and doesn't have a continuous output of works and content, the development of the brand is bound to be short-lived. Ohkaye's manager, Emma, insists on making more daily videos or notes on Red and Ins. Apart from sharing the brand-concerning content, she shares her life or teaches followers some tips. She continues to ensure that there is a good content output. In addition, Ohkaye also continues to cooperate with other bloggers or brand managers, appearing on their channels to

increase exposure with powerful titles, keeping up with online hotspots, and creating momentum jointly. In the brand itself, Emma also revealed that in the second half of 2023, Ohkaye will have new products coming out, capturing consumers' appetites in advance. This action cultivates potential consumers and lays the foundation for the brand's continued development.

4. Suggestion of Spreading the Brand Through Social Media

4.1. Making Community the Main Communication Channel

In the network era, a community is where people with similar hobbies and values gather together to communicate and exchange information in their fields of interest. According to the social nature of human beings, community is a kind of identity and a sense of belonging to the group. The biggest characteristic of a community is strong radiation. When community members are "recommended" to meet the community's interests, individuals take themselves as the center. Through horizontal dissemination, it can be radiated to a large number of community members, bringing more consumers. Therefore, in the early stage of personal brand creation, accurate positioning of the community to find the product communication chain is the necessary road the founder must go through. The steps to open up community communication are divided into two steps: positioning the audience group and producing content that caters to the preferences of community members.

4.1.1 Positioning the audience group

The first step to successful product marketing is showing the product to the right group. In the case of no data reference in the early stage, only through the way of research to the initial formation of the prototype of the user profile and the common user profile, including the three elements, Pain Point, Goals, how can I help them. After collecting a certain amount of data, enter the most critical step: analysis. For example, Emma once said that she would pay attention to the data analysis of the promotional videos on YouTube every day after the brand was founded, counting the age, occupation, country, and common search keywords of these users, and then put herself in the shoes of one of the audiences, what information she hoped to attain from the browsing, and what kind of help she hoped to get. Another key point in the analysis process is to understand the competitors. When the product has targeted a field, the founder must search for 5-10 competitors in the same field and study the head competitors' marketing channels, flow sources, and sales figures. After accurate analysis, users can be further segmented, selected, and positioned in the most aligned user groups again, to understand their browsing, clicking, interactive data, to carry out accurate content placement.

4.1.2 Produce content that caters to community members' preferences

Since community members have similar hobbies, values, and lifestyles, the keywords searched by the same community members have great similarities. Here, the authors analyzed 50 pieces of evaluative comments about the products that consumers who have purchased Ohkaye aromatherapy products posted on social media and made a chart about the word frequency. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Word Frequency of 50 pieces of comments

Ambience	38 times	Comfortable	9 times
Exquisite	35 times	Good smell	9 times
Relaxing	26 times	Warm	4 times
Textured	25 times	Immersed	2 times
High-class	18 times		

High-frequency vocabulary can reflect the focused topics within the community. The analysis found that most consumers who like Ohkaye pursue a refined life and textured, high-class items. Apart from the aromatherapy, they enjoy the ambience and emotional value the products add. Emma has also seized this commonality of the consumer group and posted content about comfort and exquisite life on her personal social media accounts and the brand's account. For example, she updates

almost every day, and her content covers tennis, golf, travel, makeup, dressing, and sharing goodies for life. Whether high-end sports or goodies to improve the sense of well-being, the content she posts and the other products she promotes are essentially the same category as her brand products, all centered on the “exquisite life”, catering to the audience’s hobbies, which largely improves the exposure of similar products and brings flow to her own products. Moreover, most of Ohkaye’s consumer groups are white-collar workers or young people who have a great pursuit of life and don’t spend much time browsing social media. So, in terms of the communication form, she adopts the form of interspersing pictures and videos, with the pictures generally in the range of 5-10 and the videos lasting no more than 2 minutes. The release time is usually at 8:00 am or 6:00 pm, which allows them to utilize their commuting time to get in touch with the brand information and communication content. In both content and form, the brand’s message is targeted to their needs, and this vertical communication also enhances the intimacy between consumers and the brand.

4.2. Consumer Participation in Brand Building

As mentioned above, in the era of “Reverse Media”, the dissemination of information is a dynamic two-way communication process. Therefore, the interaction between brands and consumers has become indispensable for brands to communicate on the Internet. C.K. Prahalad and Venkat Ramaswamy have proposed The Theory of Value Co-creation [10]. In this theory, consumers change from buyers to participants. Consumers gain experience by interacting with brands, and this kind of marketing is one of the most common ways in the Internet era. Ohkaye has set up activities to interact with consumers while advertising itself to increase its popularity, such as occasional lucky draws, in which users can participate by liking and favoriting a certain blog post or video. In the process of interacting, users can feel the brand’s value and improve their understanding, and the brand can also flow from the number of likes and favorites provided by users. In addition, product evaluation is also one of the channels for consumers to participate in brand building. Positive evaluations often provide a good reputation for the brand. Emma also conducts regular surveys and interviews with consumers about their suggestions for product improvement, learning from their comments and improving the content of the products in the feedback and communication. In the product communication chain, consumers have the opportunity to participate in the marketing process of the product and simultaneously take part in the brand building in the interaction with the brand, creating value for themselves and the brand.

5. Conclusion

The characteristics of social media, such as wide coverage, high flow, high popularity, high interactivity, and low communication cost, provide great convenience for the brands’ establishment and development. On the Internet platform, everyone has the possibility to utilize the dividends of the Internet to build a personal brand, export values, and gain profits. However, in the process of building a brand, product control, positioning, and sustainable development are challenges that brand owners must face. In this paper, the authors take the North American personal care brand Ohkaye as a point to study the brand’s positioning, content, consumers, and development mode, analyze the inherent ideas of building and developing a personal brand, the characteristics that a personal brand that can survive for a long time on social media should have, and give development suggestions. The author argues that because everyone has the right to speak freely on social media, personal brands must incorporate the creator’s unique and recognizable values in order to ensure that the product has a place in the tide of flow and, at the same time, the product itself should be unique, relevant, and continuous. In the process of building a personal brand, it is even more important to break down communication barriers and focus on the interactive relationship with consumers, not only to establish a community and produce content that caters to the preferences of community members but also to allow them to participate in the construction of the brand itself.

Overall, the methods and the analysis results used for the brand Ohkaye in this paper are relatively objective. The brand is also a relatively successful case of personal brand development, and its development model also has reference value for product developers in the same industry. However, in the research process, the researcher only interviewed some consumers about their feelings and evaluations, and the volume of users was not large enough to be representative. In addition, the study also lacks first-hand data related to brand marketing, and the results are not precise enough. In the future, the author will continue to work on this topic, obtain more detailed first-hand data through questionnaires for the brand, and investigate the operation mode of other personal brands on social media so as to draw more convincing and detailed research results through comparative analysis, expanding the research content of this paper.

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