

Analysis Of Social Media Promotion and Marketing Strategies for Disney Movies: A Case Study on Zootopia & Frozen 2

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Abstract. This study aims to deeply analyze the successful strategies of Disney movies in social media marketing, taking “Zootopia” and “Frozen 2” as case studies. With the expansion of the global movie market and the diversification of audience demand, animated movies are highly competitive, and Disney occupies a leading position with its strong strength and perfect network. The study first introduces the background of The Walt Disney Company, explaining the study's purpose and significance and the framework. Then it analyzes the global influence and marketing strategy of “Zootopia” respectively, including its background, the current fire situation, social media promotion techniques innovative parts, and offline promotion strategy. Then the background, audience reaction, social media promotion methods, and effects of Frozen 2 are discussed. It then compares the differences and changes in the marketing strategies of the two films, including social media strategies, offline promotion focus, cross-border cooperation methods, etc. It also discusses the evolution of marketing strategies, such as digital transformation, emphasizing user-generated content, exploring the application of new technologies, etc., as well as cross-cultural communication strategies. Finally, suggestions and expectations for movie marketing in the digital era are given, including strengthening innovation, building a social interaction ecology, pursuing content quality, and deepening cross-cultural communication strategies. The study summarizes the results, points out the limitations, and offers an outlook on future research directions, providing valuable experience and inspiration for the film industry.

Keywords: Disney films; social media marketing; Zootopia; Frozen 2.

1. Introduction

In recent years, with the continuous expansion of the global film market and the increasingly diversified needs of the audience, animated films, as an important branch of the film industry, have shown strong momentum of development. With the continuous advancement of technology and rich creativity, animated films have achieved significant improvement in narrative depth, visual effects, and emotional resonance, attracting more and more viewers.

Against this background, major animation production companies have increased their investment and launched a series of high-quality animated films, creating fierce competition. Disney, as the leader in the field of animated films, not only possesses strong production strength and rich creative resources but also has a perfect distribution and marketing network, which can ensure that its works are widely disseminated and highly recognized globally.

However, there is no lack of other excellent animation production companies and works under the light of Disney. For example, Pixar Animation Studios' Toy Story series and DreamWorks' Shrek series have won the audience's favor with their unique creativity and superb production and become an important force in the global animation film market.

1.1. Background of The Walt Disney Company

Since Walt Disney and his brother Lloyd laid the foundation in 1923, The Walt Disney Company has transformed from a single animation studio into a globally recognized comprehensive entertainment giant. With businesses spanning film production and distribution, theme park and resort operations, media networking, consumer product development, and interactive media exploration, The Walt Disney Company has built an entertainment empire that reaches far and wide. In the vast

universe of global culture and entertainment, Disney has shined with a series of iconic animated characters and established its leadership position through several box office hits.

Over the years, Disney films such as the Star Wars series and the Avengers series have won worldwide acclaim and box office success, not only touched the hearts of audiences but also demonstrated Disney's depth and excellence in film creation and global distribution. These successes have not only generated significant financial returns for Disney but have also reinforced the company's leadership role in the global entertainment landscape.

Particularly noteworthy are the two masterpieces "Zootopia" (2016) and "Frozen 2" (2019). The former won a warm response from global audiences with its unique creative conception, three-dimensional character portrayal, and profound thematic connotations, and eventually returned with a box office success of \$1.024 billion (the above data comes from the Cat-Eye Box Office); while the latter, based on inheriting the essence of its predecessor, deepened the story level and broadened the narrative horizons, and ultimately achieved a new record with a box office success of \$1.45 billion (the above data comes from the cat-eye box office), becoming another iconic Disney film milestone [1]. The brilliant achievements of these two works are not only a concentrated display of Disney's film production skills but also provide a vivid example of its innovative practice in social media marketing.

1.2. Purpose and Significance of the Study

The core purpose of this study is to deeply analyze the intrinsic motivations that have enabled Disney films to maintain their leading position globally, especially their unique strategies and successful practices in the field of social media marketing. By carefully analyzing the marketing cases of two iconic films, "Zootopia" and "Frozen 2", the study will reveal how Disney has used social media as a platform to build strong brand influence and audience connection, and then to arouse and maintain high public attention and interest. At the same time, this study will also explore why many film studios have struggled to replicate the success of Disney's marketing strategy when trying to emulate it, to provide valuable lessons and insights for other players in the film industry.

This study has far-reaching practical significance for the future development of the film industry and the entertainment industry as a whole. Firstly, by exploring Disney's successful experience and strategies in social media marketing, this study will provide a practical example for other entertainment companies to learn from, helping them optimize their marketing strategies and enhance their competitiveness in the market. Secondly, this study will focus on the innovative practices in the film industry, exploring how to enhance the box office and brand influence of films through novel marketing methods, and providing theoretical support and practical guidance for the industry's continuous innovative development. Finally, by comparing and analyzing the similarities and differences in the marketing strategies of Zootopia and Frozen 2, this study will further reveal the unique role and operating rules of social media in film marketing and provide valuable references and lessons for future film marketing practices.

1.3. Research Framework

This study adopts a case study approach to conduct an in-depth analysis of the social media promotion and marketing strategies of Disney's animated films Zootopia and Frozen 2 to reveal Disney's successful practices in building brand influence and stimulating public attention and interest. The research framework is divided into the following sections:

(1) Introduction section: introduces the background, purpose, and significance of the study, as well as the scope and expected objectives of the study.

(2) Case Study Section: Analyze in detail the social media marketing tactics, offline promotional activities, and cross-cultural communication strategies of Zootopia and Frozen 2, to reveal how Disney has used social media platforms to build brand influence and to stimulate and maintain public attention and interest.

(3) Comparative analysis section: Compare and analyze the similarities and differences in marketing strategies between Zootopia and Frozen 2, revealing Disney's innovative practices in the field of social media marketing.

(4) Conclusion and outlook section: Summarizes the study's main findings, analyzes the study's limitations, and provides an outlook on the future research direction.

2. Global Phenomenon of Zootopia

2.1. The Background and the Current State of Zootopia

Zootopia, a 3D animated film created by Walt Disney Animation Studios, has been sweeping the world with its extraordinary charm since its sparkling release in 2016. The film cleverly constructs a future metropolis where mammals live in harmony - Animal City and narrates the remarkable journey of Judy Rabbit, who pursues her dream of becoming a newcomer to the police force in Animal City. In this world of fantasy and reality, all kinds of animal's leap onto the screen in vivid anthropomorphic postures, not only showing colorful characters but also touching upon social issues such as racial equality and workplace challenges, making the film entertaining as well as educational.

Since its release, Zootopia has become a global cinema frenzy. Its unique creative conception, exquisite production techniques, and profound thematic meaning have won wide acclaim and enthusiastic support from audiences around the world, and the film eventually achieved remarkable box office results, accumulating 1.024 billion US dollars, consolidating its status as a classic in the history of Disney's animated films. At the same time, the film has also received high praise on all major film review platforms, with word-of-mouth making it a hot topic of discussion on social media. According to the well-known film review website IMDb, "Zootopia" has received a rating of up to 8.1 points, while on another authoritative film review website Rotten Tomatoes, the freshness of the film has reached 93%, and the audience satisfaction rating is as high as 90%, and on the domestic rating website Douban "Zootopia" has also received a high score of 9.2 with more than two million people evaluating it, which are all proofs of the high recognition of the film in the eyes of the profession and the audience—highly recognized in the audience's mind.

2.2. Social Media Promotion Techniques and Innovations Section

The marketing strategy of Zootopia in the social media field is a benchmark in the industry. The film made full use of mainstream social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and successfully attracted the attention and participation of a large number of users through the release of carefully planned creative content and the organization of highly interactive activities.

Regarding content creativity, the film production team released various behind-the-scenes secrets, character profiles, and exciting trailers, which effectively aroused the audience's interest and expectations in the film. At the same time, the creative posters, beautiful illustrations, and other visual elements showed the film's unique charm and meticulous production, further increasing the attention of the film.

In terms of interactive activities, the film is even more original, through the organization of quiz challenges, character popularity voting, lucky draws, and other diversified activities, greatly enhancing the audience's sense of participation and sense of belonging and promoting the viral spread of the film's word-of-mouth. In addition, the film also cleverly used topic marketing means, the content of the film and the current social hotspots are closely linked, successfully triggering a wide range of social discussions and concerns, for the film's box office success to lay a solid foundation of public opinion [2].

2.3. Offline Promotion

As a successful animated film by Disney, the offline promotion strategy of Zootopia also deserves in-depth analysis. Disney has greatly enhanced the popularity and influence of the film through diversified offline promotion means. For example, in large shopping malls, cinemas, and theme parks

in major cities, the film held role-playing parades, interactive exhibitions, and special screenings, which attracted the participation of a large number of audiences. These events not only raised the film's profile but also reinforced the audience's love and anticipation for the film.

The film also made use of physical storefronts for promotion. For example, in some large bookstores and toy shops, the film set up special display areas with posters and character models of the film, attracting consumers' attention. In addition, the film also cooperated with some supermarket chains to launch goods related to the film, such as snacks and beverages, further expanding the film's influence.

In addition, the film launched several co-branded products with well-known brands, covering toys, clothing, stationery, and other areas, which were not unique in design and quality, but also perfectly integrated with the film's elements, and were well received by consumers. Through these offline promotional activities, the film has not only maximized its brand value but also further consolidated its position in the hearts of the audience, injecting a strong impetus for the film's continued popularity and long-term development [3].

3. Sequel returns strong: Frozen 2

3.1. Film Background and Audience Reaction

As the sequel to the 2013 animated film *Frozen*, *Frozen 2* has captured the world's attention since it was announced that it was in the works. The film picks up where its predecessor left off, with the adventures of Elsa, Anna, and their pals stretching beyond the kingdom of Arundel, not only digging deeper into the roots of Elsa's magical powers but also revealing the kingdom's deepest secrets while portraying an even more complex network of characters' emotions and relationships.

Upon its release, *Frozen 2* quickly struck a chord with audiences around the world. The film won high praise from audiences for its exquisite graphics, touching music, deep thematic exploration, and the pure and profound emotional exchanges between the characters. According to Box Office Mojo, the film's global box office reached \$1.45 billion, making it the second highest-grossing animated film in Disney's history, with an IMDb rating of 7.4, a Rotten Tomatoes freshness rating of 95%, and an audience satisfaction rating of 91%. These numbers certainly prove the popularity of *Frozen 2* among audiences and its dual success at the box office and by word of mouth. The film not only maintains the high standard of its predecessor but also leaps to the depth of storytelling, the power of visual effects, and the subtlety of emotional expression, further solidifying the *Frozen* series' lofty position in the hearts of the audience.

3.2. Social Media Promotion Methods and Effectiveness

The reason why *Frozen 2* has surpassed its predecessor to become the top-grossing Disney animated film at the box office is complex and multi-dimensional. The first and foremost factor is the strong brand influence and sequel anticipation created by the previous film, which has amassed a huge and loyal following for the sequel, making the audience look forward to the film even before it is released.

However, the success of the film was also due to its well-planned marketing strategy. In promoting *Frozen 2*, Disney adopted an all-round, three-dimensional marketing approach, covering social media campaigns, cross-border cooperation, offline activities, and other levels, which effectively raised the film's visibility and audience participation, and provided a strong boost to the box office's sustained growth.

It is particularly worth noting that social media played a key role in this marketing campaign. Through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other mainstream platforms, Disney released creative promotional content and organized a rich variety of interactive activities, successfully attracting the attention and discussion of a large number of users, forming a positive word-of-mouth effect, and laying a solid foundation for the film's box office success [4].

In the field of social media publicity, Frozen 2 has demonstrated excellent creativity and execution. The film production team carefully planned a series of trailers and theme song MVs, which were widely disseminated on social media platforms. These promotional materials not only showcased the visual feast and musical charm of the film but also cleverly set up the suspense of the plot, stimulating the audience's imagination and desire to watch the film.

In addition, the film also cleverly leveraged the power of key opinion leaders (KOLs) to spread word-of-mouth. Many famous bloggers, netizens, and celebrities have shared their feelings and love for the film on social media, and their positive comments and recommendations have further expanded the scope and influence of the film's audience. This KOL marketing strategy not only enhanced the credibility and attractiveness of the film but also stimulated the interest of more potential viewers.

In terms of interactive activities, Frozen 2 also performed well. The film producer organized a variety of interactive sessions on social media platforms, such as knowledge quizzes, role-playing challenges, and fan works collection. These activities not only enhanced users' participation and sense of belonging but also promoted communication and sharing among the audience, further deepening the audience's recognition and love of the film brand [5]. Through these creative and interactive social media promotional activities, Frozen 2 successfully transformed the audience into active communicators, contributing indelibly to the film's box office success.

4. Differences and changes in marketing strategies for Zootopia and Frozen 2

4.1. Comparison of Marketing Strategies

Disney's "Zootopia" and "Frozen 2" are two animated films that share commonalities and differences in their marketing strategies.

In terms of social media strategy, both films have tapped into mainstream platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and relied on the release of creative content and the organization of interactive activities to effectively increase the exposure of the film and audience interaction. However, "Frozen 2" is particularly outstanding in terms of brand consistency and emotional links. It not only inherits the popular characters and musical essence of its predecessor but also profoundly touches the audience's emotional resonance of sisterly love and self-discovery through the ingenious trailer and theme song MV, thus creating a wider wave of discussion and sharing in the social media field.

In terms of offline promotion, both films adopted diversified means, but each had its own focus. Through the theme exhibition and character parade in Shanghai Disneyland, Zootopia creates an immersive experience for tourists and strengthens the emotional bond between the audience and the film [6]. In contrast, Frozen 2 may focus more on ice-themed exhibitions, concerts, and other activities, which not only consolidates the film's unique charm in the setting of Frozen Wonderland but also provides the audience with more diversified entertainment enjoyment.

In terms of cross-border cooperation, Disney's ability to integrate resources and brand linkage has been highlighted in both films. Zootopia has broadened its market boundaries through co-branding with major brands. For example, Monster Charge has launched a variety of themed customized sharing charging treasures, including Officer Judy, Nick the Fox, Officer Leopard, and Director Cow, with the inhabitants of Zootopia as the blueprint for its design; and Frozen 2 has become one of the leading IPs in Disney's portfolio. one of Disney's leading IPs. From film DVDs, books, princess doll toys, and princess dresses to peripherally related character development, games, beauty apparel, and other IP licensing, and finally landed in the theme park, the derivation of "Frozen" interlocked to create a complete derivative industry chain.

4.2. Evolution of Marketing Strategies

As times change, the marketing strategies of Disney films are also evolving to meet the new demands of the market and consumers. Digital transformation has become a significant feature of the

current strategy evolution. Disney uses big data, AI, and other cutting-edge technologies to accurately analyze audience behavioral preferences and implement personalized marketing strategies. For example, it relies on the intelligent recommendation system of social media platforms to push customized film information and interactive activities to target groups, which significantly improves marketing effectiveness.

Meanwhile, the importance of user-generated content (UGC) is increasing, and Disney actively encourages viewers to share their feelings about the film on social media, create derivative works (such as homage, COSPLAY), and enhance the sense of participation and belonging through interactive mechanisms (likes, comments, retweets), thus consolidating brand loyalty and influence [7].

In addition, Disney also continues to explore the application of new technologies (VR, AR) and the development of personalized experiences to maintain brand competitiveness and attractiveness. For example, the use of VR technology allows viewers to experience the film scenes immersively, or AR technology to achieve the integration of film elements and the real world, providing viewers with an unprecedented immersive and interesting viewing experience.

4.3. Intercultural Communication Strategies

Disney has rich and successful experience in the field of cross-cultural communication, which is deeply reflected in its animated films. Zootopia tells a universal story from a global perspective while integrating multicultural elements across geographical boundaries, triggering the resonance of global audiences. In terms of marketing strategy, Disney has implemented localized strategies for different markets, adjusting the promotional content and activities according to local cultural practices and audience preferences to enhance the film's affinity and acceptance.

The "Frozen" series, on the other hand, has given the film a deep cultural heritage and emotional value by tapping into and passing on traditional culture. The Nordic mythological elements and natural landscapes in Frozen 2 not only display unique cultural charms, but also inspire viewers to think deeply about nature, family, and self. In terms of marketing strategy, Disney has strengthened the film's cultural contagion and global influence by telling cultural stories and displaying cultural symbols, winning the love and respect of global audiences [8].

5. Recommendations and Expectations for Film Marketing in the Digital Age

In today's digital world, social media has become an indispensable and important channel for film promotion and marketing. To stand out in the future market, film companies need to keep innovating to attract and retain the attention of audiences.

1) Strengthen the strategic position of innovation: Film companies should be brave enough to open up new paths of publicity, such as using virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology to create an unprecedented immersive experience for the audience; or keeping up with the trend of using short videos, live broadcasts and other popular forms of media to deepen the level of interaction with the audience. At the same time, content creativity also needs to keep up with the times, keep up with the pulse of the times, and incorporate hot topics and popular elements to stimulate the audience's empathy.

2) Build an active social interaction ecosystem: Maintaining an active social media community is crucial to boosting audience engagement. Filmmakers can plan online quizzes, polling activities, creative challenges, etc. to stimulate audience participation and creative sharing. In addition, responding to audience feedback promptly and establishing a positive two-way communication mechanism will help deepen the audience's sense of belonging and brand loyalty.

3) Pursue excellence in content quality: High-quality content is the cornerstone of audience attraction. When producing promotional materials such as trailers, posters, and music videos, film operators should strive to give equal weight to both aesthetics and creativity and accurately convey the essence and emotional color of the film. At the same time, they should pay attention to the

diversity and inclusiveness of content to meet the aesthetic needs and expectations of different audience groups.

4) Deepen cross-cultural communication strategy: In the context of globalization, cross-cultural communication has become a bridge and an opportunity that film industry players must cross. Deep insight into the cultural background and audience preferences of the target market and the formulation of localized marketing strategies are the keys to enhancing the international influence of a film. At the same time, incorporating multicultural elements and perspectives into the film will help enhance its universal appeal and global resonance.

6. Conclusion

Through an in-depth analysis of the social media promotion and marketing strategies of Disney's animated films "Zootopia" and "Frozen 2", this study reveals Disney's successful practices in building brand influence and stimulating public attention and interest. The study points out that Disney's success stems not only from innovative content distribution and interactive campaigns but also from its in-depth insights into different market cultures and localization strategies. However, this study also has some limitations. Firstly, it fails to cover the marketing strategies of all Disney's animated films due to the limitation of time and resources of the study, and thus may not be able to fully reflect all of Disney's innovations and practices in the field of social media marketing. Second, this study mainly focuses on social media promotion and marketing strategies, while ignoring the impact of other important factors such as film quality and competitive market environment on film box office.

Future research directions can further explore the following aspects: firstly, the scope of the study can be expanded to analyze the marketing strategies of other Disney animated films, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of Disney's innovative practices in the field of social media marketing. Second, more data and cases can be combined to analyze in depth Disney's marketing strategy adjustments in different market environments and the specific impact of these strategies on the film box office. In addition, the social media marketing strategies of other animation production companies or the film industry can be explored to comparatively analyze Disney's uniqueness and what can be learned from it.

Overall, this study provides valuable experience and insights for the film industry, but further in-depth research is still needed to provide richer and deeper theoretical support for the innovation and development of film marketing strategies. With the continuous development of social media platforms and the continuous change in the film industry, the study of film marketing strategies will have more important practical significance and long-term value.

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