

Research On Marketing Strategy of Social Media Platform: A Case Study Based on Tiktok

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Abstract. In the context of the digital age, the frequency of using social media platforms in people's lives is increasing. This paper discusses the market overview, marketing strategies, success reasons and future prospects of Tik Tok as a new social media platform. The research methods include literature review and empirical analysis. The literature review section provides theoretical support for subsequent case analysis based on previous research results; Through specific cases and data, the empirical analysis shows the marketing strategies of TikTok as a representative of social media platform in different market environments. This study aspires to deliver valuable insights and strategic lessons for businesses and digital platforms by meticulously examining TikTok's digital marketing strategies. By delving into a profound analysis and offering a holistic assessment, this research endeavors to furnish substantial empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks. These contributions aim to deepen the comprehension and academic discourse surrounding TikTok's influence and competitive edge within the dynamic global social media landscape. Furthermore, the findings are anticipated to inspire innovative approaches to digital marketing, emphasizing the significance of adaptive and data-driven strategies in today's interconnected digital ecosystem.

Keywords: TikTok; social media; marketing strategies; case studies.

1. Introduction

With the development of technology and the Internet, social media platforms have become an important way to spread information in today's digital era. Especially in recent years, short videos have gradually come to the fore. With their short time and rich content expression forms, they have quickly attracted the public's attention in a large number of social media, especially TikTok. Since its launch in September 2016, they have gained a large number of users' love by focusing on user generated content (UGC) mode, and through interaction mechanisms such as users' attention, likes, comments, etc., and also provided enterprises with new marketing channels and opportunities1]. The success of TikTok's marketing can also be reflected in data. As of October 2022, TikTok has more than 1 billion registered users, including 880 million daily active users. These figures reflect the huge user participation of TikTok in the field of social media.

Previous studies have extensively explored the importance and impact of social media platforms in marketing. The purpose of this paper is to study and analyze the platform marketing strategy of TikTok and reveal the key factors that can make it stand out from many We Media platforms. First, this research analyzes how TikTok can promote user creation and interaction through UGC mode, as well as its algorithm recommendation mechanism and market performance, so as to improve the attractiveness and communication effect of the platform. Secondly, we will discuss TikTok's marketing strategies, including content marketing, advertising strategy, local language marketing and live streaming. In addition, we will also discuss the successful opportunities and challenges TikTok faces at present and put forward some suggestions for its future development in combination with the current market situation.

The 4Ps is a commonly used concept in marketing, representing Product, Price, Place and Promotion. These elements are the core elements that must be considered and balanced in marketing strategies and can help businesses effectively promote and sell their products or services in the market. Based on the concept of 4Ps, this paper hopes to comprehensively analyze the platform characteristics and marketing practices of TikTok, reveal the secret behind its success, and further promote the

development and innovation of digital marketing by discussing the actual strategies and application effects of TikTok's successful marketing.

2. Overview of TikTok Market

2.1. Origin and Development

TikTok is a music creative short video social platform launched in September 2016 with Byte Dance. Its positioning is a platform that helps users express themselves and record their beautiful lives. Users can post videos on the platform, as well as add special effects, background music, initiate topics, and perform actions such as commenting and liking on the content. On May 12, 2017, TikTok, the overseas version of TikTok, was launched in Google Store and officially launched to the global market in 2018. By 2021, TikTok has become one of the most popular social media applications in the world.

2.2. Introduction to Main Gameplay

TikTok mainly focuses on short videos of 15 to 60 seconds, adopts the UGC mode, highlights users' creativity and entertainment short videos, and provides creative tools, including a large number of pictures, video templates, content effects, filters, and sound effects, so that users can quickly use and create content, and caters to the needs of modern social media users for fast access to content and information, which can significantly improve user participation and retention [2].

TikTok platform covers a variety of topics, from funny, food to life, current events and other aspects of content creation, attracting users with different cultural backgrounds and interests, making it a global social platform today. In addition, depending on its powerful algorithm system, TikTok can recommend relevant content to users according to their historical viewing behavior and preferences, so as to achieve personalized content customization and extension of relevant content, thereby increasing user retention and participation.

In addition, TikTok has also developed another form of e-commerce, which enables information transmission between businesses and users through short videos, enabling users to participate in the purchase, sales, comparison and sharing of information of products and services in online communities and markets [3]. Compared with traditional e-commerce, the new social commerce developed by TikTok strengthens the interaction between buyers and sellers and can also promote the faster decision-making process of product or service purchase.

2.3. Market Performance

As of October 2022, TikTok has more than 1 billion registered users and 880 million daily active users. TikTok not only dominates the market in Chinese Mainland, but also develops rapidly worldwide, including Southeast Asia, India, Europe, America and other regions, and has formed a community of different languages and cultures.

According to the Analysis on the Competition Pattern and Market Share of China's Short Video Industry in 2023, China's short video industry can be divided into three competitive echelons and ten major competitive factions [4]. The representative companies in the short video industry include: TikTok, Kwai, Tencent, Baidu, Bilibili, etc. As a mainstream Internet application, the market competition pattern of short video industry is relatively stable. From the number of active users, TikTok short video and Kwai short video rank first in the industry. The active users of these two short video platforms account for more than five levels of the overall market size, and TikTok's user size is even better.

The data in the second quarter of 2022 shows that, in terms of the traffic value of users, TikTok's data is up to 54.6 billion yuan, ranking the leading position in the short video industry. Due to the high number of competitors in the current Chinese short video market, there is fierce competition among various factions and major platforms competing with each other. At the same time, short video platforms are facing cross-border substitution threats from traditional video and social platforms. As

upstream suppliers of video platforms, content producers have certain bargaining power over the platform because they rely on the platform to promote and advertise their content. As for the downstream of short video platforms, including content distribution platforms and users, due to the large number of short video platforms in the market, users have strong choices. In addition, due to the high barriers to entry into the short video industry, core technical support is needed to achieve precise content distribution and establish high user stickiness, so the threat of new entrants is relatively small [4].

2.4. Overseas Market Situation

In recent years, TikTok has been successfully extended to many countries and regions, including but not limited to Southeast Asia, India, Europe and the Americas. According to App trace data, the TikTok application is currently available in 154 countries/regions and offers 75 different language versions, ranking in the top 25 out of 135 countries/regions. Each market has a specialized localization strategy to adapt to the cultural and language preferences of local users. On May 1st, Sensor Tower, an application market research company, released its Q1 2018 report on the mobile application market. Data shows that since its launch in 2016, "TikTok" and "TikTok" international versions have been downloaded 45.8 million times, surpassing Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and other applications to become the most downloaded apps in the world's Apple Store. According to the official data released by TikTok, as of June 2023, the number of global users of TikTok has exceeded 1 billion, indicating that TikTok has become one of the most popular short video platforms in the world [1].

At the beginning, social networking platforms such as Facebook and Twitter dominated, establishing user identities and social connections through account registration. These platforms facilitated communication and content sharing among users. With the rise of mobile Internet, these platforms have rapidly expanded from websites to mobile applications, facilitating users to access social media services at any time [2]. With the diversification of the pattern in recent years, YouTube and TikTok have attracted a large number of viewers by uploading short videos. Users' demand for graphics, video, audio and other content formats is also growing. The overseas version of Tiktok TikTok perfectly meets users' new pursuit, providing a large number of image and video templates and special effects to facilitate users' creation and content sharing. At the same time, it provides a customized recommendation mechanism to recommend relevant content according to users' browsing preferences, so as to increase user participation and retention.

Not only that, with the development of TikTok's audience and scale, the platform has launched a series of new gameplay such as live streaming, integrated e-commerce shopping functions, and provided users with a better shopping and trading experience.

3. TikTok's Marketing Strategy

At the initial stage of launch, TikTok mainly targeted young user groups in tier one and tier two cities, because they had a high acceptance of emerging things and were willing to try new social media platform applications. Video content also focused on social hot spots, social trends and music. Until now, as a comprehensive content product, Tiktok TikTok's short video content is currently available to users of all ages and regions, including music, dance, tourism, life, food and other categories. Indicating that the target range of TikTok's marketing strategy is gradually expanding to a larger age group [5].

3.1. multi-dimensional Marketing

According to the product strategy analysis in the "4Ps" analysis, a major highlight of TikTok is the diversified gameplay brought by its recommendation algorithm. Through one level, multiple level, and popular recommendations, high-quality food is selected and pushed on the site, allowing users to see the most exciting and popular videos. Based on this, the multi-dimensional interactive play of TikTok has attracted the active participation of users, further improving the interaction and stickiness

between users and the platform. Users are not only the audience of short videos, but also the creators of short video content. Users can follow popular trends or their own interests to generate video content and upload it to the platform for other users to watch. However, at the same time, as users see more and more homogeneous videos, they may feel bored while watching clearly homogeneous content, which can lead to aesthetic fatigue and creative exhaustion among users [6].

Since the birth of TikTok, it has developed a marketing model that increases fan interaction through celebrity promotion and consumer seeding, namely the "KOL+KOC" (Key Opinion Leader plus Key Opinion Customer) marketing model. In July 2018, TikTok launched the "Star Map" platform, which provides services for brand MCN and KOL trading content. TikTok gathered a large number of well-known KOLs through the official platform, providing a more convenient channel for brands to find suitable KOLs for cooperation and marketing, providing more opportunities for KOL, and also promoting them to produce high-quality short video content.

3.2. Advertising Placement Strategy

TikTok's advertising marketing mainly includes information flow advertising, native advertising and brand advertising. Information flow advertisements mainly appear in users' video streams, integrated with ordinary user content, displaying their advertising identity with certain identifiers. Usually, such advertisements attract users' attention through attractive product thumbnails. The content is short and concise and can quickly convey the brand's core psychology and the main value of the product; Compared with information flow advertising, native advertising is more integrated into the user experience of the TikTok platform, including not only video advertising, but also challenges, TikTok cooperation, interactive Q&A and other forms. This kind of advertising usually cooperates with popular TikTok creators and combines user generated content UGC and short videos to enhance the trust of the brand in the minds of users. Hashtag Challenge is a form of advertising [5], which can be promoted organically by brands or through KOC. It includes users using tags to create and upload content. If it is sponsored by brands or any company, it will carry tags with advertising instructions, through the display and click of advertising, The number of videos generated and the interaction with users and other indicators are used to measure the promotion of such ads; Brand special effects advertising often appears during specific holidays and events, using unique visual effects and special effects techniques to attract user attention.

3.3. Localized Marketing

According to different regions of users, TikTok can customize targeted activities, which often include promotional activities, TikTok Challenge, etc. in cooperation with brands, to increase the sense of belonging and participation of users; Another aspect of localized marketing is to promote brands or products by cultivating local influencers. For example, in the local module of TikTok, we can see that many local experts or bloggers promote local restaurants by video. The advantage of this type of marketing method is that local experts can generally better understand and convey the local culture and consumer psychology, and more effectively enhance the brand recognition in the minds of local users [7].

3.4. Selling Goods through Livestreaming

Live streaming marketing is a new form of online marketing that combines the characteristics of video live streaming, social media, and e-commerce. Compared with traditional online marketing forms (images, text, or prerecorded videos), live streaming marketing has more unique features and is more attractive to consumers. Based on Liang & Wang's research on consumers' trust and commitment to live streaming e-commerce, they developed a research model based on the theory of trust commitment. By surveying 412 live streaming e-commerce users and testing them, they found that consumers' trust in live streaming e-commerce platforms and hosts is influenced by cognitive, emotional, and social factors, while purchase commitment is influenced by psychological and economic factors. The enhancement of trust and commitment helps to increase consumers'

willingness to purchase and reputation, but the moderating effects of different types of products on these factors vary. Live streamers can showcase the features, functions, advantages, or usage scenarios of products or services in a more direct and persuasive way [8].

4. Reason Analysis and Development Challenge of TikTok's Success

4.1. Reasons for the Success of TikTok

4.1.1 The algorithm and functions of TikTok

Like most software today, TikTok's algorithm is a recommendation algorithm based on user habits and favorite content. Based on users' interests, comments, and playback completion, TikTok intelligently recommends similar videos to users, and during the user's video browsing period, it recommends relevant product advertisements to users based on their recent browsing history. In addition, TikTok has also established a popular search list and a celebrity list. Users can receive hot trends on TikTok in real time, so that more users can participate in the interaction. Compared with YouTube, YouTube only provides users with the content they want to see in their search. Users actively accept information, and videos are mainly long videos. TikTok automatically pushes relevant videos based on users' likes and collections. Videos are passively received by users, which can make users more attractive and immersive. And because TikTok is mainly short videos, it is easier for users to immerse themselves in endless video streams. This is why more people like to browse TikTok in fragmented time, and TikTok also successfully occupies users' usual fragmented practice, which is also the magic of TikTok algorithm [9].

4.1.2 The content generation mechanism of TikTok

The content creators of TikTok short videos not only include professional generated content PGC, but also most of them are generated from user generated content UGC, which greatly improves user activity and plays a role in entertainment and social networking. Through the form of user generated content spontaneously, it can also drive other user groups to participate in the process of content generation, from video production to release to management, forming a relatively mature content ecosystem, and in this process, it can increase the number of fans and playback of individuals on the platform, which is an important reason why TikTok can continuously attract users to produce more innovative content. At the same time, PGC is introduced, which covers professional media communication personnel, including self-media teams, professional entertainment teams and other vertical fields, greatly improving the quality and widespread promotion of short videos [10].

4.2. Development Challenge of TikTok

4.2.1 Challenge 1- content homogenization issue

TikTok's algorithm recommendation mechanism recommends the same type of video content for users based on their historical browsing data and favorite video types. However, too precise recommendation will lead to too unified video content recommended to users, resulting in homogeneity of viewing content. This phenomenon will inevitably reduce users' viewing interest and participation to a certain extent, thus damaging users' trust and loyalty, and causing loss of users to the platform. Therefore, the platform needs to guide social hot spots to enable creators in UGC to generate more creative and social trend video content. Live streamers also need to focus on content innovation and differentiated operations, creating more diverse and attractive live content for users.

4.2.2 Challenge 2- product quality and service assurance

After the development of TikTok e-commerce, TikTok platform should pay more attention to customer satisfaction and trust. Although live streaming e-commerce is currently a relatively emerging trend, compared with traditional e-commerce websites (such as Taobao, JD, etc.), TikTok platform is just a social media platform with additional e-commerce platform attributes, and it also needs to greatly enhance the service and product quality of merchants to maintain customer

satisfaction; On the other hand, live streamers should be more honest about their product features and information, avoid using exaggerated language to mislead users, and regularly inspect product quality to respond promptly and professionally to customer feedback and complaints about the product.

5. Conclusion

This paper deeply analyzes the market overview, user data, marketing strategy, the reason why TikTok can stand out from many social media platforms and the challenges it faces in the future development as a very popular social media platform. Through the discussion of the origin, development and market of TikTok, we know that TikTok has attracted a large number of user groups through its core algorithm recommendation mechanism and user interaction mode and has taken a leading position in the fierce market competition through innovative marketing strategies. In just a few years, TikTok has not only achieved great success in the Chinese market, but also has a strong influence and growth potential worldwide. The research of this paper not only provides insight into TikTok and its success factors, but also provides theoretical and practical guidance for relevant researchers and market practitioners. However, the data source of this study can only be based on public data and specific survey samples, which may lead to an incomplete understanding of TikTok user behavior and market impact. Future research can conduct more in-depth studies on users, including their behavior patterns, preferences, and so on, through in-depth qualitative research or big data analysis.

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