

Content Ecosystem Construction of Soul App: Analysis based on User Behavior

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Abstract. In the era of rapid development of mobile Internet, Soul App, as a new social star focusing on soul communication and interest matching, its content ecosystem construction is crucial to consolidate its market position and enhance user experience. This study uses the SWOT analysis framework to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that Soul App faces in building a content ecosystem based on user behavior data. The study shows that Soul App demonstrates strong momentum in terms of user size, usage hours, and activity. However, Soul App still has potential for improvement in terms of content diversity and creation incentives. Therefore, this study proposes that Soul App should strengthen content ecosystem construction. Soul App can take measures such as cross-border cooperation and co-branding, innovative forms of content creation and display, and encouragement of user-creation mechanisms so that Soul App can maintain its leading position in the highly competitive social application market and realize sustainable development.

Keywords: Soul app, content ecosystem construction, user behavior, swot analysis.

1. Introduction

With the innovation of mobile communication technology and the increase in the penetration rate of smart mobile devices, the number of Internet users and mobile users in China continues to increase. As of December 2023, China's Internet penetration rate reached 77.5%, representing a 1.9-percentage-point increase from December 2022. Meanwhile, the size of China's cell phone netizens reached 1.091 billion, an increase of 25.62 million from December 2022. Of these netizens, 1.059 billion are engaged in social media and other forms of instant messaging via mobile devices. The data indicate that social applications have become an indispensable component of individuals' daily routines.

Nowadays, China's social application field shows a new pattern of diversified development, forming three distinct and intertwined mainstream trends: acquaintance socialization, public socialization, and stranger socialization [1]. Stranger socialization is different from the acquaintance socialization represented by WeChat and QQ, as well as the public socialization represented by Weibo and TikTok. Stranger socialization breaks the limitations of traditional socialization and lowers the threshold of socialization so that users have a higher degree of freedom to broaden their social circle, which is loved by network users. Under this trend, stranger social platforms represented by Soul App suddenly emerged, and its unique decentralization as well as the dilution of personal identity successfully attracted the attention of young groups, among which Generation Z has become a key force in the development of stranger social software [2].

Soul App was launched in 2016, with "soul socialization" as the core concept, which attracts a large group of Generation Z users. Concurrently, Soul App's built-in anonymity feature, cutting-edge meta-universe social model, and rich interactive features make it a favorite among young people. As of January 2024, 46.16 million people were active on the product, with more than 10 million active dailies [3]. From July 2023 to July 2024, Soul App demonstrated a consistent performance, ranking within the top 10 of the free social charts on the APP STORE. However, the Soul platform faces many challenges and competition in the increasingly competitive social market. How Soul App can maintain its unique competitive advantage and further expand its market share has become a matter of discussion. This paper aims to elucidate the present circumstances, challenges, and prospective

opportunities of Soul App in constructing a content ecosystem. Through SWOT analysis based on user behavior, the content ecology of Soul App is comprehensively evaluated, and suggestions for constructing the content ecology are put forward to provide useful references for the future development of Soul App.

2. SWOT Analysis

2.1. Strengths

2.1.1. Soul App Has High User Stickiness

As of January 2024, Soul App has been used for 377,818,000 hours, reaching 66.36 minutes per capita per day [3]. The number of launches of Soul App is 5,180,020,400 times, and the number of daily launches per capita is 15.17 times [3]. These data show the deep dependence and high stickiness of users on the platform. High stickiness helps enhance users' loyalty and sense of belonging to the platform's content, laying a solid foundation for the stable development of the content ecosystem.

2.1.2. Young and High-Spending Power User Groups

Soul App's user targeting strategy is oriented towards a younger demographic, specifically those under 40. This type of user group usually has strong consumer willingness and purchasing power. And they are highly receptive to new things. Meanwhile, among the consumer groups of Soul App, middle-high consumers accounted for 33.09%, medium consumers accounted for 30.23%, and medium-low consumers accounted for 18.15% [3]. Therefore, Soul App has a significant advantage in attracting brand cooperation and advertising and can provide more business resources and financial support for the construction of the content ecosystem.

2.1.3. Huge User Base and High Activity.

Soul App has 46.16 million monthly active users and a stable average of 11.016 million daily active users [3]. The data shows that the Soul App has a high level of user activity, which provides a large audience and a constant source of power for the construction of the Soul App content ecosystem. This high level of activity means that users continue to pay attention to and engage with the platform's content, which is conducive to the development of the content ecosystem.

2.1.4. Unique Socialization Model

From its inception to the present, Soul App's product slogan has been "Follow the soul to find you"[4]. The core positioning of Soul App is soul socialization, different from the appearance socialization and hormone socialization represented by Hello Group and Tan Tan, to create a differentiated stranger socialization product [4]. Soul is based on the user's interest map and the results of the soul test, for users to "soul match", so that users can effectively find like-minded friends. Furthermore, Soul App is committed to creating meta-universe socialization for young people. Unlike other platforms, Soul App does not allow users to upload images of individuals as avatars. Instead, it provides users with a virtual character image as an avatar, thereby ensuring a pure communication space. Users can customize their personalized image with 3D face pinching according to their preferences.

2.2. Weaknesses

2.2.1. Slowdown in User Growth

The number of active users of Soul App increased from 34.0457 million in January 2023 to 46.16 million in January 2024, with month-on-month increases of 8.11% in April, 8.40% in May and 8.54% in January, respectively [3]. March, June, and November showed negative month-on-month growth of -2.91%, -0.87%, and -3.14% respectively [3]. Although the user scale of Soul App in the past year has grown as a whole, the growth rate has declined and fluctuated greatly. This indicates that Soul App is facing some challenges in attracting new users and maintaining the activity of old users. In

addition, Soul App also showed a slowing growth trend in per capita daily use time and startup times, and per capita daily use time increased by less than 1.68% from June 2023 to January the following year, of which the month-on-month growth decreased to -4.16% in August [3]. From June to January of the following year, the month-on-month growth of startup times was lower than 1.92%, and the month-on-month growth decreased to -1.48% in September [3]. The resulting increase in activity from user growth is not significant. This could mean that the platform is deficient in terms of content ecology and user experience. Negative growth in Soul App startup times and hours of use per capita further indicates the challenges Soul App faces in terms of growth momentum and content appeal.

2.2.2. Content Regulation Issues

The growth in user scale and content volume has made Soul face greater challenges in content regulation. How to ensure the authenticity and legality of content and prevent the spread of undesirable information is an issue that Soul App needs to continuously focus on and solve.

2.3. Opportunities

2.3.1. Meta-Universe Development Trends

With the rise and development of the meta-universe concept, Soul App, as one of the pioneers of the social meta-universe, is actively utilizing the technological characteristics and development trends of the meta-universe to further expand its content ecosystem and user base. By integrating cutting-edge technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality, Soul App can provide users with a more realistic and interesting social experience, enhancing their sense of participation and belonging. Moreover, the cross-platform compatibility of the meta-universe provides Soul App with a more extensive market space, thereby helping it to attract a greater number of users and consolidate its market position.

2.3.2. Brand Marketing Cooperation

Soul App has a large-scale Generation Z user base and an active community atmosphere, attracting the attention of many brands. Through brand cooperation in content marketing, Soul App can enrich the content ecosystem while increasing brand influence and commercial value. Soul has already cooperated with brands such as WALOVI, JD Pets Chevrolet, etc. In cooperation with WALOVI, Soul combined the characteristics of the platform to fully open the “Soul Matching” function, and tailor-made a “Don't be afraid of fire, be the King of Summer” Soul Matching Day campaign for WALOVI. “Soul utilized the topic linkage between WALOVI and King of Glory to guide users to generate a large amount of social content related to the brand, forming a huge amount of content precipitation for WALOVI's summer marketing. Through keyword eggs, linked searches, topic discussions, and private chats, WALOVI users as well as King of Glory users are targeted precisely.

2.3.3. AI Technology Empowerment

In recent years, Soul has been practicing the deep integration of AIGC + practice. The soul has already launched such technological innovations as the intelligent recommendation system “Ling Xi”, the self-developed language model “Soul X”, and the intelligent dialog robot “AI Gou Egg”. This shows that Soul seizes the general trend of AI development and utilizes these technologies to improve the efficiency and quality of content creation, strengthen content supervision and auditing, etc., to promote the construction of the content ecosystem, and enhance the user experience.

2.4. Threats

2.4.1. Fierce Competition in The Market

The social apps market has been highly competitive in recent years, with apps of the same type popping up all the time. Soul is facing competitive pressure from other social apps, such as Hello Group, Tan Tan, Jimu Hertz, etc. Competitors are challenging Soul's user growth by introducing more innovative functions or services. Competitors are challenging Soul's user growth by offering more innovative functions or services to attract users' attention. Soul has to pay attention to its competitors

anticipate changes in the market and adjust its strategic plan in time to cope with the competitive challenges.

2.4.2. Changes in User Demand

As Soul's user base is gradually growing, users' demand for content is also growing and becoming more diversified. Meanwhile, Soul's user group is mainly young people, who pursue fresh, interesting, and in-depth content. Therefore, Soul needs to gain insight into the preferences of young users, and continuously enrich and optimize its content ecosystem to meet the interests and needs of different users.

3. Discussion

Based on the data of user behavior and SWOT analysis, it can be concluded that Soul urgently needs to strengthen its ecological content construction at the current stage of development.

First of all, the continuous growth of user scale and activity, as well as the high performance of user stickiness, has built a solid user base for Soul. However, this also means that users' expectations of the platform's content are rising. Therefore, to meet the growing and diversified needs of users, Soul needs to continuously enrich and optimize its content ecosystem to provide more appealing and valuable content to further consolidate and enhance user stickiness.

Secondly, from the perspective of SWOT analysis, although Soul has a large user base and high activity, there is still potential for improvement in content ecology. Competitors attract users through innovative content strategies, while Soul must strengthen its content construction and create unique content advantages if Soul wants to maintain its leading position in the fierce market competition. By providing rich, high-quality, and differentiated content to enhance users' sense of belonging and loyalty, it effectively reduces the threat of external competition.

Ultimately, the construction of content ecology is also the key to Soul's commercialization development. A high-quality content ecosystem can attract more brand cooperation and advertising, bringing considerable commercial revenue to the platform. At the same time, through content marketing and community operation, Soul can deeply explore the value of users and realize the virtuous cycle of users and businesses.

In summary, to continue to attract and retain users, enhance the competitiveness of the platform, and promote the commercialization process, the Soul platform needs to attach great importance to and strengthen its ecological content construction. By continuously optimizing the quality of content, enriching the content form, and improving the user experience, Soul will be able to build a more prosperous and active social ecology, creating greater value for users and the platform.

4. Content Ecology Construction Recommendations

4.1. Cross-border Cooperation and Co-branding

Emotional attachment is directly linked to the user's intention of the Soul [5]. Cross-border cooperation and co-branding can enrich the content ecology of Soul, provide diverse interactions and topics, and enhance the emotional resonance and social value of users, thus deepening their emotional attachment to Soul and increasing their intention to use it.

First of all, the Soul platform can attract more users by cooperating with famous domestic and foreign clothing brands. Soul can cooperate with clothing brands to make 3D virtual clothes from real clothes so that users have more choices when dressing up their virtual images. At the same time, Soul can also try to develop technology that allows 3D virtual clothing to be displayed on the user's body. This approach not only improves user stickiness but also enhances the playability of the platform. Secondly, Soul can cooperate with popular IPs; Soul can cooperate with popular games, anime, movies, and TV dramas, launching virtual images of popular characters and the same character clothing, and utilizing the popularity of IPs to quickly attract fan groups. In addition, Soul can set up

exclusive chatting scenes and dialogues for the characters in the existing Echoes of Otherworld function, invite original voice actors to select some sound clips of the original works and use AI recognition and synthesized voice technology to dub the chats. In this way, users can feel as if they were in the world of IP, interacting with their favorite characters in depth, thus strengthening the platform's content ecosystem construction. The soul can also organize online-themed activities around popular IPs, such as launching topic challenges, plot creation contests, etc., encouraging users to create and share relevant content, enriching the platform's content through users, and forming a strong community atmosphere. Finally, Soul can cross the border to cooperate with some cultural creations and artists. In addition to Soul's opening of digital collections and cooperative avatar content in the NAWA Store, Soul can also produce some offline peripherals for commercialization. At the same time, Soul has not yet carried out personalized services such as personalized skin changes, avatar pendants, start screens, App icons, etc. The soul can develop these function boards and cooperate with cultural museums and artists for theme design.

4.2. Innovative Forms of Content Creation and Presentation

First, the Soul can enrich the form of content. Soul can open up short videos, live broadcasts, comics, animations, and other forms of content to enrich the platform's content ecology. For example, Soul can explore virtual live broadcasting technology, or realize live broadcasting without looking at the face according to the existing 3D pinch face form. This way to allow more users to participate in it, it also improves user stickiness while enriching the content. Second, Soul can utilize AI to empower content creation. By harnessing the power of AI, companies can now generate more attractive, relevant, and timely personalized content based on target audience preferences and interests [6]. For example, in AI editing video, AI can form the corresponding video according to the user's requirements, help users to create, reduce the threshold of creation, and improve the efficiency of user creation. AI helps users easily create high-quality, creative content, to meet the diverse expression needs of users. Finally, Soul can open up the function of supporting the co-creation of moments. For example, cooperative creation, relay creation, and other forms, so that more users participate in the process of content creation and enhance the user's sense of participation and sense belonging.

4.3. Optimize Content Creation and Incentives

First, establish a content creation fund system. Soul can provide financial support or income sources for quality content creators through this method, encouraging creators to continue to produce quality content to attract more users. Secondly, Soul can bring in content creators from the outside. Soul can look for content creators with a large fan base or potential from other apps so that flow transfer from other platforms can be realized through content creators. Finally, improve the content audit and reward mechanism. Soul should further strengthen the content audit, supervise the text, photos, audio, and other content posted by users, reduce the occurrence of low-quality content (such as inappropriate language, abusive language, obscenity, and other offensive content), and improve the user experience. At the same time, for users who create a good community atmosphere, actively participate in the interaction, and contribute to the community building, appropriate rewards will be given (e.g., beautiful medals, special titles, appropriate Soul coins, more exposure, etc.).

5. Conclusion

This thesis elucidates the behavioral characteristics of Soul user groups through a comprehensive analysis of their behavioral data. Soul builds a solid ecological foundation among the young and energetic user groups by its unique social model and precise user positioning. In the face of increasingly fierce market competition and diversified content needs of users, Soul should focus on deepening ecological content construction. Through cross-border cooperation and co-branding, innovative content creation and display forms, as well as optimizing content creation and incentive mechanisms and other strategies, Soul will continue to improve the quality and diversity of content,

thus enhancing user stickiness and platform attractiveness. Specifically, cross-border cooperation and co-branding can bring in fresh elements and broaden the boundaries of content. Innovative content creation and display forms can stimulate users' interest and enhance the interactive experience. Optimizing content creation and incentive mechanisms can effectively motivate content creators and ensure the continuous output of high-quality content. Additionally, Soul also needs to pay close attention to the dynamic changes in user behavior and flexibly adjust its content strategy to meet the growing personalized needs of users. In summary, Soul App should focus on the core of ecological content construction and continue to explore and practice cross-border cooperation, content innovation incentive mechanism optimization, and other strategies, to build a richer, more active, and attractive content ecosystem, to consolidate and expand its competitive advantage in the field of social media and achieve sustainable development and long-term success.

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