

The Influence of Product Personification on Consumer Emotional Connection and Purchase Intention —— Take MIXUE as an Example

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Abstract. In the context of rapid digitalization, product personification has become a key marketing strategy. This study examines its impact on consumers' emotional connections and purchase intentions, using MIXUE as a case study. As consumer behavior evolves, understanding the effectiveness of product personification is essential. Theoretically, the study enriches marketing theory, especially in consumer psychology and brand management. Practically, it offers guidance for brand marketing decisions. Using process tracking, the research analyzes how MIXUE builds brand awareness and affinity through anthropomorphic image building, creating strong emotional connections with consumers. Results show that MIXUE reduces the psychological distance between the brand and consumers with personified design elements (e.g., the snowman identity, high saturation colors, and expressions) and marketing communications (e.g., social media interactions, offline activities, and the theme song). These strategies enhance emotional resonance, brand loyalty, and purchase intention. Anthropomorphic strategies are crucial in the consumer purchase path, aiding final purchase decisions through initial emotional connections. In conclusion, this study reveals the effectiveness of product anthropomorphic strategies in real markets and provides insights for other brands. Understanding and utilizing these strategies helps brands stand out and achieve long-term value in a competitive market.

Keywords: personification, marketing strategy, consumer.

1. Introduction

It is of great theoretical and practical significance to study the effect of product personification on consumers' emotional connection and purchase intention. At the theoretical level, this research helps to enrich and develop the research results of marketing theory, especially in the field of consumer psychology and brand management. At the practical level, this study can provide practical guidance for brand marketing decisions. By understanding the effectiveness of product personification and its impact on consumer behavior, it can help enterprises develop more targeted marketing strategies, so as to enhance the competitiveness of brands in the market.

The literature shows that product personification plays an important role in consumer cognition and emotional response. Aggarwal and McGill found that when the anthropomorphic features of products are consistent with the existing cognitive framework of consumers, they can trigger positive emotional responses and enhance brand loyalty and purchase intention [1]. In addition, the study found that different types of influencers have different influences on consumer decisions when promoting products. Virtual influencers are more practical when promoting practical products, while human influencers are more recognized by consumers when promoting hedonic products. Another study pointed out that brand anthropomorphic impression cues and interactive cues both have a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention, but the impact of interactive cues is more significant [2]. Meanwhile, psychological distance and information processing fluency play a partial mediating role in the influence of brand personification on purchase intention. Interdependent self-

constructing consumers have stronger purchase intention for interactive cues than independent self-constructing consumers.

MIXUE, as a successful brand, shows the unique advantages of this strategy through anthropomorphic image shaping. The combination of its brand communication, appearance design, cultural and social background and behavioral personification strategy has successfully promoted brand recognition and affinity, forming a strong emotional connection with consumers. This study takes MIXUE as a case, and uses the process tracking method in case study to deeply explore the impact of its anthropomorphic image building on consumers' emotional connection and purchase intention. By analyzing the concrete implementation and effect of MIXUE, the application effect and challenge of product personification in the actual market environment are revealed.

The goal of this study is to provide valuable insights and practical guidance for other brands in selecting and implementing product personification strategies through the successful experience of MIXUE. In today's increasingly competitive global market, brands need to constantly innovate to meet the increasingly diverse and personalized needs of consumers. Understanding and effectively using product personification strategies will help brands stand out in the market and maximize their long-term brand value.

2. Case Analysis

2.1. Product Personification Practice and Consumer Reaction

In today's highly competitive market environment, brands not only need to provide high-quality products and services, but also need to establish deep connections with consumers on an emotional level. MIXUE knows this well, through the clever use of anthropomorphic strategies, it has successfully created a friendly and highly recognizable brand image in the two dimensions of design elements and marketing communication. At the design level, MIXUE chose the lovely snowman as the brand logo, and made the brand image more vivid through rich expression design and bright color application. In terms of marketing communication, it transforms the brand into the friend of consumers through humorous advertising style and telling the growth story of snowmen, which greatly shortens the psychological distance between the brand and consumers. This comprehensive anthropomorphic strategy can not only help consumers to better understand and remember the brand and product, improve consumers' perception fluency, but also profoundly affect consumers' emotional reactions, and improve consumers' loyalty and goodwill [3].

2.1.1. An anthropomorphic strategy for the design elements

With the deepening of marketing research, Guoqing-Guo pointed out some of the core concepts and theory of psychology and sociology can well explain brand marketing strategy, consumer behavior and brand personification emphasis on the characteristics of human brand, can stimulate consumer Lenovo, let consumers more easily understand the brand information, reduce consumer strangeness of brand, close the distance between brand and consumers, and influence consumer attitudes and preferences for the brand [4].

In the selection of design elements, MIXUE uses anthropomorphic techniques to enhance the brand attraction. The brand selects the snowman as the iconic pattern in the image design. This image is not only lovely and moving, but also easy to be accepted by the majority of consumers, thus effectively enhancing the appeal and affinity of the brand. In terms of color application, the brand prefers to use high saturation colors, especially bright red. This bright color choice makes the snowman stand out from many visual elements and further enhance the recognition of the brand. In terms of expression design, the snowman image is endowed with anthropomorphic expressions, such as smile, blink. These subtle expression changes give the emotion of the brand people, making the brand image more vivid and lively.

2.1.2. The anthropomorphic practice of marketing communication

In the era of rapid development of digital media marketing, MIXUE closely follows the digital trend. In the practice of marketing communication, MIXUE also pays attention to the use of anthropomorphic techniques.

Communicating with consumers on major social media platforms. MIXUE uses Weibo, TikTok and other media platforms to release publicity videos with "Snow King" as the main image, hold online activities to attract a large number of fans, and follow the network trend and use the image of "Snow King" to produce a variety of theme videos consistent with the current network trend and release them, attracting more netizens' attention.

In addition to online marketing, MIXUE also has its own offline marketing methods. MIXUE makes use of its humorous advertising to personify the brand itself into friends or partners of consumers, and hold offline pop-up stores or theme parties, bringing the anthropomorphic image into life, and narrowing the distance between the brand and consumers.

In addition, taking its theme song "MIXUE BING CHENG TIAN MI MI" as an example, the lyrics are easy to understand, the tune is catchy, and its theme song has become the brand memory point of the majority of consumers to MIXUE. At the same time, in the construction of the brand story, MIXUE takes the snowman as the protagonist and tells a story of adventure growth. This emotional marketing strategy not only enhances the attraction of the brand, but also triggers the emotional resonance of consumers.

2.1.3. Analysis of consumers' emotional responses to anthropomorphic products

From the perspective of consumers, both anthropomorphic product design elements and marketing communication methods have had a profound impact on their emotional reactions. The image characteristics of Snow King in MIXUE make the brand more human. Consumers often have a strong sense of affinity when consuming. When the brand is endowed with human characteristics, consumers are more likely to regard it as the same kind or resonance object, thus generating a strong sense of identity. The brand story of MIXUE stimulates the emotional resonance of consumers by telling the adventure and growth experience of snowmen, and makes the brand occupy an important position in the hearts of consumers. At the same time, the humorous and interesting story content also makes consumers feel relaxed and happy when they have contact with the brand. This pleasant emotional experience further enhances the brand's goodwill and word-of-mouth communication effect.

3. The Influence of Product Anthropomorphism on Consumers' Purchase Behavior

3.1. Emotions

MIXUE has applied the principle of anthropomorphism to create the Snow King intellectual property (IP). The cute and accessible 'Snow King' is not only as an image representative of MIXUE, but also as a medium for establishing emotional resonance between the brand and consumers. Sociality Motivation, defined as an essential determinant about individual differences in anthropomorphic cognition, meaning that individuals universally need love, belonging, close attachment, and interpersonal connections. Individuals need and desire to establish social connections with others [5]. MIXUE uses the 'no positioning, no personality' multidimensional strategy to create the Snow King image, which allows different consumer groups to find resonance and project their emotions onto the Snow King. This strategy can enhance consumers' social motivation to select MIXUE's products. For example, MIXUE uses cute and high-saturation of red design elements to create the 'Snow King', which not only ensures recognizability but also evokes feelings of warmth and approachability among consumers. The theme song "MIXUE BING CHENG TIAN MI MI" is catchy and easy-to-sing, making it easier for consumers to feel sweet and happy, and transfer the positive feelings to MIXUE. Using the process of inductive reasoning, consumers search and retrieve the anthropomorphized product which offer incentive factor such as the anthropomorphized features

and emotions. The incentive factor can activate the consumer's emotional needs, and thus trigger resonance, increasing the emotional connection and purchase intention, and finally choose the product.

3.2. Path to Purchase - Initial Emotions Final Purchase Decision

The path to purchase of consumers can be divided into three stages: awareness, consideration and decision-making. When consumers realize their needs and gather information and plans to solve them, they transition into the second stage-consideration. During this phase, consumers will be more actively researching and evaluating alternative products. If a consumer's attitude can be changed in this stage, it significantly enhances their intention to purchase, and toward the final decision-making stage. MIXUE has given its products with human-like traits and emotions through the 'Snow King' IP. When 'Snow King' provides the emotional needs of consumers or evokes the consumer's past experiences, it fosters a deeper emotional connection between consumers and MIXUE. It makes the consumer more like a friend who shares emotional experiences with Snow King, leading to more positive evaluations for MIXUE's products. Consequently, this will help MIXUE stand out in the consideration stage and ultimately be chosen by the consumer.

3.3. Anthropomorphism vs. Non-Anthropomorphism

Compared with non-anthropomorphic products, the anthropomorphic image 'Snow King' can provide human characteristics, behaviors, and emotions that resonate with consumers on personal level. Once consumers perceive similarities and a sense of belonging towards 'Snow King', they will gradually transfer these positive sentiments to MIXUE's products with the 'Snow King' logo, resulting in enhanced evaluations thereof. Conversely, non-anthropomorphic products lack emotional connections with consumers and are better suited for functional or utilitarian purposes [6].

4. Theoretical Refinement, Promotion and Application of Product Personification Strategy

MIXUE by giving the "snow King" distinct character characteristics, making it a representative of the brand. Anthropomorphic theory emphasizes that giving non-human objects human characteristics, emotions, or intentions helps to create emotional connections. The Snow King's image design highlights cute and vivid facial expressions, such as smiling and blinking, as well as anthropomorphic behavioral features, such as singing and dancing. These designs not only increase visual affinity, but also make it easier for consumers to empathize emotionally.

Multi-channel interaction is one of the important strategies for the success of MIXUE. Snow King not only appears in advertisements and packaging, but also frequently appears on social media platforms and offline events. Through social media, brands are able to interact with consumers in real time, sharing the dynamics of Snow King, increasing exposure and affinity. Offline activities, such as store celebrations and fan meetings, further narrow the distance between Snow King and consumers. This multi-channel interaction effectively promotes brand loyalty.

Emotional resonance is at the heart of MIXUE's anthropomorphic strategy. By giving the Snow King human emotional and behavioral characteristics, the brand has successfully established an emotional connection with consumers. According to the theory of social motivation, consumers tend to personify objects when they have social connection needs. MIXUE has emotional interaction with consumers through social media and offline activities, making Snow King an emotional dependent object. The happy, excited and other emotions shown by Snow King in the video have resonated with consumers and enhanced the brand's love and dependence.

The success of MIXUE offers lessons for other brands. When it comes to creating anthropomorphic images, brands can enhance affinity by giving their mascots distinct character traits and human emotions. In terms of enhancing interactions, a multi-channel approach can effectively increase brand exposure and loyalty. Combining local cultural and social trends can help brands better integrate into the lives of consumers and improve their market competitiveness. The integrated

application of these strategies has significantly improved the brand's market competitiveness and consumer loyalty.

5. Conclusion

This paper explores the influence of product personification on consumers' emotional connection and purchase intention, and takes MIXUE as a case. The research conclusion points out that MIXUE has successfully shaped the brand image of "Snow King" through the anthropomorphic strategy, which has promoted the emotional connection and purchase intention of consumers. The anthropomorphic marketing strategy not only enhances the brand awareness and affinity, but also improves the brand loyalty and market competitiveness through multi-channel interaction and emotional resonance.

From the perspective of significance and influence, this research enriches the marketing theory, especially in the field of consumer psychology and brand management, and provides practical guidance for brands. As a new marketing strategy, product personification helps enterprises to stand out in the fiercely competitive market and maximize the brand value. At the same time, the research also provides valuable insights and references for other brands in selecting and implementing anthropomorphic strategies.

With the development of digitalization and information technology, the product personification strategy will be more diversified and complicated. Future studies could further explore the differences in responses of different consumer groups to product anthropomorphic, and the applicability of anthropomorphic strategies in different cultural and market contexts. In addition, in future research, people can also focus on the synergy of anthropomorphic strategies and other marketing strategies such as social media marketing and content marketing, so as to comprehensively improve the market performance of the brand.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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