The Impact of Social Media Marketing on the Mobile Game Industry--Take Glory of the Kings as an Example

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Abstract. Glory of the Kings is in a leading position in the mobile game industry, and its successful marketing strategy is worth learning from other mobile game manufacturers. This paper takes the marketing strategy of Glory of the Kings as an example to study how the mobile game industry should carry out more targeted marketing strategies according to the characteristics of different social media after the maturity of social media platforms. For social media with solid relationship characteristics, it is necessary to build a friend mechanism around the relationship link between users, strengthen the social attributes of games, enhance user stickiness, and carry out social marketing. For social media with weak relationship characteristics, marketing strategies closer to users should be adopted to stimulate users' interest and sense of participation, and interactive marketing should be conducted. Key opinion leaders should be utilized for content-heavy social media platforms to gain higher brand exposure and reach more target customers. It can also establish social media based on interest community, which can not only accumulate users but also feed back the game ontology and two-way drainage, complement each other to promote long-term operation and continue to expand the influence and possibility of game IP.

Keywords: Social media marketing, Mobile game industry, Glory of the Kings.

1. Introduction

1.1. Research background

According to the 2022 Communication Industry Statistics Bulletin released by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the total number of mobile phone users in China in 2022 is 1.683 billion, with a net increase of 40.62 million and a penetration rate of 119.2 per 100 people. That is 2.9 per 100 mobile phone users compared with the end of the previous year. The number of 5G mobile phone users reached 561 million, accounting for 33.3 percent of mobile phone users, up 11.7 percentage points from the end of the previous year. Mobile Internet access traffic reached 261.8 billion gigabytes, up 18.1 percent from the previous year. The average monthly mobile Internet traffic (DOU) reached 15.2GB per household per month, an increase of 13.8% over the previous year. In December, DOU reached 16.18GB/per household, 1.46GB/per household higher than at the end of last year Households. According to QuestMobile data, the net increase of Internet users in 2022 will be 22.14 million, marking a new high in the past three years, and the total number of mobile Internet users in China will exceed 1.2 billion. The penetration of the whole network continues to deepen steadily, especially the per capita usage time, which has increased significantly in the past year, and users' online engagement has become increasingly more assertive.

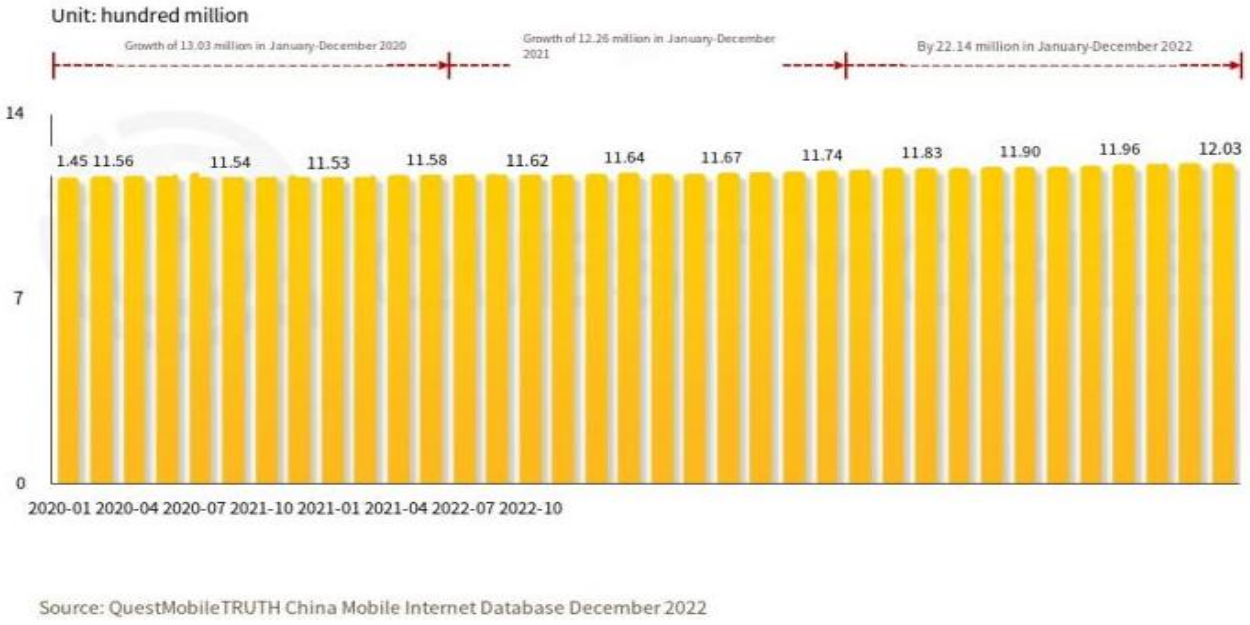


Fig. 1 Monthly active users of mobile Internet in China from 2020 to 2022

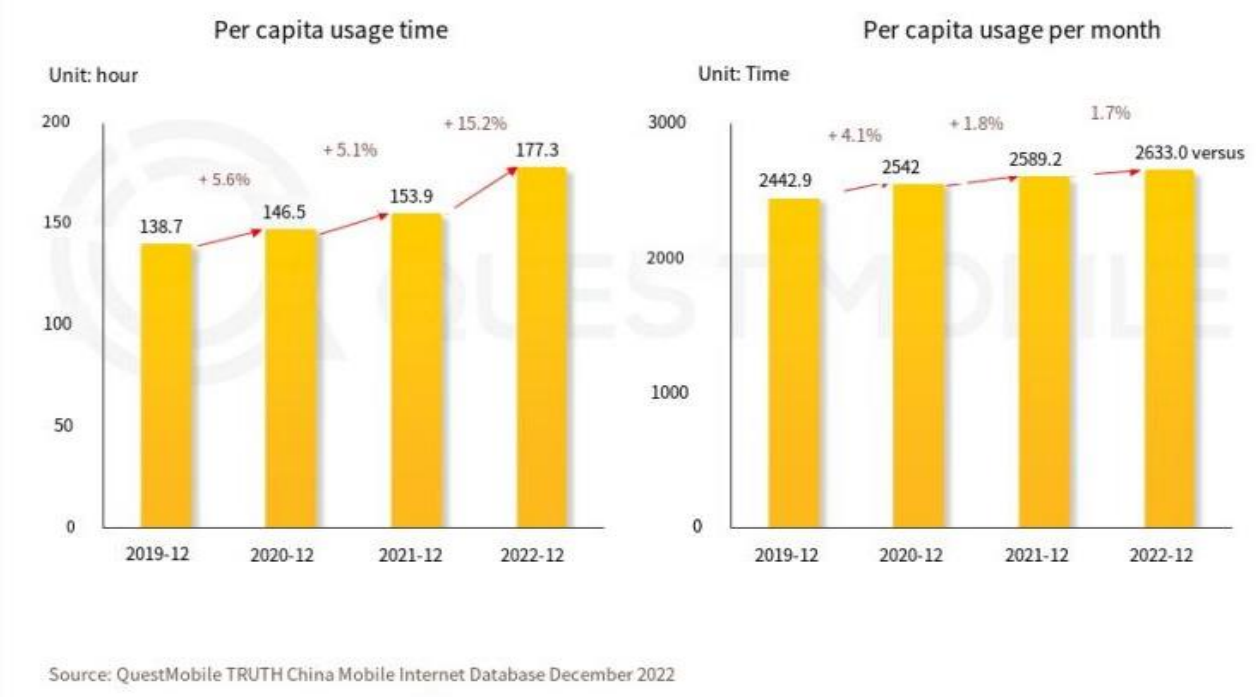


Fig. 2 Mobile Internet usage behavior in China from 2019 to 2022

The figure 1 and figure 2 show the usage of mobile Internet in China. The number of active mobile Internet users has reached 85% of the total people in China, and the duration and frequency of mobile Internet use continue to grow. Mobile Internet is more and more closely related to daily life. How to use mobile Internet to improve operation efficiency and obtain profits has become an essential issue for enterprises.

Mobile games are a form of games based on mobile Internet terminals. With the increasing penetration rate of mobile Internet, the mobile game industry is booming. Glory of the Kings is in a leading position in the mobile game industry, with more than 200 million users and more than 100 million daily active users, and its revenue ranks first all year round. The success of Glory of the Kings is closely related to the development of mobile Internet. Based on this background, this paper will analyze the marketing strategy of Glory of the Kings from the perspective of social media marketing.

1.2. Purpose and significance of the study

With the rapid development of the Internet, the number of social media platforms and the user base are increasing. For game manufacturers, social media marketing can get more free traffic. Rely on the social media platform for marketing operations through the platform's social attributes to gain much exposure. Social media platforms are in a highly mature stage, and game manufacturers have realized a problem: if the game products only pursue high exposure, a single form of social marketing can no longer meet users' needs. Therefore, if game manufacturers want to use social media marketing to achieve user growth, the primary consideration is how to enhance the insight of the user population and formulate effective strategies.

This paper studies Glory of the Kings from the social media marketing perspective. The research on social media marketing is in its infancy in China, and the relevant research has certain limitations; only some studies combine social media marketing with the mobile game industry. To a certain extent, this paper can fill the gap in related research fields in China and provide a theoretical basis for other scholars.

1.3. Literature review

In recent years, the research on the marketing strategy of Glory of the Kings developed gradually. Liu Yunfeng synoptically analyzes the marketing strategy of the Glory of the Kings [1], Qiao Yuqian explores the Glory of the Kings innovative marketing strategy [2], and then Ke Xu uses the 4 p theory from word of mouth marketing, network marketing, brand marketing, integrated marketing, Interactive marketing a comprehensive marketing strategy analysis of five aspects [3]. Xu Man discussed the influence of cross-border cooperation on the Glory of the Kings marketing strategy [4]. Yu Jiajia, from the perspective of the marketing scene, concluded that scenario building could focus on the brand audience, enrich the brand content, expand the brand communication channels, and enhance the brand communication effect conclusion [5]. Yao Dan and Liu Shiyan discussed the role of well-known IP in marketing strategy from the perspective of cultural marketing [6]. From the perspective of traditional Chinese culture, Xiao Yining discussed the consumer psychology that should be paid attention to when studying marketing strategies [7]. Gu Chongdong and Zhang Ruifang, based on the consumer behavior model, found that the satisfaction of psychological needs brought by role play was an essential factor in the success of marketing strategy [8]. From the perspective of marketing hegemony, Wang Zhaohui found that a manufacturer's marketing communication strategy is a concrete embodiment of its knowledge advantage, and these strategies provide a means for establishing its marketing hegemony [9].

Regarding social media marketing research, Shi Jianhui, Jing Ming, and Zhu Yan found that social media based on relationship connection formed a social media interaction circle model [10]. Xie Meifeng believes that in the application strategy of social media marketing, enterprises should pay attention to the close coordination of multiple channels and adhere to the content first [11]. Liu Bingling found that in social media marketing, marketers can quickly develop old consumer resources with the help of high convenience [12]. Liu Dan analyzed that the marketing strategy of social media should pay attention to the combination of marketing strategies and the construction of social platforms [13]. Tian Yuanyuan discussed the importance of "planting grass," key opinion leaders, and critical consumers in social media marketing [14].

2. Analysis of Glory of the Kings Social Media Marketing Strategy

2.1. Personal relationship social media marketing: WeChat, QQ

As of March 31, 2022, the combined number of monthly active accounts of WeChat and WeChat was 1.2883 billion, and according to the data released by Tencent in 2022, the number of monthly active users of the QQ terminal was 572 million. WeChat and QQ have become indispensable social media software for the Chinese people. WeChat and QQ are built on the nodes of "permission to

follow," and a large number of "familiar relationship nodes" form a relatively closed communication circle, which is more private and pays more attention to the interaction and communication between "circle friends." They have a strong relationship with social media. From the social marketing perspective, Glory of the Kings enables WeChat users to account log directly; the convenient Glory of the Kings connectivity mechanism is based on social media users' connected interpersonal relationships to carry out brand or product marketing. Glory of the Kings establishes a friend system. In addition to the friends added in the game, the friends with Glory of the Kings account in WeChat will also be displayed in the friend system. Users may not know that the WeChat friend also has an account with Glory of the Kings, so users can better play with their WeChat friends and strengthen the social attributes of Glory of the Kings. Glory of the Kings' friend system also has a "friendship rekindling" mechanism. When the user returns to the player more than 30 days after not playing with the user in the game online, they can get the reward. The mechanism using Glory of the Kings user relationships to promote the old player return increases user viscosity. At the same time, the user can share the game link directly to WeChat and friends via links to jump directly to the game, which is convenient and quick.

Glory of the Kings will also carry out social marketing through activities related to users' friends. During the Spring Festival, a friend team event is held, which is spread through social media such as WeChat. As long as the group's total spending amount reaches a certain amount, they will be rewarded together, and everyone's spending amount will be ranked. Team activities not only stimulate the sense of competition among friends within the team but also motivate users to spend more. In addition, Glory of the Kings will also publish the task of forming friends in daily activities to encourage users to strengthen their connection with their friends.

Glory of the Kings uses the above social marketing methods when marketing through QQ and uses QQ's rich functions to strengthen further the marketing strategy of using a relationship network. QQ users can show their achievements and skin of Glory of the Kings in the QQ profile card. In QQ intimate relationships, they can invite friends to become "king partners" and use the relationship network to strengthen user loyalty.

2.2. Open relationship social media marketing: Weibo

By the end of 2010, monthly active users of Weibo had reached 586 million. As an open social media platform, Weibo forms relationship nodes based on "voluntary attention" among users. Many nodes constitute an open social communication network, which tends to be open, has both interpersonal and mass communication properties, and belongs to a weak relationship with social media. As a tool and platform for users to share information, opinions, insights, experiences, and viewpoints, Weibo is a new type of online media that gives users a great space to participate, reflecting the instant communication and interaction between information publishers and information receivers. They can involve users for free, stimulate interested users to actively contribute and give feedback on their experience and feelings, and encourage users to make the most authentic voice because of their strong participation to make the spread of information more accessible. At the same time, the publishing threshold of microblogs is low, and the cost is far less than advertising, but the effect is not harmful. Microblog information supports various platforms, including mobile phones, computers, and other traditional media. There are various ways of transmission, and forwarding is very convenient. The use of the celebrity effect can make the propagation of the event geometrically. One of the most striking features of Weibo is its rapid spread. After a micro-blog triggers the micro-blog tipping point, interactive forwarding can reach every corner of the micro-blog world quickly, reaching the most significant number of witnesses in a short period. Micro-blog is highly interactive, can communicate with fans immediately, and get user feedback quickly. The activity form of "activity content+ prize + attention (forward/comment)" has always been the primary way of Weibo interaction.

As of August 2023, the official Weibo Honor of Kings account has 18.32 million followers. In the operation of the official account, the updated content of Weibo covers the competition promotion and event prediction of Glory of the Kings and forwards the lottery and peripheral purchases. Although it

has many fans, the official Weibo of Glory of the Kings is different. However, it uses a cute tone and a recent popular meme in the promotion, increasing the sense of personification and intimacy and narrowing the distance between it and other Weibo users. In the era of social media, communication emphasizes humanization and personalization, and "official words" and "press releases," in addition to playing a credit role in severe events, appear out of place in such a social and entertainment first place. Enterprises use a very humanized way to shape their image, not only narrowing the distance with the audience to achieve sound marketing effects but also the brand reputation and loyalty. This "low profile" publicity method can be closer to users, improve user participation, stimulate user interest in Weibo content, and get user experience and feedback in time. At the same time, the official microblog of Glory of the Kings often reposts lottery activities, effectively capturing the eyes of Weibo users and achieving sound publicity effects. The continuity of release is also an essential reason for the success of Glory of the Kings Weibo marketing, Glory of the Kings will publish at least three micro-blogs every day so that users can constantly get the latest information about the product brand. Overall, becoming the topic and object of user communication and conducting interactive marketing is the key to Weibo marketing.

2.3. Mobile video platform

A mobile video platform is a network platform that provides short video production, release, sharing, and viewing services. They often apply mobile Internet technology to enable people to create and watch short videos anytime and anywhere through mobile devices such as smartphones. These platforms are committed to meeting users' needs for entertainment, learning, sharing, and socializing through video content spontaneously uploaded by users and helping content creators achieve personal influence and commercial value improvement. At the same time, short video platforms usually have robust algorithms and data support, which can accurately push content according to users' interests, browsing records, and social relationships to obtain more user growth and business cooperation opportunities.

The mobile video platform has strong interactive and even characteristics. It is more vivid and pictorial than text and photos, and the content is full of three-dimensional sense, gradually becoming an essential carrier of mobile terminal social. The "comment function" strengthens users' online discussion and enhances users' strictness; the "like function" enhances the attention of the video; the "forwarding function" enables other users to forward the video on their social platforms, expanding the scope of the video's dissemination and improving the communication effect of the video; the "following function" receives the message and interacts with the video immediately after the attention. These functions greatly mobilize people's enthusiasm to create and watch videos and have solid social attributes.

Nowadays, mobile video platforms make it easy for consumers to find people with shared backgrounds, hobbies, and tastes, thus influencing consumers' consumption attitudes and purchase intentions. The mistrust of traditional advertisement is more and more consumers for personal web, consumer review websites, and e-commerce consumer comments from a dependent increase in social media, such as word of mouth, has a significant effect on enterprise product sales. The marketing strategy has changed from focusing on the direct marketing effect to focusing on the secondary communication effect. Enterprises not only focus on the direct impact on consumers but also pay attention to affected consumers in secondary effects brought by social media sharing, which requires the information service and integration of content and output. Thus, key opinion leaders (KOLs) emerged.

Key opinion leaders in the game industry refer to people who create content based on video platforms, have more accurate product information, are accepted or trusted by fans in the game industry, and can guide fans in the game industry to buy. As of March 2022, mobile video users reached 954 million. For opinion leaders on social platforms, if their influence is confined to their inherent fans, they cannot effectively "break the circle." Mobile video platforms as open social media platforms, on the one hand, help realize KOL ones; on the other hand, they also let KOL in the broader

public field establish a more positive personal brand image. Game KOL's promotion and propaganda are effective for game companies' marketing strategy: brand visibility is short. Glory of the Kings ", "mobile game anchor hi's, for example. Hi's life every time the Glory of the Kings mobile game has 1 million viewers, fixed height can reach 2 million, and barrage peaks more than 2000 per minute; this also means that the Glory of the Kings mobile game in a short period can reach millions of times of exposure, And compared with traditional advertising and marketing of the game was unable to achieve the propaganda effect in a short time. Second, the target audience is more accurate. As senior game players, game KOLs have a deeper understanding of game products. Game KOLs know what players care about and love and work better when cooperating with game manufacturers. As a game KOL, the number of their fans and users is also strong, and they are all game enthusiasts. As a result, the game helps the KOL target audience to obtain a more accurate retention rate and conversion rate.

2.4. The Camp of Kings

Glory of the Kings has more than 200 million users, an extensive user group. Glory of the Kings chose to build their social media platform, the Camp of Kings, based on shared interests to build a large community of interest. The interest community is characterized by decentralization, and the atmosphere of user communication is open, equal, and diversified. Users have high recognition for content, and high-quality content is the key. User "attention" threshold and the cost is higher, and more trust the recommendation of other users.

Users of the community of interest can be diverted through games or other platforms, but maintaining the number of users requires more functions. One of the great values of the Camp of Kings is its instrumental nature. Players can add their friends to the Camp of Kings and check their achievements. Players can view the information sent by their friends in the game through the Camp of Kings. The Camp of Kings community has topics to discuss, as well as sharing and communication between users. The Camp of Kings itself has features that cater to users' interests. Users can view their record and performance, game information, and background Settings. At the same time, the Camp of Kings gradually launched personalized AI guidance and other functions, more convenient to help advanced players understand the hero, lineup, line, and other content. In addition to diversified functions such as daily benefits, event information, and camp mall, the consistently high ease of use makes camp another powerful "magic weapon" for players to learn deep learning outside the game. The rapid success of the Camp of Kings has not only the game's brand appeal but also the product's quality. It is not constrained by a single orientation but also by strengthening optimization tool attributes, gradually becoming another important game community between players. Strictly speaking, quality content is essential for a community to attract users to participate. In the four years since its launch, the Camp of Kings has opened a short video plate to meet the current user habits and Integrated Glory of the Kings anchor live broadcast room; click-click to watch. The "Camp Cup" live broadcast platform anchor competition is also open to attract users to participate in e-sports content. At the same time, the cooperation of the six platforms can continue to drive the heat of the Camp of Kings and cultivate the birth of more high-quality content. Creators' passion primarily drives the output of quality content, and the Camp of Kings is increasingly encouraging creators. In terms of content creation support, in addition to the monthly Nova program that rewards graphic and video creators, the Camp of Kings also led the launch of the "Glory Campfire Program" with game officials and seven live streaming platforms to encourage creative works, with more than 2.4 million summoners participating in the first phase.

On the other hand, strengthening the social function is another direction to deepen the community attributes of the Camp of Kings, for example, through hot topics, circles, and other ways to provide players with a social platform so that even the slightest love can be voiced. The return of chat rooms this year will also give more friends a place to communicate freely. Furthermore, in the face of more and more partners with similar interests, convenient social functions will promote spontaneous interaction between users to a large extent, and a self-operating cycle system will be achieved, which naturally ensures high user engagement. Based on the three pillars of tools, content + e-sports, and

social, the Camp of Kings has successfully built a community ecology. At the same time, the official also continued to launch activities at essential nodes such as game versions, new heroes, significant events, and festivals, which achieved good long-term operation results. Under the long-term solid operation strength, the camp builds, improves, and enriches the community ecology and gradually precipitates its own "private domain traffic." At the same time, because the users who use the Camp of Kings are the target customers, precision marketing can be carried out according to the collected data, which is more effective for promoting Glory of the Kings skin and surrounding areas.

With 100 million average daily active users, Glory of the Kings is now in its eighth year. However, strictly speaking, with a sufficient number of users precipitation, Glory of the Kings needs a different way of drainage. Therefore, Tencent's choice to continue to increase the king camp to create a community of its own is obviously of great significance. On the one hand, thanks to the influence of the existing game, the Camp of Kings rapidly accumulated users through community ecology, settling their own "private domain flow." On the other hand, with the gradual growth of the camp ecology, with its brand appeal, it can also feed back the game itself, two-way drainage, complement each other to promote the long-term operation, continue to expand the influence and possibility of the game IP, but also promote the future of more king IP new work "win at the starting line." Facing the dilemma of "user shortage," maximizing user retention will undoubtedly be the key to future market competition. The four-year-old Camp of Kings has made many peers realize the value of tool apps outside games.

3. Conclusion

After the social platform is highly mature, to achieve the growth of users' demand for products, it is necessary to change from a single strategy of increasing exposure to a diversified marketing strategy that is more in line with users' needs. According to the characteristics of different social media platforms, the mobile game industry should implement different marketing strategies. The Glory of the Kings is worth learning about other mobile game manufacturers. Marketing strategy for the private relationship characteristics of social media is prioritized with social marketing strategy. An interactive marketing strategy is the primary strategy for social media with open relationship characteristics. For mobile video platforms, key opinion leaders can be utilized to gain higher brand exposure and acquire more target customers. It can also set up the game community and improve users, a combination of interactive marketing and social marketing of precision marketing at the same time.

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