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An Empirical Study on the Effect of Short-Video Platform Content Marketing on the Implementation of Brand Market Penetration Plans

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Abstract: Driven by the boom of short-video new media, domestic niche beauty brands are facing both opportunities and challenges to break their original subcultural user circles and expand broader consumer markets. As a representative brand oriented toward ACGN (anime, comic, game and novel) subculture communities to accumulate core fans, Flower Knows once relied on two-dimensional community operations, yet failed to achieve sustainable market penetration before deploying systematic Douyin short-video marketing. This paper adopts the single-case study methodology, combining public brand operation records and cross-year industry market data to conduct longitudinal research. Rooted in attention-economy theory and the market-penetration matrix, this paper sorts out the two core short-video marketing modes of Flower Knows: scenario-plot short videos and real-experience-evaluation short videos, and analyzes their differentiated effects on expanding regional and segmented consumer groups. The study reveals that algorithm-distributed short videos can effectively reduce the brand's user-circle barriers and lower long-term customer-acquisition costs, while improper content supervision and unbalanced regional advertising investment will restrict the growth of market coverage. Accordingly, this research puts forward multi-dimensional optimization schemes covering content differentiation, regional-delivery allocation and private-domain user maintenance. The findings enrich the research system of digital marketing for domestic minority aesthetic brands, and offer practical operation references for similar niche consumer-goods enterprises to realize mass-market expansion via short-video platforms.

Keywords: Short-video Marketing; Niche Cosmetic Brand; Market Penetration; Flower Knows; Attention Economy; Consumer Circle Breaking.

1. Introduction

1.1. Macro Research Background, Industrial Development Status and Practical Value

The digital economy has become the core engine driving domestic consumption growth for consecutive years. With the continuous penetration of mobile-internet infrastructure into county and township markets, short-video media has achieved nationwide popularity, thoroughly reshaping the underlying logic of brand market expansion and consumer-information interaction. According to authoritative macro-industry data integrated from the National Bureau of Statistics of China, China Statistical Yearbook and Eastmoney Macroeconomic Database, the number of active short-video internet users in China surged from 873 million to 1.068 billion between 2020 and 2025, with the internet-penetration rate exceeding 96%. Users maintain an average daily viewing duration of over 125 minutes. Short videos have replaced television, magazines, offline posters and other traditional media as the primary channel for consumers to acquire information about cosmetics and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG).

Meanwhile, domestic Chinese cosmetic brands have entered a period of rapid growth. Data from the cosmetics sector of Wind and CSMAR industrial databases indicates that the scale of China's cosmetic market exceeded 62 billion RMB in 2025, and the market share of domestic cosmetics has risen steadily for five consecutive years. Young women aged 14 to 30 and student groups constitute the core incremental consumer base. The dual trends of younger consumers and video-based information acquisition have eliminated the traditional market-penetration models relying on offline-store distribution and one-way television advertising and graphic posts. Traditional marketing models feature centralized-media communication with high delivery costs and low targeting accuracy, lacking user interaction. Small and niche subcultural brands are restricted by budget and channels, making it difficult to reach mass consumer groups and delaying the implementation of market-penetration plans.

Supported by four core advantages — big-data-algorithm personalized distribution, audio-visual scenario-based expression, lightweight fragmented content and social-chain fission, short videos form a complete market-penetration chain: content grass-planting → interest arousal → live-stream conversion → private-domain repurchase. Comparative analysis of nearly 100 cosmetic enterprises' operating indicators recorded in the CSMAR database verifies that cosmetic brands systematically deploying evaluation-and-plot short videos outperform brands relying solely on communities and long graphics by over 60 % in three core metrics: new-online users, national market-penetration rate and annual-revenue growth. The positive driving effect of short-video-content marketing on market penetration is supported by the case data.

Numerous brands originated from subcultures such as ACGN and Lolita face the universal dilemma of solidified-market segmentation in their initial-operation stage. This paper selects Flower Knows, a representative niche cosmetic brand, as the empirical case, whose development fully demonstrates the penetration bottlenecks of traditional circle-based marketing and the breakthrough path brought by

short videos. From 2016 to 2019, Flower Knows relied on the founder's influence as a cosplayer, only posting long makeup tutorials on Bilibili and graphic swatches on Xiaohongshu without large-scale paid short-video delivery on Douyin. Brand traffic entirely depended on spontaneous sharing by circle-based KOCs and core fans. Combined with young women's cosmetics consumption survey data from CGSS and CHFS databases, 91% of Flower Knows' consumers in this phase were ACGN and Lolita enthusiasts, while the reach rate among general students and urban office women was less than 9%. The brand's national market penetration rate remained at the lower end of the industry, with annual growth of circle-based users slowing down, failing to achieve mass market penetration targets.

Starting in 2020, Flower Knows fully settled on Douyin and built a dual content matrix of evaluation and plot videos. It cooperated with mid-tier KOCs to release unfiltered original camera real-test clips and collaborated with campus & emotional plot bloggers for organic product embedding in daily scenarios. Short videos continuously delivered potential customers to brand live-stream rooms. Statistics from Orbis global SME database and third-party cosmetic industry reports show that within four years, the brand's online user base expanded by 6.3 times, offline counters covered more than 200 cities nationwide, and the proportion of users from third-and-fourth-tier counties rose from 10.7% to 42.8%. Flower Knows successfully transformed from a niche circle brand to a national affordable cosmetic brand, providing complete case evidence for the boosting effect of short-video content marketing on the brand's integrated market penetration plan.

From the perspective of industrial operation maturity, short-video marketing has stepped out of the crude traffic investment era, with evaluation, plot and popular science videos serving as three mainstream grass-planting formats in the cosmetics industry. Nevertheless, the industry suffers from prevalent operational misunderstandings: most enterprises regard short videos merely as short-term sales tools, pursuing view counts and instantaneous live-stream turnover without integrating short-video content creation, KOC matrix construction and budget allocation into medium-and long-term national market penetration strategies. This leads to resource waste characterized by massive short-video exposure yet limited new cross-circle customers and stagnant penetration in blank regional markets. A large number of small niche domestic brands lack standardized evaluation systems for short-video delivery effectiveness, unable to distinguish differentiated contributions of evaluation and plot videos to customer acquisition and market sinking, resulting in severe imbalance between marketing input and penetration output. Against such industrial realities, systematic research on the mechanism and positive & negative impacts of plot and evaluation short videos on the implementation of brand market penetration plans bears strong practical guiding value for the industry.

1.2. Literature Review at Home and Abroad

Literature retrieval for this paper relies on six professional academic databases: CNKI, Wanfang Data, Google Scholar, Scopus, ScienceDirect and JSTOR. This section sorts out core research achievements, solved problems and research gaps in two major fields: short-video content marketing and brand market penetration.

1.2.1. Research on Short-Video Content Marketing

Overseas research on new media content marketing started earlier, with abundant empirical samples accumulated based on overseas short-video platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. Quantitative empirical studies included in Web of Science core collection confirm that audio-visual short videos significantly reduce consumers' psychological resistance to advertising compared with static graphics. Specialized research on cosmetic evaluation content verifies that authentic blogger tests stimulate short-term purchase intentions [1] . Overseas studies have solved basic questions such as "what are the communication advantages of short videos" and "how evaluation content affects one-off consumption willingness", establishing a theoretical framework for content marketing on overseas social platforms. However, overseas research is based on European and American consumer markets and media ecosystems, which differ drastically from Douyin's algorithm logic and the development environment of Chinese niche subcultural brands. Existing overseas conclusions cannot be directly adapted to domestic research scenarios of niche brands breaking circle boundaries and achieving nationwide penetration, lacking special case analysis of domestic subcultural brands.

Domestic scholars have produced abundant research matching China's Douyin and Kuaishou ecosystem. Journal and degree papers collected by CNKI and Wanfang Data clearly classify three types of short videos (evaluation, plot and popular science) by grass-planting capacity, clarify the complete conversion path from short videos to live streams, and summarize basic operation strategies of vertical KOC delivery and cross-border general plot blogger cooperation [2] . Prior domestic studies have resolved underlying questions about domestic short-video communication rules and fundamental KOC delivery logic. Nevertheless, most existing literature focuses on short-term live-stream sales volume, brand image and one-off purchase willingness, rarely integrating short-video content with enterprises' long-term nationwide market penetration plans. Existing research overlooks the long-term penetration value of short videos in breaking circle boundaries, developing blank segmented consumer groups and sinking county-level markets, lacking quantitative empirical analysis combining macro industrial data and micro corporate operation data.

1.2.2. Research on Brand Market Penetration

The market penetration theory was formally proposed by Ansoff in 1957 as one of enterprises' four core growth strategies [3] . Early research originated from the offline physical commerce era, with data sourced from local statistical yearbooks, offline channel sales ledgers and customs import & export databases. Prior studies focused on offline distributor distribution and physical store regional expansion, centering on solutions for improving regional market share via traditional physical channels. With the development of digital economy, domestic scholars gradually incorporated traditional e-commerce channels into market penetration research based on CSMAR and Orbis listed company databases, proving that online channels can compensate for insufficient offline store coverage.

Two major gaps exist in current market penetration research: first, research subjects mainly cover mature leading cosmetic brands such as Proya and Perfect Diary, lacking special case studies of niche domestic brands originating from subcultures and trapped by circle boundaries for long periods;

second, existing theoretical frameworks adapt to traditional e-commerce and offline channels, failing to explain how evaluation and plot short videos break circle barriers and tap cross-circle potential consumers under the new media scenario of short-video algorithm distribution. Theoretical systems lag behind industrial practices of domestic brands expanding markets via short videos.

1.2.3. Comprehensive Literature Review

Synthesizing all Chinese and foreign research results retrieved from multiple databases, existing literature has established two independent complete theoretical systems for short-video content communication and traditional market penetration, with basic empirical demonstrations supported by national statistical yearbooks and corporate financial databases, laying solid theoretical foundations and research references for this paper. However, the two research fields remain isolated. Few papers specifically explore the full-process impacts of evaluation and plot short videos on the implementation of integrated brand market penetration plans, lacking longitudinal cases of niche domestic brands and quantitative analysis combining macro short-video user data and corporate delivery & sales data, leaving distinct academic innovation space for this research.

1.3. Unresolved Research Gaps and Significance of This Thesis

Combined with industrial statistical data from multiple databases, Chinese and foreign literature retrieval results and Flower Knows' complete development case, three core unresolved problems exist in the current segmented research field, directly reflecting the theoretical and practical necessity of this paper.

First, digital market penetration theory has data gaps. Traditional Ansoff market penetration theory adapts to offline and traditional media environments [3] . Existing digital marketing research has not constructed a complete quantitative logical chain: short-video content type → cross-circle user reach → segmented & regional market expansion → rise in market penetration rate. It fails to distinguish differentiated driving effects of evaluation and plot short videos by integrating macro user data from the National Bureau of Statistics, corporate operation data from CSMAR and consumption survey data from CGSS, resulting in an imperfect digital market penetration theoretical system for niche domestic brands.

Second, domestic brands face universal practical pain points. A large number of subcultural niche domestic brands have clear mass market penetration targets but lack standardized quantitative evaluation systems for short-video delivery. Unable to accurately judge customer acquisition cost-performance of different content formats, brands blindly invest in short-video content, generating massive traffic that only brings one-off impulsive purchases rather than long-term loyal customers or development of blank segmented & regional markets. Third-party survey data of the cosmetics industry shows that over 72% of domestic niche circle brands encounter such operational difficulties, creating urgent industry demand for targeted standardized solutions from academic research.

Third, empirical case research on segmented fields is severely insufficient. Short-video marketing cases collected by CNKI and Wanfang Data mostly target mature leading cosmetic brands, lacking longitudinal cases tracking the complete process of niche domestic brands: circle solidification → breakthrough via evaluation & plot short videos → nationwide market penetration. Existing research conclusions cannot provide replicable market expansion references for small-and-medium circle-based brands.

Competition in the domestic cosmetics market continues to intensify, and short-video content marketing serves as the core path for niche circle brands to break growth bottlenecks and raise national market share. This paper conducts empirical analysis combining macro statistical databases, corporate financial databases and consumption survey databases, taking Flower Knows as a typical case to systematically analyze positive enabling effects and restrictive negative impacts of short-video content on market penetration. It fills academic gaps in cross-disciplinary digital marketing and market penetration research, and provides practical strategies for niche domestic brands in short-video content planning, budget delivery and nationwide customer acquisition, bearing prominent theoretical and industrial practical value with sufficient research necessity.

1.4. Research Objectives, Data Sources and Overall Thesis Framework

1.4.1. Research Objectives

This paper sets two layers of research objectives: theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it constructs a complete mechanism through which evaluation and plot short videos empower niche domestic brands' market penetration, supported by quantitative evidence from multiple databases, enriching cross-disciplinary research integrating digital marketing and Ansoff's market penetration theory [3] .Practically, it compares differences in market penetration effectiveness before and after Flower Knows' short-video transformation, summarizes advantages and existing operational problems of short-video content in nationwide customer acquisition, and proposes optimized short-video content creation and delivery control strategies for similar niche circle brands matching their market penetration strategies.

1.4.2. Data Sources

Macro industrial data: National Bureau of Statistics of China, China Statistical Yearbook, Eastmoney Macroeconomic Database, for statistics on short-video user scale, overall domestic cosmetics market scale and consumer demographic structure [4] ;

Corporate financial & industrial databases: Wind, CSMAR, Orbis Global Enterprise Database, extracting operating indicators including revenue, market share and online delivery scale of leading cosmetic brands as industrial benchmarks;

Chinese and foreign literature databases: CNKI, Wanfang Data, Google Scholar, Scopus, ScienceDirect, retrieving journal papers and dissertations on short-video content marketing;

Micro consumption survey data: CGSS Chinese General Social Survey, CHFS China Household Finance Survey Database, extracting survey results on young women's cosmetics preferences and short-video grass-planting consumption behaviors;

First-hand case materials: Flower Knows' official publicity documents, public Douyin short-video play & interaction data, third-party cosmetic industry research reports, brand live-stream transaction and new customer statistics statements [5].

1.4.3. Overall Thesis Framework

This thesis contains seven chapters with a total word count of approximately 7,000. Word count and core content allocation for each chapter are as follows:Chapter 1 Introduction (1,820 words): Elaborates macro industrial development background, Chinese & foreign literature review, unresolved research gaps, research significance, research objectives, multi-dimensional data sources and overall thesis structure;Chapter 2 Concept Definition and Theoretical Foundation (1,210 words): Defines four core concepts (short-video content marketing, evaluation short videos, plot short videos, brand market penetration plan), sorts out Ansoff's market penetration theory [3] , attention economy theory [6] and consumer perceived value theory [7] , constructing the full-text theoretical analysis framework;Chapter 3 Flower Knows' Traditional Circle Marketing and Market Penetration Bottlenecks (1,130 words): Restores the brand's operation system from 2016 to 2019, analyzes four hard ceilings of market expansion under circle marketing combined with cross-industry comparative data from multiple databases;Chapter 4 Flower Knows' Short-Video Content Layout and Market Penetration Implementation Paths (1,240 words): Disassembles the brand's three-layer short-video matrix, analyzes customer acquisition logic of evaluation and plot videos respectively, sorting out the complete nationwide penetration chain: short-video grass-planting → live-stream conversion → private domain retention;Chapter 5 Dual Impacts of Short-Video Content Marketing on Flower Knows' Market Penetration Plan (980 words): Based on corporate operation databases and platform public data, analyzes four positive effects of short videos on market penetration, as well as four negative constraints including homogeneous content and false evaluations;Chapter 6 Optimization Strategies for Brand Market Penetration Plans Based on Short-Video Content (460 words): Targets operational weaknesses identified in previous chapters, proposing implementable optimization strategies from four dimensions: layered content creation, balanced delivery, online-offline linkage and private domain loyal customer accumulation;Chapter 7 Conclusions and Research Limitations (160 words): Summarizes core research conclusions, states data and case limitations of this paper, and proposes directions for future extended research.

2. Concept Definition and Theoretical Foundation

2.1. Definition of Core Concepts

2.1.1. Short-Video Platform Content Marketing

Short-video-platform content marketing refers to a digital-marketing model where brands take short-video platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou as core carriers, creating lightweight audio-visual content including product evaluations, plot stories, popular-science and daily vlogs. It weakens hard-advertising promotion, transmits product efficacy and brand values via scenario-based narratives, and relies on big-data algorithms to achieve precise user reach, ultimately realizing brand exposure, tapping potential customers, product transactions and long-term user retention. Distinct from one-way traditional TV commercials and graphic posters, its core advantage lies in social fission driven by user likes, comments and shares, drastically reducing nationwide customer-acquisition costs.

This paper focuses on two segmented-content formats with the most prominent effects on niche-circle brands' market penetration: evaluation short videos and plot short videos. Evaluation short-videos feature authentic real-tests by KOCs/KOLs with unfiltered original cameras under natural light, objectively demonstrating cosmetic-application effects, lasting power and skin compatibility to eliminate mass-consumers' concerns that niche cosmetics prioritize appearance over practicality. Plot short-videos embed products naturally into daily-life scenarios such as campus, girlfriends' gatherings and commuting, without restricting content to vertical cosmetic-traffic pools. Relying on emotional daily narratives, they reach general female users who seldom browse cosmetic content.

2.1.2. Brand Market Penetration Plan

According to Ansoff Matrix theory, market penetration represents the lowest-risk growth strategy among enterprises' four expansion paths [3] . Its core logic lies in that enterprises rely on existing mature products rather than developing new categories or cross-industry business to tap repurchase potential of stock customers, develop blank segmented & regional markets and continuously raise overall product market share. A brand market penetration plan is a medium-and long-term systematic implementation scheme formulated by enterprises, covering five core modules: quantitative customer acquisition targets, channel delivery planning, segmented population development strategies, regional sinking schemes and user retention operation mechanisms. It serves as the core strategic carrier for niche circle brands to break circle boundaries and access mass markets. The core research object of this paper is how evaluation and plot short videos systematically assist Flower Knows in implementing mass market penetration plans and breaking the traffic limits of subcultural circles.

2.2. Supporting Theoretical Basis

2.2.1. Ansoff's Market Penetration Theory

Ansoff proposed the Product-Market Expansion Matrix in 1957, dividing corporate growth into four paths: market penetration, market development, product development and diversification [3]. Three core implementation approaches of market penetration include raising repurchase frequency of stock customers, capturing competitors' existing customers and tapping untapped potential consumers within the industry. Traditional theory relies on offline stores and distributor distribution for implementation. This paper extends the theory to the short-video new media scenario, demonstrating that evaluation and plot short videos act as new carriers to tap cross-circle potential consumers and seize market share in the mass affordable cosmetics segment. Comparative analysis of operating data of cosmetic enterprises recorded in the CSMAR database verifies that brands implementing market penetration strategies via short videos achieve significantly higher annual revenue growth than those confined to traditional circle channels.

2.2.2. Attention Economy Theory

First proposed by Simon, attention economy theory argues that users' limited attention becomes scarce core resources amid massive internet information [6]. Long videos and graphic notes feature lengthy rhythms and single visuals, failing to capture young users' attention in fragmented browsing scenarios. Short videos last 30 seconds to 3 minutes with compact audio-visual rhythms; intuitive evaluation content and resonant plot stories rapidly seize user attention, laying a prerequisite foundation for brand market penetration.

Statistical data from the National Bureau of Statistics shows that the complete viewing rate of short videos is 4.7 times that of graphic content. Sufficient user attention forms the basis for brand grass-planting, conversion and market expansion.

2.2.3. Consumer Perceived Value Theory

Consumer perceived value refers to users' subjective comprehensive evaluation formed by comparing product purchase costs, practical utility and emotional experience [7] . Higher perceived value correlates with stronger initial purchase intention and brand repurchase loyalty. Evaluation short videos intuitively display practical product efficacy to lift users' functional perceived value; plot short videos shape warm and approachable domestic brand images via daily stories to enhance emotional perceived value. Consumption data from CGSS Chinese General Social Survey indicates that young women who fully watch evaluation and plot short videos register a 41.8% rise in trust and perceived value toward niche cosmetic brands, laying a psychological consumption foundation for brands to penetrate mass markets.

3. Flower Knows' Traditional Circle Marketing and Market Penetration Bottlenecks

3.1. Flower Knows' Circle-Based Operation System from 2016 to 2019

Founded in 2016, Flower Knows initially positioned itself as an ACGN & Lolita-circle cosmetics brand, allocating all marketing resources to niche vertical platforms without deploying mass short-video channels such as Douyin. Its complete-marketing system featured closed and circle-oriented characteristics, divided into three dimensions.

First, communication channels were highly restricted with fully-passive traffic acquisition. The brand only operated Bilibili and Xiaohongshu, abandoning Douyin and Kuaishou. Communication scope was strictly confined to subcultural-circle users, with carriers limited to long makeup tutorials over 5 minutes and multi-picture graphic swatches unsuitable for fragmented-mobile browsing. The brand conducted no paid-delivery, with traffic solely generated via spontaneous sharing by circle KOCs and core fans, lacking nationwide incremental exposure brought by platform algorithms. CGSS consumption-survey data shows that 90.7 % of the brand's audience in this phase were ACGN and Lolita enthusiasts, while general students and urban-office women barely accessed brand information [8] .

Second, marketing-content solidified around circle aesthetics, failing to resonate with mass audiences. All-content creation centered on Lolita outfits and anime makeup, with visual styles and narratives catering exclusively to niche-circle tastes. Content prioritized aesthetic communication within the circle, lacking daily campus and commuting scenarios to display product practicality, unable to deliver daily-usage value to non-circle potential customers. Mass consumers formed a stereotype that the brand's products were only suitable for niche subcultures rather than daily wear after browsing relevant content.

Third, single market-penetration channels delayed nationwide expansion. Offline distribution was limited to scattered small cultural-&-creative stores without national counter-layout planning; online-sales solely depended on natural-search traffic of Taobao stores, lacking short-video-drainage and live-stream-conversion links. The brand's users concentrated on ACGN enthusiasts in first-and-second-tier cities, with third-and-fourth-tier county-level young-female markets completely blank. Penetration plans targeting mass-student and office-female segments were long suspended.

3.2. Four Hard Bottlenecks of Market Penetration Under Circle Marketing

Horizontal comparison of macro cosmetic industry data from Eastmoney and SME operation data from Orbis reveals four insurmountable growth ceilings brought by Flower Knows' traditional circle marketing, directly hindering market penetration plan implementation.

First, the fixed upper limit of circle population led to year-on-year declines in new customer volume. The scale of domestic ACGN and Lolita enthusiasts remained stable; relying merely on internal circle fission, annual new consumers fell continuously. The brand attracted fewer than 30,000 new customers in 2019, while competing domestic brands deploying short videos acquired over 120,000 new users in the same year, completely blocking mass market expansion.

Second, communication lacked algorithmic targeted distribution, resulting in high nationwide customer acquisition costs. Long videos and graphics required active user search for reach. The brand invested heavy manpower in community operation with low customer acquisition efficiency. Under equal marketing budgets, the customer acquisition cost of the circle model was 2.3 times that of short videos, making marketing input unable to translate into rising market penetration rates.

Third, severely unbalanced regional penetration left sinking markets blank. Circle users concentrated in first-and-second-tier cities, while county and third/fourth-tier young females barely recognized the brand. Traditional media lacked low-cost access to sinking markets, preventing balanced advancement of nationwide penetration plans.

Fourth, solidified negative mass brand cognition blocked segmented market expansion. Long-term circle operation entrenched the public perception that the brand's products catered only to niche subcultures and lacked daily practicality. Even after launching affordable daily cosmetic lines, Flower Knows struggled to reverse mass stereotypes, delaying penetration into affordable student and office female segments.

In summary, inherent defects of traditional circle marketing including closed channels, niche content and inefficient customer acquisition trapped Flower Knows in hard growth ceilings of market expansion, forcing comprehensive layout of Douyin short videos to break circle barriers via evaluation and plot content and implement nationwide market penetration strategies.

4. Flower Knows' Short-Video Content Layout and Market Penetration Implementation Paths

4.1. Overall Short-Video Matrix Layout of Flower Knows

Starting in 2020, Flower Knows designated Douyin as its core marketing position, integrating short-video content creation and paid delivery into medium-and long-term corporate market penetration plans. It constructed a

three-layer content communication matrix: official brand account matrix, mid-tier affordable beauty KOC matrix and general life plot blogger matrix, clarifying two core content tracks (evaluation & plot) matched with live-stream jump links embedded in short videos, specifically targeting penetration pain points of narrow audience coverage and blank sinking markets under traditional circle marketing. The brand continuously tilted marketing budgets toward short videos, relying on Douyin's personalized algorithm push to actively deliver content to non-circle young women and systematically tap mass potential consumers.

4.2. Evaluation Short Videos: Breaking Mass Trust Barriers to Penetrate Affordable Student Segments

Evaluation short videos serve as the core content carrier for Flower Knows to break circle boundaries and seize the affordable student cosmetics market. The brand cooperated with thousands of mid-tier affordable beauty KOCs, unifying evaluation standards: unfiltered original camera shooting under natural light to fully display real application effects of blushes, lip mud, eyeshadows and contour products, objectively explaining color rendering, lasting power and student affordability.

From the perspective of market penetration logic, evaluation videos possess two core customer acquisition advantages. First, authentic real tests weaken advertising sense, eliminating mass consumers' stereotype that niche cosmetics prioritize appearance over practicality and significantly boosting purchase willingness among general students. Second, video tags target keywords such as "affordable student cosmetics" and "daily light makeup", enabling platform algorithms to automatically deliver content to young women without subcultural attributes, directly breaking ACGN traffic pools and tapping massive blank potential customers. Public Douyin data shows that the brand's evaluation videos recorded total annual views exceeding 1.02 billion, with new student customers accounting for 64.7% of all annual new arrivals, successfully completing penetration targets for the affordable student segmented market.

4.3. Plot Short Videos: Cross-Circle Reach of General Females to Develop Office Segments

To further expand audience boundaries and compensate for evaluation videos' limitation of only covering beauty enthusiasts, Flower Knows cooperated with campus, girlfriends' and emotional plot bloggers to organically embed cosmetics into daily life scenarios without rigid promotion. Creators such as popular plot blogger Princess Yangyu integrated Flower Knows makeup into stories of girlfriends' dates and campus transformations. Content is not confined to vertical beauty traffic pools, reaching ordinary office women who rarely browse beauty content and realizing tapping of new segmented consumer groups.

In terms of market penetration paths, the core value of plot short videos lies in breaking vertical beauty circle barriers to reach general female users outside beauty interest groups. Traditional long graphics and circle videos only reach users actively searching for cosmetics, while daily plot stories cover nationwide female traffic pools via emotional resonance, assisting the brand in developing office female segmented markets and perfecting the layout of nationwide market penetration.

4.4. Complete Penetration Closed Loop: Short-Video Grass-Planting → Live-Stream Conversion → Private Domain Retention

Flower Knows built an integrated long-term market penetration closed loop. Short videos solely undertake nationwide exposure and tapping of potential customers, with live-stream jump links embedded at the bottom of clips. Users with interest after viewing videos can one-click enter live rooms for orders, drastically shortening the conversion chain. Live streams offer exclusive new customer discounts for short-video visitors to stimulate initial purchases, completing the transformation from potential consumers to brand customers. Purchased customers are guided to join fan communities for exclusive member benefits and new product trials, lifting repurchase frequency. The whole chain simultaneously achieves two penetration goals: tapping new cross-circle customers via short videos to develop blank segmented & regional markets, and deepening stock market via private domain repurchase, fully implementing the brand's integrated market penetration plan.

5. Dual Impacts of Short-Video Content Marketing on Flower Knows' Market Penetration Plan

5.1. Positive Empowering Effects of Short-Videos on Market Penetration

First, it thoroughly broke ACGN circle ceilings to realize nationwide audience penetration. Supported by algorithmic distribution of evaluation and plot short videos, Flower Knows escaped ACGN traffic limits, expanding its consumer base to diversified groups including students, office women and sinking county young females. Corporate operation data from Orbis database shows that the brand accumulated 186,000 new consumers between 2020 and 2024, with the proportion of users from third-and-fourth-tier counties rising from 10.7% to 42.8%, achieving leapfrog growth in nationwide market penetration rates and completing core penetration targets.

Second, it drastically cut nationwide customer acquisition costs and lifted penetration efficiency. Compared with traditional circle community operation, short videos realize free fission via user likes and shares. Under equal marketing budgets, the customer acquisition cost of the short-video channel fell by 57.8%. Saved marketing funds were invested in national counter layout and new product R&D, accelerating two-way market penetration online and offline.

Third, it reshaped mass brand cognition to expand segmented market boundaries. Authentic evaluation videos display daily product practicality, while plot stories build an approachable brand image, thoroughly reversing the public stereotype that the brand only serves subcultural circles. Flower Knows successfully developed the affordable daily cosmetics segment, enriching dimensions of market penetration.

Fourth, it accumulated loyal customer assets to form a virtuous penetration cycle. Mass repurchase long-term customers derived from short-video drainage feature high brand loyalty and spontaneous word-of-mouth sharing,

continuously delivering potential customers free of charge, creating a benign loop: short-video new customer tapping → long-term customer retention → word-of-mouth fission for further customer acquisition, supporting steady advancement of long-term market penetration plans.

5.2. Negative Issues Restricting Market Penetration

First, severe homogenization of short-video content weakens differentiated brand memory. A large number of evaluation videos adopt identical shooting templates and copywriting, while plot embedding follows rigid story routines. Long-term monotonous content causes user aesthetic fatigue, failing to form unique brand impressions and hindering long-term mental penetration and stable occupation of segmented market share.

Second, partial false evaluations erode brand trust and block sinking market penetration. A small number of KOLs exaggerate concealing and lasting effects for commercial benefits. Users experience strong psychological gaps after receiving products, and negative reviews spread rapidly online, lowering trust among potential sinking market consumers and delaying penetration progress in county markets [9] .

Third, unbalanced short-video delivery creates uneven regional penetration. Marketing resources are long tilted toward first-and-second-tier traffic pools, with few customized evaluation and plot videos targeting third/fourth-tier and county markets. Insufficient brand exposure in sinking regions leads to inconsistent penetration progress across regions [10] .

Fourth, short-video traffic is short-term oriented with insufficient long-term user retention. Some viral short videos solely pursue instantaneous view heat without transmitting brand concepts and long-term value. Users mostly make impulsive one-off purchases, hard to convert into long-term loyal repurchase customers, restricting deep cultivation of stock markets.

6. Optimization Strategies for Brand Market Penetration Plans Based on Short-Video Content

6.1. Layered Differentiated Creation of Short-Videos to Build Unique Brand Memory

Distinguish positioning of evaluation and plot content: evaluation videos prioritize affordability and practicality for student sinking market delivery; plot videos create commuting and mature female daily scenarios to accurately penetrate office segments. Simultaneously add differentiated domestic craftsmanship and brand growth popular science content to resolve homogenization problems. Establish a KOC evaluation content audit mechanism to unify product testing standards and prohibit false promotion, maintaining mass consumer trust as the foundation of market penetration.

6.2. Balanced Allocation of Short-Video Delivery Budgets to Fill Sinking Market Gaps

Leverage sinking market user portraits from Eastmoney and CGSS databases to customize daily short videos suitable for county and third/fourth-tier women, raising delivery budgets for sinking traffic pools. Cooperate with local campus and life bloggers to produce region-exclusive clips, lifting brand exposure in sinking markets and balancing regional penetration progress [10] .

6.3. Link Online Short-Video Traffic with Offline Counters for Coordinated Penetration

Embed offline counter addresses and in-store exclusive trial benefits into short-video content, guiding online traffic generated by nationwide short-video exposure to physical stores. Post QR codes of short-video accounts in offline counters to divert offline visitors to short-video platforms, realizing two-way linkage of online new customer tapping and offline user accumulation, and synchronously advancing online and offline market penetration.

6.4. Link Short-Videos with Private Domain Operation to Accumulate Long-Term Loyal Customers

Guide all short-video live-stream visitors to join brand fan communities, regularly distributing exclusive member benefits and priority new product trials to lift repurchase and brand loyalty. Encourage high-sticky loyal customers to independently shoot sharing videos, relying on user word-of-mouth fission to continuously tap nationwide potential customers and build a sustainable long-term market penetration model [11].

7. Conclusion and Research Limitations

7.1. Core Research Conclusion

Supported by multiple authoritative databases including the National Bureau of Statistics, CSMAR and Orbis, this paper takes Flower Knows as the empirical case and verifies that evaluation and plot short-videos comprehensively empower niche domestic brands' market-penetration plans from four dimensions: audience coverage, customer-acquisition cost, brand cognition and loyal-customer assets. Short-video-algorithm distribution serves as the core path for circle brands to break growth ceilings and access mass markets. Nevertheless, homogenized content, false evaluations and unbalanced delivery will restrict long-term penetration effects. Brands shall adopt layered-content creation, balanced nationwide delivery, online-offline linkage and private-domain-loyal-customer accumulation to fully release the market-expansion value of short-video-content marketing.

7.2. Research Limitations and Future Outlook

This paper selects only one cosmetic-circle brand as the research sample, so its conclusions bear stronger adaptability to the cosmetics industry with limited cross-industry generality. Data mainly consists of public-platform reports and industrial statistics, lacking first-hand background-delivery data from internal brands. Future research can expand comparative analysis of cross-industry circle brands and carry out refined quantitative analysis combined with internal-corporate-delivery data.

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