

The Research on the Integrated Development of Personal IP and Content Marketing

Junxuan Zhao*

School of Economics, Management and Law, University of South China, Hengyang, Hunan, China

*Corresponding author: 1419254322@qq.com

Abstract. In the context of accelerating digital informatization, this paper focuses on the integration mechanism of personal IP and content marketing, exploring how to enhance communication with consumers in the era of new media. Based on the three core capitals on which personal IP is built—the Individualized Experiential Trajectory, distinctive professional capital, and emotional capital, the study analyzes the relationship and mechanism between personal IP and content marketing. It reveals that through the complementary and scenario-based embedding, personal IP lends credibility to content marketing, while content marketing empowers personal IP. Furthermore, the paper analyzes the key challenges in the process of integration of personal IP and content marketing and proposes corresponding responses, offering both theoretical insights and practical guidance for enterprises to build differentiated marketing systems and achieve long-term brand sustainability.

Keywords: Personal IP; Content Marketing; Integrated Development.

1. Introduction

Driven by both technological innovation and the shift in consumer behavior patterns, the global marketing field is undergoing profound changes. The "hard-selling" model of traditional advertising has lost its dominant position due to information overload and consumers' resistance. Content marketing, through storytelling narrative, emotional resonance, and value transmission, has gradually become an important part of the marketing field. Previous studies hold that content marketing is the art of building meaningful connections with customers, which focuses on content rather than hard selling. It is a marketing method that publishes valuable, consumer-interest-related, and attractive content to build a long-term audience [1](Pulizzi, 2012). It attracts and retains customers by publishing content that captures attention, using content as a communication tool to influence existing and potential customers [2](Hardey, 2011).

However, relying solely on content itself is insufficient to promote in-depth interaction with consumers and brand recognition. Currently, most consumers' participation in content marketing remains at the stage of interest, making it difficult to further convert into brand loyalty. The best way to make customers focus on enterprises and gain an in-depth understanding of brand content is to take people as the carrier. Personality traits can be directly associated with the brand through people related to it—such as brand user imagery, defined as "a set of characteristics associated with the typical user of the brand", company employees or CEOs, and brand product endorsers [3] (McCracken, Grant, 1989). In this way, the traits of people associated with the brand are directly transferred to the brand. These personal IPs exert a unique charm that other IPs do not have: emotion. They attract customers' attention, communicate with them through rich emotional cores, further drive attention to more brand content, and form consumption "loyalty". This paper focuses on the integrated development path of personal IP and content marketing, sorts out the formation conditions of personal IP, analyzes their interaction mechanism, the challenges faced in using personal IP on content marketing, and puts forward targeted recommendations, aiming to provide theoretical reference and practical guidance for enterprises to build a differentiated marketing system and achieve sustainable brand development.

2. The Conditions for the Formation of Personal IP

2.1. The Individualized Experiential Trajectory

Storytelling is regarded as the best way to share and convey social values [4](Agustina, 2020). By telling powerful and authentic stories, social enterprises can establish emotional connections with consumers, inspire volunteer participation, and even attract investors who share common social values [5](Korzh, Estima, 2022). Experience, as a truly happening story of an individual, is often regarded as an important marketing tool for conveying values. In the era of big data, although AI technology can replicate images and content, it cannot reconstruct the temporal and spatial continuity of real life experiences [6](Mazurek, 2025). Experience, as an "experience algorithm" deeply embedded in an individual's life, can be transformed into trust symbols with emotional resonance through specific events, key choices, and value persistence. When consumers make choices, the greater trust generated by personal IP based on authentic life trajectories--a force that AI technology difficult to replace.

Although personal experience, as a personal story, satisfies the characteristic of authenticity, only when personal experience is unique can it promote its dissemination and eventually accumulate widespread social repercussions to form personal IP. Elon Musk's dramatic and unique experiences have shaped his personal IP. Events such as three failed launches of SpaceX, Tesla on the verge of bankruptcy, struggles with traditional automakers, and competition with NASA have rapidly spread his image as a "lonely hero" and "fearless of power". As the public's understanding of Musk's experiences deepens, a unique personal IP image of him is naturally formed in their minds. Thus, unique experience is an important condition for forming personal IP.

2.2. The Distinctive Professional Capital

The human capital classification theory proposes that human capital with value and uniqueness belongs to core human capital [7](Lepak, Snell, 1999). Although this theory initially focused on internal human resource management in organizations, its classification framework can be extended to the field of personal IP to explain how distinctive professional capabilities become core competitive barriers in the field of personal IP.

Taking Yuhui Dong in China as an example. As a phenomenal personal IP, he skillfully integrates knowledge with live streaming sales through cultural output, attracting a large number of fans and leading his company named East Buy Holding Limited to enter the top list of live streaming sales. Why can Dong Yuhui's personal IP gain fans' trust? It is because people's perception of personal IP is based on their professional knowledge and skill level—which is the foundation of "trust". Individuals strengthen the cognitive label of "trustworthy expert" through continuous behavioral performance and repeated demonstration of abilities, thereby gradually planting a foundation of trust in the cognitive circle [8](Lazarus, 1991). Therefore, professional capital, through continuous output, will gradually build a solid foundation of cognitive trust, making it a "credible symbol" in cognition. However, digital technology and industry changes mean that having a single professional capability may be replaced at any time. Only with distinctive and difficult to replicate professional capabilities can an individual's value be distinguished from others. Thus, excellent professionals are not just content experts or experienced workers; they possess a special "combination of implicit and explicit knowledge, behaviors, and skills" that enables someone to have the potential for effectiveness in task execution [9](Draganidis, Mentzas, 2006). The value of distinctive professional capital lies not only in the accumulation of explicit professional knowledge or experience but also in the organic combination of implicit abilities: distinctive personal experience, intuition, insight, and values. This profoundly explains why only distinctive professional capital can cultivate personal IP with long-term influence.

2.3.The Emotional Capital

The emotional capital refers to the emotional resources accumulated by individuals in the process of interacting with others. Although emotions originate from one's own experience, they can be strengthened through the transformation of perceptual perspectives [10](Reeve, 2022). When users generate emotional resonance, they are essentially establishing a trust relationship, which will promote the establishment of brand loyalty. Moreover, the essence of emotional output is the process of value symbolization [11](Kristof-Brown, 2005). Through emotional resonance, users with highly consistent values can often be screened out, and these users form the most loyal fan group of personal IP. This loyalty is manifested in repeated purchases, interactions on social media, and even word-of-mouth communication, forming an identity chain of "emotion-value-behavior" to build personal IP. Taking Jun Lei, a famous Chinese entrepreneur with a deeply rooted personal IP, as an example. Jun Lei conducts emotional output through multiple perspectives: the linguistic symbol "Standing on the forefront of the times,even a pig can fly", the behavioral symbol "announcing his entrepreneurship by drinking millet porridge (The Chinese pronunciation of millet porridge is the same as "Xiaomi porridge", "Xiaomi" is the name of the company founded by Jun Lei.) on his 40th birthday", and the visual symbol of "standard programmer attire" with jeans and a white shirt all year round. Users with high value consistency often generate identity recognition, forming a core fan circle, and Jun Lei thus gains a large number of "Xiaomi fans". Emotional resonance can help personal IP establish strong trust through humanized interaction, sincere expression, and sensitive response to user needs. By continuously strengthening emotional resonance, personal IP can not only attract more fans but also establish long-term and profound brand loyalty. This emotional connection and trust building are the core driving forces for the long-term development of personal IP.

3. The Relationship and Mechanism between Personal IP and Content Marketing

3.1.The Relationship between Personal IP and Content Marketing

Personal IP and content marketing are not simply a "carrier and tool" relationship. Their characteristics of interactive co-creation and mutualistic symbiosis inherently make them an ecological community with value complementarity and scenario embedding.

Personal IP and content marketing are complementary. Personal IP uses the emotional expression of personal true emotions to trigger customers' emotional investment and drive the formation of customers' shopping desire; content marketing, based on valuable content, moves customers by rationally outputting to let them truly feel the value of products. If a brand only uses the personal charm of personal IP for marketing to attract audiences to pay, in the short term, the trust endorsement formed by personal experience can win customers' favor. In the context where modern customers are willing to pay for emotional premiums, this fan economy based on fan groups can promote customer consumption. Credibility from personal IP can significantly enhance brand trust, thereby strengthening consumers' impulsive purchase intention [12](Shamim, Azam, et al., 2024). However, most people are ultimately "economic men", and short-term emotional output is insufficient to bind customers to long-term consumption. If customers perceive a mismatch between product price and value, leading to a crisis of trust, they will enter a "decision reflection period". At this time, emotional filters such as brand aura and marketing words brought by personal IP will lose their effect, and users will actively seek objective evidence to guide their judgments. Their decision-making logic will shift from emotional impulse to rational verification, and content marketing can become a key hub for re-selection through value reconstruction. In essence, content marketing can complete the calibration from cognitive dissonance by providing verifiable value chains, which is exactly what personal IP lacks.

On the other hand, it is also insufficient to rely solely on content marketing to convey product functions and concepts to persuade customers to choose the most suitable products for themselves.

Although customers will rationally choose suitable brands, the lack of "memory points" makes it difficult for content marketing to play a sustained and effective role. It is worth noting that consumers' attention is a scarce resource. The brain cannot process multi-task information at the same time, leading to the filtering of a large amount of content [13](Kahneman, 1973). Therefore, individuals who deliver content marketing often need to assume the role of "memory points". A profound personal IP can trigger customers' emotional investment, thereby driving them to understand brand connotation and culture and deepening the contact between the brand and customers. In the Internet era, outputting cultural values and generating psychological resonance have become core elements of brand communication. This emotional resonance not only evokes the emotional return of the audience but also enables consumers to complete self-expression through the brand [14](Jian Zhang, Yanan Wei, 2021). If personal IP and content marketing are used separately: personal IP will become a traffic tag, and its output will fall into the hollowing out of persona. In the long run, it will lead to repeated viewpoints, diluted value, and lack of depth in content output; content marketing, due to the lack of communication penetration, turning content output into a knowledge transfer machine and making it difficult to express as human warmth. Only by adhering to the symbiotic relationship between personal IP and content marketing and leveraging their complementary characteristics can we maximize value and build an indestructible "trust pyramid" in users' minds.

Personal IP and content marketing also have the characteristic of scene inter-embedding. Scenario-based content is not simply advertising but enables consumers to perceive the value of products in specific scenarios through storytelling, situational simulation, or user experience design. Scenario-based content is a bridge for the transfer of trust capital [15](Stewart, 1999), Personal IP can integrate its own trust into scenarios through content output, and then transfer this trust to products. Jun Lei released a video introducing the battery parameters of Xiaomi Auto's battery parameters on the short video platform Chinese TikTok. He intended to popularize the functional parameters of Xiaomi batteries, but when personal IP is attached to content marketing, the content becomes a carrier of values, and Jun Lei's act of revealing battery parameters becomes a "safety commitment guarantee" for Xiaomi Auto. Personal IP enables content marketing to evolve from "function transmission" to "meaning production". In addition, content marketing connects the values and trust capital of personal IP with products or services through scenario-based and story-telling approaches, strengthening the brand attributes of personal IP. Content marketing has the characteristics of diversified channels and strong targeting. By relying on platforms of different natures, it launches relevant content through multi-channels and multi-scenarios, quickly attracting audience attention, forming certain communities, and achieving the goal of accumulating corresponding community culture [16](Min Zhou, 2018). Leveraging different channels and scenario-based marketing, content marketing serves as a bridge, connecting personal IP with brands and reinforcing the core attributes of personal IP. Since then, personal IP has become more recognizable and influential in the minds of its audience, and the marketing model has transformed from "one-way output" to "two-way collaboration".

3.2.The Mechanism between Personal IP and Content Marketing

3.2.1 The Personal IP as a Credibility anchor for Content Marketing

Further exploring personal IP and content marketing, they have an interaction mechanism. Specifically, personal IP endows credibility to content marketing, driving the value upgrading of content marketing. The signal theory proposes that in markets with information asymmetry, credible signals (such as personal IP signals) can, with their own professional background and accumulated trust momentum, send signals to guide customers to choose brands, effectively reducing their information search and verification costs and enabling customers to make decisions faster [17](Spence,1978). Specifically, the experience, professional capabilities, and strong emotional output of personal IP provide a credible stimulus, which can influence consumers' perception of content marketing output, thereby enhancing their conviction in content marketing. When Xiaomi Auto was released, no customer had test-driven it, but only through a "PPT" presentation and Jun Lei's promotion of Xiaomi Auto, Xiaomi Auto received 88,898 orders within 24 hours. The success

of Xiaomi Auto is certainly inseparable from the high-quality interpretation of this unique "PPT", but what prompted customers to place orders without test-driving is the deep emotional bond between Jun Lei's personal IP and "Xiaomi fans". This relationship transforms trading relationships into "fan relationships". Trust plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' decision-making behavior. It promotes connections and recognition between consumers and brands, and this emotional connection can effectively reduce consumers' risk perception [18](Xiangyao Kong, Jibing Li, 2024). The professional insights, real experiences, and values that Jun Lei's personal IP has long-term output have formed a "reliable information source" label in the user's mind. This trust asset is transferred to the products, services, or viewpoints he promotes, making marketing content come with an "authoritative filter". Based on emotional recognition, users have a higher tolerance for marketing content, a stronger willingness to share, and even take the initiative to defend products recommended by IP. Buying a car is certainly not a trivial matter for ordinary consumer families but a risky family decision. By using personal IP to enhance the communication of information content, the role of conveying products is elevated to emotional output. At this time, purchasing products becomes an "identity symbol" for fans to support personal IP, which greatly reduces consumers' risk perception of purchasing products and prompts them to issue purchase instructions.

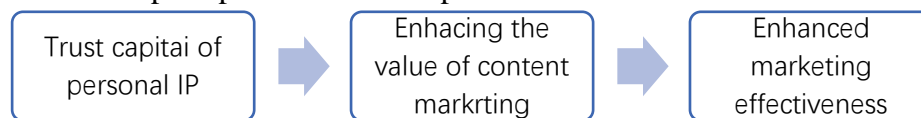


Figure.1 Mechanism of Personal IP as a Credibility Anchor for Content Marketing

3.2.2 The empowering effect of Content Marketing on Personal IP

Content marketing can empower personal IPs and further feed back to them. Different styles and categories of content will aggregate fans into various communities. The output of IP content will give them a shared identity. When they have a shared identity, this sense of common identity will promote the audience's recognition and loyalty to the IP [19](Yan Dong, 2016). When consumers engage with content that aligns with the values of a personal IP, they will feel that their own identity, interests, or beliefs are recognized and reinforced. Leveraging this characteristic, brands can further pinpoint the user portraits of their marketing targets and accurately accumulate personal IP assets by means of these user portraits. Specifically, content marketing is used to attract customers, and content interaction is used to reveal user interests. Consumers will leave comments and reviews on social media, forming collisions of ideas and generating emotional resonance [20](Yinmeng Huang, Linqing Yao, 2024). By observing users' reactions to emotional content marketing, it is possible to better target their group personas based on user preferences. When the user personas are accurately depicted, personal IPs can further operate in depth targeting core user personas, such as community interaction and friendly exchanges, to help users shape group identity tags and strengthen their recognition of personal IPs. Musk once posted tweets such as "Tesla privatization" on his Twitter, which sparked heated discussions. Fans demonstrated their "anti-traditional and independent" nature by reposting his tweets. Consumers consume content that matches their personal IP values, strengthening their psychological identification with their self-identity and deepening their bond with personal IPs. At the same time, consumers will also increase their repurchasing of brand products due to identity recognition, which will form a fan economy in the long run and precipitate personal IP assets.

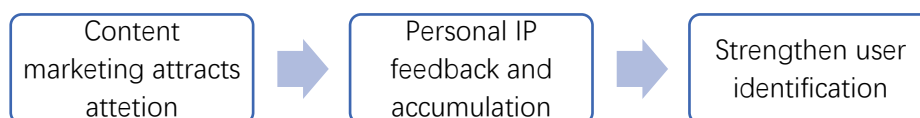


Figure.2 Mechanism of the Empowering Effect of Content Marketing on Personal IP

4. The Challenges in the Integration of Personal IP and Content Marketing

Although using personal IP for content marketing has many advantages—such as leveraging the trust capital of personal IP to better serve content marketing, helping enterprises lock user circles to form a fan economy, and facilitating two-way communication between enterprises and customers—the effective integration of personal IP and content marketing also faces various challenges. These challenges may affect the long-term development of personal IP, brand image, company development, and commercial transformation effects.

Firstly, the long-term sustainable development of personal IP depends on outputting continuously high-quality content with consistent values to maintain audience trust and loyalty. The difficulty lies in maintaining high-quality and continuous content creation challenges to the input of time, energy, and resources, and maintaining consistency in values—specifically, maintaining the "persona" in front of fans—is not easy. Once the persona collapses, not only may the individual with the online persona suffer a ruined reputation and pay a heavy price, but also the brands they endorse, as well as the enterprises and organizations they represent, will have their images and reputations damaged, while suffering huge economic losses [21](Hongyuan Su, 2022). Once the persona is on the verge of collapse, the hard-earned personal IP will no longer exist.

Secondly, the content marketing field is highly competitive. Using personal IP for content marketing has high requirements for personal IP itself, and forcibly using personal IP for marketing is not beneficial for enterprise development. Personal IP has risks because part of the control over brand image is transferred, and it is often difficult to ensure that the relevant favorable associations of personal IP are transferred to the brand. When personal IP cannot clearly define the boundary of serving enterprise strategies and overshadows the main brand, it will cause the phenomenon of "the tail wagging the dog", weakening customers' brand cognition and their sense of belonging.

Thirdly, personal IP also faces many problems in pursuing commercial transformation effects in content marketing. Personal IP pursues long-term construction and cannot damage its image for short-term gains. Although short-term profit-seeking may bring quick returns, it will sacrifice the long-term development potential of personal IP. The loss of trust capital and audience loyalty will lead to a decline in traffic, which in turn will trigger a customer trust crisis.

5. Conclusion and Future Outlook

To effectively address the challenges in the integration of personal IP and content marketing, enterprises and individuals should adopt multi-dimensional strategies to ensure the sustainable development of personal IP, reduce enterprise brand risks, and improve commercial transformation effects. Firstly, personal IP should be consistent with corporate values. The sustainable development of personal IP requires long-term and stable content output, and the output content should always be consistent with personal values to avoid the risk of "persona collapse". To this end, enterprises and personal IP holders should jointly plan the frequency and quality of content creation to ensure that the content meets audience expectations while maintaining value consistency. Secondly, clarify the boundary between personal IP and corporate brand. When enterprises use personal IP for content marketing, they should avoid over-binding personal IP with enterprise strategies, causing the fragmentation of brand cognition, and be alert to the phenomenon of "personal IP replacing the brand". Finally, enterprises should adhere to the long-term marketing concept. In the process of using personal IP for content marketing, enterprises should focus on establishing long-term user relationships and brand loyalty, rather than just short-term traffic monetization. Short-term marketing strategies may damage audience trust and loyalty, reducing the long-term relationship between brands and consumers.

With the evolution of technology and the continuous changes in consumption behavior, the integration trend of personal IP and content marketing has become more obvious, becoming an important fulcrum for brand building and consumer communication. In the future, personal IP will become a value carrier for enterprise value propositions, user relationships, and cultural

communication; enterprises will also need to strengthen their systematic management capabilities for the life cycle of personal IP to achieve coordinated development between brands and personal IP; how to handle the relationship between brand dependence, IP's autonomous commercial interests, and public responsibilities will also be an important issue for enterprises in the process of integrated development.

References

- [1] Pulizzi, J. (2012). The rise of storytelling as the new marketing. *Publishing research quarterly*, 28(2), 116-123.
- [2] Hardey, M. (2011). Generation C: content, creation, connections and choice. *International journal of market research*, 53(6), 749-770.
- [3] McCracken, G. (1989). Who is the celebrity endorser? Cultural foundations of the endorsement process. *Journal of consumer research*, 16(3), 310-321.
- [4] Agustina, T. S. (2020). Storytelling Sebagai Strategi Bisnis Sosial Start-Up Ojek Syar'i Berbasis Aplikasi di Surabaya. *INOBI: Jurnal Inovasi Bisnis dan Manajemen Indonesia*, 3(4), 448-460.
- [5] Korzh, A., & Estima, A. (2022). The Power of Storytelling as a marketing tool in personal branding. *International Journal of Business Innovation*, e28957-e28957.
- [6] Mazurek, M. (2025). Limitations of Artificial Intelligence. Why Artificial Intelligence Cannot Replace the Human Mind. *Filozofia i Nauka*, 97-111.
- [7] Lepak, D. P., & Snell, S. A. (1999). The human resource architecture: Toward a theory of human capital allocation and development. *Academy of management review*, 24(1), 31-48.
- [8] Lazarus, R. S. (1991). Cognition and motivation in emotion. *American Psychologist*, 46(4), 352
- [9] Draganidis, F. and Mentzas, G. (2006), "Competency based management: a review of systems and approaches", *Information Management & Computer Security*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 51-64.
- [10] Reeve, V. (2022). Reading perspectives on feeling and the semiotics of emotion. *Cognitive Semiotics*, 15(2), 249-267.
- [11] Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences OF INDIVIDUALS'FIT at work: A meta-analysis OF person–job, person–organization, person–group, and person–supervisor fit. *Personnel psychology*, 58(2), 281-342
- [12] Shamim, K., Azam, M., & Islam, T. (2024). How do social media influencers induce the urge to buy impulsively? Social commerce context. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 77, 103621.
- [13] Kahneman, D. (1973). *Attention and effort* (Vol. 1063, pp. 218-226). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: prentice-Hall.
- [14] [14] Jian Zhang, & Yanan Wei. (2021). An Analysis of Brand Emotional Marketing Strategies in Internet Communication *Young journalist*, 000 (022), 113-114
- [15] Stewart, K. (1999). Transference as a means of building trust in world wide web sites.
- [16] Min Zhou. (2018). Exploration of Multi scenario Combination Content Marketing Path Based on Customer Experience *Business Economics Research* (1), 3
- [17] Spence, M. (1978). Job market signaling. In *Uncertainty in economics* (pp. 281-306). Academic Press.
- [18] Xiangyao Kong, & Jibing Li. (2025). The impact of internet celebrity blogger traits on consumers' willingness to purchase online: a chain mediation based on positive emotions and brand trust *Business Economics Research* (4), 108-111
- [19] Yan Dong. (2016). Analysis of the Advantages and Essence of IP Content Marketing: Cross border Fan Aggregation Effect Based on Audience Immersive Experience *Contemporary Communication* (5), 3
- [20] Xinmeng Huang, & Linqing Yao. (2024). The path of brand asset creation from the perspective of content marketing: a research perspective based on grounded theory *Journal of Shanxi University of Finance and Economics*, 46 (S01), 157-159
- [21] Hongyuan Su. (2022). Symbolic construction, performance, and reflection of online personas *People's Forum* (10), 4