

# Emotional Value Shaping and Communication Strategy of Digital Gift Products

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**Abstract:** Digital gift products are a new gift form formed at the intersection of digital technology, network platforms and consumer culture. They include not only virtual card coupons, digital collections, emoticon gifts, member rights and interests, but also customised blessing content generated and transmitted by social platforms. Compared with traditional physical gifts, digital gift products break through the limitations of space, time and logistics, making the gift-giving behaviour more immediate, lightweight and diverse. The core of gifts lies not only in the use function, but also in carrying relationship expression, emotional transmission, identity and ritual memory. At present, some digital gift products focus on transaction efficiency and traffic conversion in the process of development and communication, resulting in emotional expression being templated, commercialised and superficial. The article analyses the main characteristics, emotional value composition, value shaping problems and optimisation paths of digital gift products, and puts forward emotional value shaping strategies with scene design, story expression, personalised customisation, interaction mechanism and cultural elements as the core, in order to propose innovative development and communication practice of digital gift products.

**Keywords:** Digital gift products; emotional value; scenario design; personalised customisation; communication strategy.

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## 1. Introduction

Digital gift-giving has become a key means of maintaining social relationships, but most existing research has focused on gifting within global e-commerce or social media platforms. Traditional gifts rely on physical items, face-to-face gifts and fixed holiday scenes, while digital gift products rely on mobile payment, social media, virtual rights and interests and platform algorithms to generate, purchase, give and share. Birthday wishes, holiday greetings, game props, virtual flowers, electronic greeting cards, digital commemorative medals and other products have gradually entered daily life and become important media for family and friend communication, brand marketing and community interaction. Gift consumption has shifted from the “exchange of objects” to the “expression of emotions.” Users purchase digital gifts not merely to satisfy practical needs, but also to convey care, blessings, companionship, or commemoration through these products. With their rapid dissemination, wide reach, and diverse forms of presentation, digital gift products provide new possibilities for shaping emotional value. However, if such products remain limited to functional accumulation and price-based promotion, it will be difficult for them to develop stable user loyalty and sustained communicative power. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the development logic of digital gift products from the perspective of emotional value and to explore pathways for value construction and communication optimization.

## 2. The Main Characteristics of Digital Gift Products

The characteristics of digital gift products are concentrated in virtuality, immediacy, interactivity and scalability. Virtuality makes gifts no longer rely on physical carriers. Users can complete gifts through links, QR codes, platform accounts or virtual spaces. The form of gifts can be rights and

interests, images, sounds, animations, digital assets or exclusive content. The immediacy lowers the threshold of gift-giving. Temporary expression of blessings, off-site transmission of feelings, and holiday peak gifts can be completed in a short time. Interactivity makes gifts no longer one-way transmission. Recipients can reply, display, collect, transfer or participate in secondary creation, so that the gift-giving process is continuous. Scalability enables digital gift products to be combined with social platforms, game scenarios, brand membership systems and cultural content to form a richer consumption entrance. Digital gift products have low logistics costs, strong communication attributes and a high degree of dataization[1-3]. The platform can make recommendations according to user relationships, consumption habits and scene needs. For this reason, the competitive focus of digital gift products is not only on the quantity and technical form of the product, but also on whether it can make users feel that “this gift has something to do with me”.

## 3. The Composition of The Emotional Value of Digital Gift Products

The emotional value of digital gift products is composed of emotional expression, relationship confirmation, identity presentation and memory retention, as shown in Table 1. Emotional expression is the foundation of the existence of gifts. Users use digital products to convey blessings, thanks, apologies, encouragement or companionship, so that abstract emotions can be perceived. Relationship confirmation is reflected in the maintenance of interpersonal connection by gifting behaviour. A birthday red envelope, a customised electronic greeting card, and a gift of membership rights and interests may become symbols of intimate relationships, friendships or community relationships. Identity presentation emphasises that users express aesthetic interest, consumption attitude and cultural belonging through gifts, such as choosing

digital gifts with national trend style, animation co-branded or public welfare attributes, which often have the meaning of self-expression. Memory retention allows digital gifts to have a commemorative function. The platform records the gift time, blessing content and interactive traces, so that the gifts can be transformed from one-time consumption into replayable

emotional files. It can be seen that the value of digital gift products does not only come from technical packaging, nor does it depend entirely on the price, but also comes from whether the products can accurately embed user relationships, life nodes and emotional needs.

**Table 1.** Composition of the emotional value of digital gift products

Elements	Main meanings	Specific Functions
Emotional Expression	Convey emotions such as blessings, gratitude, and encouragement through digital gifts	Enhance the emotional warmth of gifts
Relationship Confirmation	Maintain relationships with family, friends, colleagues, or communities through gifting	Strengthen interpersonal connections
Identity Presentation	Reflect aesthetics, interests, and cultural identity through gift style	Express personal attitudes and identity
Memory Retention	Record the timing of gifts, message content, and interaction history	Create a revisitable emotional archive

#### 4. Problems in the Emotional Value Shaping of Digital Gift Products

The rapid expansion of digital gift products has brought rich choices, but also exposed the problem of insufficient emotional value modelling. Some products simply understand digitalisation as online, and transfer the patterns, blessings and purchase processes of traditional gifts to the platform. There is a lack of detailed understanding of user emotional changes, relationship differences and communication context. Users often feel convenient in the process of use, but not necessarily feel impressed; they can complete the gift, but it is difficult to form a deep memory. The reason why emotional value is weakened is not only at the product design end, but also related to platform operation, brand communication and consumption orientation. When digital gifts pursue sales, exposure and conversion rates excessively, emotional expression is easily replaced by standardised rhetoric, and gift-giving behaviour may also be simplified to a one-time payment action. If digital gift products want to achieve long-term development, they need to change from "buyable" to "reasonable", from "disseminable" to "willing to spread", so that users can feel the emotional response in the complete link of selection, giving, receiving and sharing.

##### 4.1. Serious product homogenisation

Product homogenisation is a prominent manifestation of the lack of emotional value of digital gift products. Electronic greeting cards, virtual red envelope covers, blessing templates and rights gift bags launched by many platforms in the festival node have limited differences in visual elements, copywriting styles and interaction methods. Red, gold, zodiac and reunion symbols are mostly used during the Spring Festival, cakes, balloons and fixed blessings are mostly used on birthdays, and Valentine's Day is more focussed on roses, love and sweet expressions. Although these symbols have a high degree of recognition, they are easy to cause aesthetic fatigue. Users face a large number of similar products when choosing, and it is difficult to find gifts that really fit the relationship and personal emotions of the object. The imitation speed between brands is relatively fast. Once the popular elements are verified by the market, they will be quickly copied, and the original design space will be squeezed. Homogenisation will also reduce users' emotional investment in products, because gifts lack exclusivity and memory points, and it is difficult for the recipient to perceive the giver's intention. If digital gifts

rely on universal templates and popular symbols for a long time, they will gradually lose the delicacy of emotional expression.

##### 4.2. Excessive commercialisation weakens the emotional experience

Excessive commercialisation will deviate from the emotional expression of digital gift products. Some platforms design digital gifts as promotional entrances to promote user consumption through full reduction, lottery, limited-time purchase, grade rights and interests and fission sharing. Gift-giving behaviour is embedded in a strong marketing mechanism. Users originally hoped to convey blessings or care, but they repeatedly touched advertising information, brand slogans and conversion buttons on the purchase page, sharing page and receiving page, and the emotional atmosphere was interrupted by business prompts. When the recipient opens the gift, if he sees too much promotional content, he may understand the gift as a marketing message rather than a sincere expression from others. Commercialisation is not a natural problem of digital gift products. The problem is that commercial information occupies the position of emotional expression. Excessive emphasis on scarcity, comparison and price will also make the gift-giving relationship utilitarian, making users pay attention to "expensive or not", "worth it" and "whethering whether to show off", but ignoring the emotional meaning behind the gift. Once the emotional experience is covered by consumption stimulation, it is difficult for product communication to form real identity.

##### 4.3. Insufficient degree of personalisation

The lack of personalisation makes it difficult for digital gift products to meet the complex interpersonal expression needs. Real gift scenes often have obvious differences. Expectations for tone, content and form are different between parents and children, friends, lovers and colleagues. Although many digital gift products provide basic functions such as avatars, nicknames, and blessing replacement, they are still in the shallow customisation stage. Users can modify superficial information, but they cannot generate more exclusive content based on relationships, common experiences, recipient interests and special anniversaries. The lack of personalisation is also reflected in the recommendation mechanism[4-5]. The platform often pushes gifts according to the popularity of the festival, sales ranking and user

consumption records, and lacks identification of the emotional context. When users want to express implicit care, the system may recommend exaggerated and lively templates; when users want to convey formal thanks, the page is full of entertainment content. The accuracy of gift expression is affected by this. If digital gift products cannot establish a more refined user understanding and content generation ability, the emotional value will easily stay at the level of general blessing.

## **5. Strategies for Shaping and Disseminating the Emotional Value of Digital Gift Products**

### **5.1. Strengthen the scenario design**

Under the background of digital consumption increasingly integrated into daily life, users' demand for gifts has shifted from simply obtaining goods to obtaining emotional expressions that fit the situation. Scenario design can help digital gift products enter users' lives more accurately. The emotional power of gifts often comes from specific situations rather than isolated commodity forms. Birthdays, graduations, promotions, housewarming, anniversaries, holiday greetings, remote accompaniment, post-illness condolences and other scenes have different requirements for the content and expression of gifts. Product design should build visual, copywriting, interaction and communication paths around the scene, so that users can quickly find the expression that meets their needs when entering the page. Products for birthday scenes can highlight growth records and blessing companionship, products for graduation scenes can present youthful memories and future expectations, and products for remote companions can add voice messages, scheduled delivery and common memories functions. In terms of communication, the platform can set up special pages, holiday topics and short video content around different life scenarios, and improve user recognition and willingness to share through specific tags such as "birthday wishes", "graduation commemoration" and "of-site companionship". Scenario-based communication should avoid simple promotion, but present the role of digital gifts in relationship maintenance through real use of the situation, so that the recipient can perceive the connection between the gift and the current life node when opening the gift.

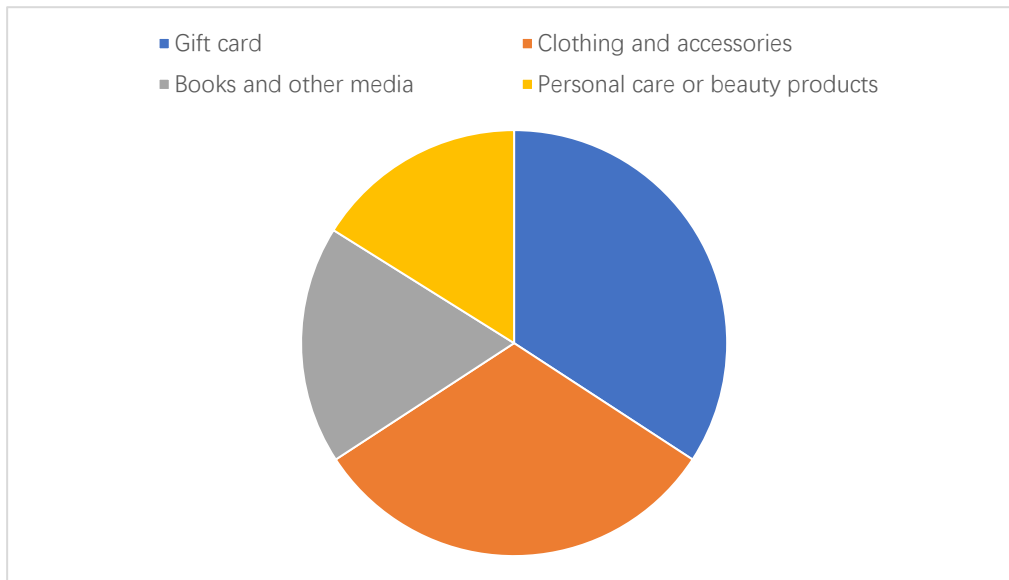
### **5.2. Pay attention to narrative expression**

The deep value of emotional communication lies in evoking users' associations with relationships, experiences and memories. If digital gift products lack narrative support, they are easy to stay at the short-term visual stimulation level. Story-based expression can transform digital gift products from functional objects to emotional narrative carriers. Users' memories of gifts often come not from the product itself, but from the relationship story behind the gift. Digital gift products can guide the giver to write down common experiences, blessing reasons and emotional sources by designing narrative clues, so that the gift has a stronger

personal imprint. Electronic greeting cards not only display blessings, but also photo timelines, voice clips and exclusive labels; digital commemorative medals not only display patterns, but also record the origin of an anniversary; brand gifts not only emphasise the content of rights and interests, but also tell the connection between the brand concept and user life. At the communication level, products can expand emotional resonance through user story collection, social platform topics, brand short films and real case display, so that potential users can understand how digital gifts can participate in daily relationship expression. Story-based communication should not rely on empty slogans, but should highlight specific characters, specific relationships and specific situations. The more specific the story is, the easier it is for users to have a sense of immersion, and the easier it is for products to form spontaneous sharing and secondary dissemination.

### **5.3. Improve the ability of personalised customisation**

Digital gift products face differentiated interpersonal relationships and diversified emotional needs[6]. It is difficult for general templates to fully carry the exclusive feelings that users want to express. Personalised customisation is an important way to improve the emotional value of digital gift products. The advantage of digital gifts is that the content can be edited, the form can be generated, and the transmission can be tracked. The platform can provide more flexible customisation options from titles, tone, visual style, music, dynamic effects, blessing content and delivery time, so that users can complete the expression according to the characteristics of the recipient. Take "Gift Card Greetings" launched by Hallmark in 2024 as an example. The product combines traditional greeting cards with QR code digital gift cards. Users can not only retain the sense of ceremony brought by physical greeting cards, but also allow recipients to complete digital gift exchange through mobile phones. Thus connecting "visible blessings" and "immediately useable digital rights and interests". The data of the past three years also shows that gift cards still have a strong attraction for gift consumption. According to the NRF 2024 holiday consumption survey, gift cards have become the most popular category in the consumer wish list with a request rate of 53%, higher than clothing and accessories, books and other media, personal care or beauty Makeup and other categories, as shown in Figure 1. At the communication level, personalised content itself has a strong sharing value. Users are more willing to share digital gifts with exclusive titles, photos, voice or commemorative messages to social platforms, thus driving the spread of product reputation. It can be seen that if digital gift products can add personalised content, scenario packaging and emotional interaction on the basis of convenient delivery, they can reduce the sense of alienation brought about by template expression, and make the recipient feel that the gift is not generated in bulk, but specially prepared for themselves.



**Figure 1.** The proportion of major categories on the holiday wish list of consumers in 2024

#### 5.4. Increase the interaction mechanism

The development of digital media makes gift delivery no longer limited to one-time delivery. Users are more looking forward to the formation of continuous emotional exchange in the process of receiving, responding and sharing. Digital gift products should extend the emotional life cycle through interactive mechanisms, so that gift-giving behaviour can change from "sending" to "continuous generation of relationships". Take the trend of gift card use in holiday consumption in the past three years as an example. Gift cards can not only be sent instantly as digital rights and interests, but also be combined with online purchases, message blessings, exchange feedback and other links to form a more complete interactive link; According to the NRF 2023-2025 winter festival consumption survey, consumption The proportion of people who want to receive gift cards is 55%, 53% and 50% respectively, and the proportion of online shopping destinations is 58%, 57% and 55% respectively. At

the same time, the preference for gifts such as clothing and accessories, books and other media, personal care or cosmetics also maintains a high proportion, as shown in Table 2. At the communication level, the interaction mechanism can improve user participation and content diffusion. For example, the platform can set up functions such as blessing messages, receiving feedback, second forwarding, anniversary reminders and co-editing, guiding users to continue communicating after gifts, and encouraging recipients to share their gift experiences through Moments, short video platforms or communities. It can be seen that the interactive design of digital gift products should not only add buttons, lucky draws or gamified operations, but should establish an emotional loop around giving, receiving, responding, exchanging and sharing again, so that the recipient can continue to feel the giver's heart in the process of using gifts, and also transform digital gifts from one-time consumption. It is a continuable and disseminable relationship medium.

**Table 2.** Comparison of the proportion of holiday gift preferences and online shopping in 2023-2025

Category	2023	2024	2025
Gift card	55%	53%	50%
Clothing and accessories	49%	49%	46%
Books and other media	28%	28%	27%
Personal care or beauty products	25%	25%	23%
Online shopping destinations	58%	57%	55%

#### 5.5. Integrate cultural elements

Gift consumption itself carries a distinct cultural significance. Digital gift products can only gain deeper emotional identity and spread memory when they enter a specific cultural context. Cultural elements can improve the recognition and emotional thickness of digital gift products. Gifts themselves have strong cultural attributes, and there are unique gift-giving customs in different festivals, regions, groups and intergenerational relationships. Digital gift products can extract design resources from traditional festivals, folk symbols, poetics, non-heritage skills, regional aesthetics and contemporary youth culture, and transform cultural significance into perceptible digital expression. Spring Festival gifts can integrate New Year's paintings,

window flowers, lanterns and family book elements. Mid-Autumn Festival gifts can combine moon phase, reunion images and poetic expressions. Graduation gifts can absorb campus memory, school motto spirit and youth symbols[7-8]. The use of cultural elements needs to avoid simple stacking. Traditional patterns should not only be pasted on the interface, but also the emotional core behind the symbols should be understood. At the communication level, platforms and brands can explain the design source and cultural connotation of digital gifts through holiday theme activities, cultural story interpretation, non-heritage co-branded content, social media topics and user co-creation activities, so that users can also complete the transmission of cultural meaning when giving gifts. Digital gifts with cultural temperature are easier to be collected, forwarded and discussed, and can also form brand

differences, promoting digital gift products from single consumption communication to the combination of emotional communication and cultural communication[9-10].

## 6. Conclusion

The development of digital gift products reflects the profound impact of digital technology on emotional expression. It breaks through the limitations of space, time and form of traditional gifts, making gift-giving behaviour more convenient, diverse and spreadable. Convenience does not necessarily bring emotional recognition, and emotional value is still the core of whether digital gift products can be favoured by users. At present, there are problems such as product homogenisation, excessive commercial expression and insufficient personalisation ability in the market, resulting in some digital gift products staying at the level of formal innovation, and it is difficult to truly reach user relationships and emotional needs. In the future, digital gift products should return to the essence of "gifts" and serve people's emotional communication with technology, content, scenes and culture. By strengthening scene design, focussing on story expression, improving personalised customisation ability, increasing interaction mechanisms, and integrating cultural elements, digital gift products can form a more warm user experience. Emotional value shaping is not only conducive to product innovation, but also promotes digital consumption from traffic-driven to relationship-driven, providing a more lasting impetus for the development of the digital culture industry.

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