

# Research on Cross-Cultural Marketing in the New Media Era

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**Abstract**—The 21st century is an era in which media producers and consumers interact with each other, an era in which new and old media collide, and an era in which print media and electronic media merge. At the same time, with the deepening of globalization and the increasingly frequent cooperation and interaction among countries and economies, cross-cultural marketing faces unprecedented opportunities and challenges in many aspects, such as cultural shock caused by cultural background, religious differences, and communication barriers and so on. Information dissemination in the new media era has the following characteristics: diversified media forms, widespread disseminators, instant information dissemination, and global synchronization. The use of the characteristics of new media mobile internet can implement effective cross-cultural marketing, but in the implementation, multiple measures should be taken simultaneously; it is necessary to pay attention to interculturality, respect cultural differences, improve cross-cultural communication capabilities, and adopt marketing strategies that are adapted to the unique local culture to effectively conduct cross-cultural marketing.

**Keywords:** *new media, cross-cultural marketing, interculturality, fan culture*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century global economic integration process, international trade and business exchanges are becoming more and more frequent, more and more economic activities cross national borders, and enterprises face wider markets. And the constant emergence of new media has provided unlimited potential for corporate marketing. How to make good use of new media and turn potential into momentum is both an opportunity and a challenge.

## II. OVERVIEW OF THE NEW MEDIA ERA

Professor Xiong Chengyu of Tsinghua University believes that today's new media usually refers to media forms that appear and affect on the basis of computer information processing technology [1]. That is, new media refers to the forms of communication and media that provide users with information and entertainment services through digital, network, and mobile technologies through the Internet, wireless communication networks, satellites, and other terminals such as computers, mobile phones, and digital televisions. New media is a constantly changing

concept. In recent years, new media such as streaming media, self-media, and social media have emerged one after another, and their expressions have also changed with each passing day, such as podcasts, Kwai, and Tik Tok. The content characteristics of information dissemination in the new media era mainly include the characteristics of mass information carrying and fragmented information dissemination. Therefore, the formal characteristics of information dissemination in the new media era are mainly diversified media forms and widespread disseminators. And the information dissemination in the new media era has the characteristics of beyond time and space, that is, the information dissemination is instant and global synchronization.

## III. CROSS-CULTURAL MARKETING IN THE NEW MEDIA ERA

Cross-cultural marketing, as a marketing activity carried out in two or more cultural environments, mainly emphasizes the management of cultural differences implemented by the two parties (companies and customers, clients, distributors, suppliers, etc.) who have reached a transaction, which mainly includes cultural marketing strategy management, related market research work, brand management and marketing work content. Intercultural communication of media discourse is coded in one culture but decoded in another. Differences in understanding and lack of semantic meaning in transmission will constitute marketing obstacles. As communication scientist David Morley puts it: "The development and popularization of information and communication technology has promoted communication and dialogue like never before, but there are more misunderstandings, misconceptions and conflicts between civilizations in different parts of the world than ever before." [2] Therefore, there is a special phenomenon in cross-cultural marketing that can't be ignored — the collision or even conflict between different cultures, that is, culture shock in marketing.

On November 18, 2018, the Italian luxury brand Dolce & Gabbana (D & G) launched a promotional video of "Having Dinner with Chopsticks" on its official social account. In the film, an Asian face model wearing a cheongsam, in a room full of old Shanghai-style decoration, uses chopsticks to eat three different Italian foods, including pasta and pizza. The

model in the video is stacy; she calls Chinese chopsticks a "little stick", but naming the traditional Italian margarita pizza with the words "Italian great", which has stirred up a wave of negative comments on the Internet. After watching the promotional video, many Chinese netizens believe that this film is suspected of discriminating against traditional Chinese culture. This view has been supported by many foreign netizens. Some people think that this is due to the lack of awareness of Chinese culture by the Italian brand D & G, which can cause such a biased speech. More people think that despite the slogan of highlighting Chinese culture, they repeatedly commit the low-level mistake of discrimination against China, which is the manifestation of cultural discrimination.

#### IV. STRATEGIES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR CROSS-CULTURAL MARKETING IN THE NEW MEDIA ERA

In cross-cultural marketing, the communicator and the audiences have different paradigm rules, so they will have communication obstacles, dialogue dislocations with other subjects different from their own paradigm, which may reduce the communication effect and even cause communication failure. Therefore, the two parties need to communicate across their own cultural horizons, so as to achieve a common perception and understanding at a new level. The details are as follows:

##### A. *Respecting for interculturality in cross-cultural communication*

UNESCO defines interculturality as the existence and equal interaction of different cultures and the possibility of generating common cultural expressions through dialogue and peaceful respect. That is, when different cultures meet, they should recognize the differences and respect the other, take discourse interaction as the root, and make connections in the interaction through reasonable dialogue. In cross-cultural communication, interculturality involves not only the language level, but also the spiritual and cultural level beyond language [3]. For example, Chinese chopsticks reflect Chinese philosophical thoughts, such as the interaction between Yin and Yang, and Liang Yi Zhi Xiang. Chinese chopsticks are straight and long, with one square head and one round head, and two chopsticks make up a pair. Taking food with chopsticks is not moving two chopsticks at the same time, but one chopstick is initiative and the other is driven, one is on top and the other is on bottom. The combination of two chopsticks becomes a Tai Ji, that is, it has the characteristic of Liang Yi Zhi Xiang. And D & G called the Chinese chopsticks "sticks" in the promotional video. It is indeed a disrespect behavior to the culture of others.

##### B. *Understanding different cultures*

Culture is the sum of material and spiritual products of human society. The category of culture includes three levels: material culture, institutional custom culture, and spiritual culture. Different nations have different languages and different cultures, and different cultures influence and restrict

people's clothing, food, shelter, etiquette, customs, aesthetic taste, value orientation, and so on. Some scholars have pointed out that "the problem of cross-cultural communication can be understood as a problem of cultural differences in social events and perception of reality. To reduce and overcome such communication barriers caused by perceived differences, it is best to understand the cultural factors that cause these differences, and at the same time have the sincere desire to successfully communicate across cultural barriers." [4]

##### C. *Adopting a marketing strategy adapted to the unique local culture*

Because different people have different lifestyles and living habits, they also need an adaptation stage for foreign goods. Therefore, in cross-cultural marketing, in addition to intensifying market research and doing detailed market research, special research is also needed on local ideology and culture, taboos, and social lifestyles. According to the local actual situation and cultural level, social development status, etc., it is possible to develop a suitable cultural marketing strategy that is in line with local development. Only in this way can people succeed in cross-cultural marketing activities. A prime example of this is the British television series Peppa Pig following in the footsteps of the Chinese Golden Pig Year. Since its launch by British BBC Radio in 2004, Peppa Pig has been regarded as an excellent work for children's intellectual enlightenment and English education because of its naive and goofy image and cheerful lively childish story, becoming popular among Chinese parents and children. Page can be seen on TV everywhere. Children watch it cheerfully on the subway. In the jubilant Chinese Golden Year of the Pig in 2019, the Page families also wore the Chinese New Year's favorite color red, dressed in traditional Chinese costumes, and appeared in the Spring Festival "fortune" stickers and pictures of the Spring Festival. This cartoon cleverly gains advantage of the Spring Festival and becomes the "first golden pig" of the Chinese Golden Pig Year.

##### D. *Leveraging new media to create a fan culture and achieve viral transmission*

So far, human history has experienced several major media technological revolutions, including "language-word-printing-electronic engineering-network". Each media technology revolution has greatly extended the reach of the human body. McLuhan's theory that "the medium is an extension of the human body" is once again demonstrated. Unlike traditional media communication, the communication tools of the 21st century streaming media era are no longer in the hands of individual organizations or institutions, and communicators have become widespread. The virtual nature, sharing, and interaction of the network media enable different groups to exchange information at any time and place, which results in a more diverse communication relationship.

From ordinary phones to smart phones, from snail mail to email, the communication technology is advancing by leaps

and bounds, and Social Media based on the Web2.0 era gives everyone the ability to create and distribute content [5]. The ever-changing technology breaks down the barriers to cultural communication. As the audience is allowed to create and exchange UCG (user-generated content), social media users determine their content and the intensity and breadth of their communication to some extent. The huge network and fan culture have become the cornerstone of the growing social media. Henry Jenkins of the University of Southern California believes that with the development of new media and the increasingly decentralized and decentralized dissemination of information, the boundaries between fans and ordinary audiences have become increasingly blurred. In the cultural production and dissemination of the digital age, the experience of ordinary consumers and fans has increasingly become an active participant [6]. In the era of rapid development of media technology, the word "audience" has dual meanings of information producer and consumer, and has become a "prosumer", ie, a producer + consumer. The following still takes Peppa Pig as an example: In October 2015, "Peppa Pig" was launched on China's three major video platforms — iQIYI, Youku and Tudou. In just one year, the number of viewers exceeded 10 billion. With the help of Kwai, Tik Tok, Podcast and other high-traffic platforms, Page has become a rich "pig with goods". Netizens not only make Page into a series of emojis, use and transpond these emojis a lot, but also buy its extended products to be cool. According to the data released by Tmall, compared with February 2018, the search volume for Peppa Pig on Tmall in March 2018 increased by 5 times in a straight line, reaching nearly 20 million person times; in April, the search volume reached more than 20 million. In 2019, Tmall Double 11 even sold 3.03 million pieces of Peppa Pig IP custom-made growth pants. Such amazing data is enough to prove that Peppa Pig has transformed from a simple animated character to a communication phenomenon.

It can't be ignored that although the fan culture relies on the pleasure, participation and consumption ability of the audience, as a new era of social media, it must keep the sense of social responsibility in mind and be a qualified "gatekeeper". Efforts should also be paid to strengthen the promotion of positive content on the Internet and establish a good Internet ecological environment.

## V. CONCLUSION

The 21st century is an era in which media producers and consumers interact with each other, an era in which new and old media collide, and an era in which print media and electronic media merge. Changes in media technology have also had a profound impact on culture. It is necessary to combine the perspectives of political economy and cultural studies to capture the contradictory relationship between media production and consumption. In the era of globalization, international exchanges and cooperation are becoming closer and closer. Cross-cultural marketing should also be inclusive and seek development together in order to embark on a path of sustainable development. If only one flower blooms, it can't be regarded as spring. When all

flowers bloom, the garden is full of spring. It is hoped that mutual learning in cross-cultural marketing, seeking common ground while shelving differences, respecting the diversity of the world, and jointly promoting the prosperity and progress of human civilization will soon become a consensus.

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