

# Analysis of 5W Model of Pechoin Brand Communication in the New Media Era

## Taking the Products of Pechoin as an Example

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### ABSTRACT

The paper comprehensively analyzes the brand communication of Pechoin through Laswell's 5W (who, says what, in which channel, to whom, with what effect) model, trying to show a detailed picture of the communication in the context of new media. It aims to provide the basis of factor analysis for the brand communication, so as to obtain better communication effect.

**Keywords:** new media, Pechoin, brand communication

### I. INTRODUCTION

To survive the cutthroat competition in beauty market under new media, Pechoin employs various social media to improve its brand image, thus establishing emotional connection with consumers and stimulating their emotional resonance. In addition to establishing youth brand image by launching new products and inviting celebrities sought after by young audience as spokespersons, the brand offers audience more product choices. Such online-offline communication channel has achieved remarkable effect. Laswell's famous "5W" model, namely, the communicator (who), the communication content (says what), the communication channel (in which channel), the audience (to whom) and the communication effect (with what effect), can depict the communication prospect of Pechoin under the new media environment in a three-dimensional way.

### II. COMMUNICATOR (WHO)

Yu Mingyang holds that brand communicators serve as the main body of brand communication process. For brand communicators, brand communication is a continuous and two-way communication process. In this process, communicators should grasp the needs of the audience and keep pace with the era, and highlight the characteristics of their own brands in the specific implementation process.

Pechoin, a Chinese brand with a history of nearly 90 years, has won the favor with consumers with profound

brand culture, and gained high reputation and trust. This is also Pechoin's merit as a communicator.

However, Pechoin, a traditional brand, seems to be less appealing as the main consumer of beauty makeup in recent years is becoming younger and younger, which requires Pechoin to fully consider the young, main consumer groups, when formulating communication strategies. In recent years, it attempts for public attention through endorsement contracts with Jay Chou, Dilraba, ONER, Zhang Yunlei, ect. These celebrity spokesmen with large fan base promote the brand through new media including Microblog, WeChat. The "love me, love my dog" mentality of the fan group is employed to enhance the brand's appeal to young consumers, which is conducive to subsequent brand communication activities of Pechoin.

### III. THE AUDIENCE (TO WHOM)

#### A. Change in audience: the main consumer group is younger

Founded in 1931, Pechoin caught the eye of more people, and won their favor. Pechoin cream launched in 1940 was then popular with socialites and celebrities. However, after the founding of China in 1949, Pechoin was no longer the luxury sought after by upper-class in Shanghai, but the representative of affordable skincare products. With the passage of time, Pechoin is regarded as "cheap public skincare products" by most Chinese people, and typical middle-aged and elderly skincare products in the eyes of young consumers.

The main consumer of China's beauty makeup industry is young groups born after 1990 or 2000, whose pursuit of fashion and trend prompts Pechoin to promote youthful brand image. As young consumers

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prefer beauty products with diverse functions and novel concepts, Pechoin makes upgrades and innovation on its existing skincare product line, and launches facial mask, BB cream, hand cream and other product series that are popular with young people. As young consumers care more on product packaging, Pechoin includes glass bottles into the design of packaging, meeting consumers' pursuit of packaging texture. The brand also seize the opportunity to further seize the young market. In 2012 and 2015, it successively introduced youthful brands as Sansheng Blossom, Hello Happiness and Bluemyth, which further grab the attention of the young through fresh image.

To further cater to young people's way of obtaining information under new media, Pechoin published first full-page advertisement "1931" by virtue of social media including weibo and WeChat. This has set off a wave of "full-page" craze, which gradually renews its image featuring youth in young audience, keeping up with the trend that the main consumer group are becoming younger.

#### *B. Changes in audience demands: clear segmentation of product functions*

Nowadays, young consumers have more detailed demands for beauty makeup products. They attach more importance to the usage and ingredients of the products, and hold various requirements for different parts such as lips and eyes, etc. Terms such as whitening and moisturizing, freckle removing, sunscreen and anti-aging have gradually been recognized by consumers.

The change of audience demand prompts Pechoin to continuously innovate and upgrade its products. The newly launched series is mainly aimed at whitening and moisturizing. However, its main consumer are people aged between 20 and 35. First of all, it is still pending whether the two functions of whitening and moisturizing can satisfy the needs of young people in their 20s. People around 30 will begin to pay attention to anti-aging and anti-wrinkling, while Pechoin enjoys no corresponding products. The single function of the product is a major drawback, which fails to meet the functional requirements of consumers for beauty makeup products.

### **IV. THE COMMUNICATION CONTENT (SAYS WHAT)**

#### *A. Brand products: time-honored Chinese herbal products without extra stimulation to skin*

In view of ever-changing beauty makeup industry, Pechoin positions its herbal products without extra stimulation to skin, which is different from that of other international skincare brands. Such herbal skincare positioning, coupled with the advantages of traditional Chinese herbal medicine, can attract the attention of

some consumers with specific needs. To meet the diverse needs of young consumers, Pechoin also launches several new product lines, including Men's skincare, cosmetics, which broadens its audience. Thanks to time-honored public praise and new products that satisfy the needs of current audience, Pechoin has gained more attention.

#### *B. Brand culture: Oriental beauty*

Brand culture, a reflection of its own unique charm, contains such important factors as value concept and enterprise concept, which matters in the process of brand communication.

Pechoin has been committed to show the Oriental craftsman's beauty and the concept of natural health to the world. Since its birth in 1931, it has been adhering to the natural and non-stimulating way of skincare and promoting the power of herbal skincare. The cross-border cooperation with the Forbidden City incisively and vividly shows the beauty of the craftsman, which lies in "commitment". Such spirit is a representative of Pechoin's spirit of quality products for decades. Such cultural communication on the one hand reflects the unique charm of the brand, which can bring economic benefits, on the other hand inherits and promotes its own brand culture.

#### *C. Brand activities: following the pace of the times, combining inheritance and innovation*

As for the activities, due to the influence of new media, Pechoin invites spokespersons with high popularity or supported by young groups, such as Jay Chou, Dilraba, Zhang Yunlei, ONER, etc. In addition to its increasingly young spokespeople, it has sponsored popular programs such as The Voice of China and There Is Something New In The Palace Museum, attracting more young audiences born in the 1990s and 2000s. While adhering to the nostalgic style of the time-honored brand, and combining with the preferences of young people in the new era, Pechoin has inherited the value concept of "Oriental beauty" that it boasts. The innovative publicity activities also make this brand gradually return to the audience's vision.

### **V. COMMUNICATION MEANS**

As the trend requires a younger brand image, Pechoin gets rid of the stereotyped old brand in the eyes of consumers through appropriate advertising and public relations activities.

#### *A. Advertising*

"Nostalgia" serves as one of the elements of brand communication for Pechoin. Advertising featuring nostalgia can arouse the resonance of older consumers, thus stimulating their purchasing desire. However, for

young consumers, knowing the history and culture of a brand can help them enhance their trust in the brand.

The first is graphic advertising. In 2017, the full-page advertisement "1931" set off a craze, showing the street of Shanghai then, reflecting the living conditions of people there, which is quite nostalgic and in line with the brand image of Pechoin. The advertisement was circulated widely on weibo and in Moment immediately. The new product of Pechoin on Mother's Day, Moonlight Treasure Box, was also favored by many consumers. The advertisement also received favorable communication effect. Later, Pechoin successively launched "It's lucky to meet you", "time treasure box" and other several advertisings with unique style. Through these advertisements, the audience not only read a very interesting story, but also unconsciously shaped a good impression of Pechoin.

The second is video advertising. The Oriental Beauty employs a lot of traditional Chinese elements to reflect the beauty of the East. Since the traditional culture can arouse the patriotic feelings of the audience, the combination of nostalgic elements with young vitality makes the slogan "Oriental Beauty, Pechoin" more appealing to consumers.

In addition, considering the things that young people like, Pechoin promotes its popularity by sponsoring popular programs and inviting young people's favorite celebrity for endorsement. In 2018, due to the popularity of Idol Producer, Pechoin elevated ONER chief energy experience officer, which received favorable response among the post-95, 00 consumer groups.

The series of advertisements reveal the combination of nostalgia and innovation, which not only conforms to the long history of the brand itself, but also close its gap with consumers. The brand spokesmen are getting younger and younger, and staying current with hot spots, thus forming unique brand attraction, making consumers have a strong emotional identification with the brand, and also spreading new brand image to consumers.

#### *B. IP crossover*

The promotion of "Internet +" made cross-border cooperation between brands and IP become the mainstream at present. Crossover means that two unrelated brands cooperate with each other, break traditional thinking, and unite to attract the attention of different audience groups. This is no longer a new word for today's consumers. Currently, products involving crossover are attracting attention from consumers, mainly those born after 1990 and 1995.

In terms of IP crossover, in 2017, Pechoin jointly launched gift box, limited gift box and popular merchandise with The Palace Museum, a powerful IP

with a history of more than 600 years, which not only features vitality and youth, but also reveals the profound heritage of Chinese traditional culture. In addition to online cooperation, Pechoin also carried out an offline aesthetic forum — Oriental Aesthetics Seminar, which is located in the Palace Museum Jianfu Palace. The offline aesthetic seminar vividly showcased crossover cooperation. Both academics and products involve the expression of design language and the inheritance of cultural genes. More importantly, the Oriental beauty is translated into a way of life, which has spread to many consumers, as well as the brand culture of Pechoin.

#### *C. Public relations activities*

In 2013, Pechoin launched a public welfare activity for the protection of folk art named "30 Degrees North latitude • Amber Plan". In 2014, it carried out a public welfare activity of "100,000 hand cream to deliver warmth". In 2017, it launched a public welfare video "You should be Proud" to encourage young people. In addition, Pechoin, along with China Youth Development Foundation, Chinese Association of STD and AIDS Prevention and Control and other social public welfare organizations, participated in public welfare projects such as poverty alleviation and education, AIDS medical treatment and prevention.

Pechoin contributes to the society, not only fulfilling its social responsibility as time-honored brand, but also showing its excellent corporate culture and concept, spreading its good image.

## **VI. THE COMMUNICATION CHANNEL (IN WHICH CHANNEL)**

### *A. Online social media*

Information transmission in the new media era is more complex and diverse. Weibo, WeChat and other social media platforms are the gathering places of contemporary young people. Therefore, Pechoin tries every trick to catch the attention of young people on online social platforms.

First, the attention it has received from consumers in recent years cannot be separated from its active interaction with fans on weibo. In 2019, Pechoin and Watsons jointly released an advertisement to encourage girls to get rid of the shackles and be themselves, and launched the topic "Be yourself" on weibo. It scored 240 million views and nearly 9 million discussions, which showed the wide spread of topics on weibo. In addition, Pechoin also actively launched lottery for fans on its official Microblog to raise attention and increase the activity of fans. The spokesmen or influential beauty makeup celebrities forwarded the publicity of products and activities, so as to achieve viral transmission among fans.

Second, Pechoin uses its WeChat public account to spread advertisements, including 1931, which immediately hit the Moment, and the imaginative video "Si Mei Is not happy". The advertising songs with allusion combined with brainwashing lines spread widely through such social platforms as WeChat, which improves consumers' impression of the brand and also makes consumers feel its efforts. Together with the long history of the brand itself, its brand image featuring vitality and credibility is shaped.

In addition, the expanding KOL (key opinion leader) circle allows KOL influence no less than celebrity spokespersons, as the former are closer to consumers' lives. In 2016, Pechoin held the press conference of "Huanyao Dongfang • Pechoin" in Shanghai, and signed contract with Shang Kan, Zuo Jiaojiao and other beauty celebrities on the scene, and carried out a full live broadcast. In view of the rise of live broadcasting, Pechoin has cooperated with KOLs on some live broadcasting platforms, such as Li Jiaqi, the king of lipstick sales. Although the process is not particularly smooth, its efforts to cater to the way young consumers shop in the new media environment can be seen.

#### *B. Offline channel*

In the offline communication channels, Pechoin pays more attention to the intuitive feelings and experience of the audience, reduces the sense of distance with the audience, and directly disseminates its own brand image and brand culture to the audience.

Different from the online virtual display, offline audiences can directly get in touch with its products. In December 2019, Pechoin invited its makeup spokesperson, Dilraba, to participate in the pop-up shop activities. The promotion of online topic interaction in warming-up period attract consumers to go to offline stores for interaction with celebrities face to face, which simulates many fans and their purchasing desire. Moreover, the young and beautiful personal image of Dilraba, combined with her promotion of products, is conducive to changing the image of Pechoin in the eyes of young audiences, and can also spread the youthful brand image of Pechoin to young audiences more directly.

Unlike online communication channels, which emphasize the breadth of communication, offline communication channels pay more attention to the depth of brand communication. Through intuitive feeling and experience, the audience can gain a deeper understanding of the brand's products, image and culture.

## **VII. THE COMMUNICATION EFFECT (WITH WHAT EFFECT)**

### *A. The combination of popularity and tradition causes resonance among consumers*

With a history of nearly 90 years, the biggest selling point of Pechoin is "nostalgic Chinese goods". However, in such a rapidly developing era of new media, coupled with the youth of the consumer group, nostalgic strategies are not enough. Pechoin combines modern popular elements and traditional nostalgic elements together for fusion, innovation and inheritance, so that these popular elements inject vitality to the brand, and also spread the brand's young image to consumers.

Sansheng Blossom, Hello Happiness and other brands in line with modern young people's aesthetic taste share the positioning of "natural and non-stimulating way of skincare", and employ modern advanced technology. This not only conforms to the core value and the long history of the brand, but also makes the product more close to the life of audience, so as to generate emotional resonance.

In the era of new media, Pechoin combines nostalgia with popular elements, relaying information through new media platform, and continuously disseminating its young aspect to consumers, so as to gain their favor.

### *B. IP crossover for more consumer groups*

Pechoin seized the rise of "China-made bandwagon", in 2017, and cooperated with the Palace Museum, a hit IP, to launch gift box with strong Chinese traditional cultural characteristics before Double Eleven, which set apart with "Oriental Beauty" and attracted more consumer groups through its distinctive visual elements. Nearly 70,000 pre-sale gift boxes were snapped up in 30 seconds, which shows the attention and affection of consumers to the event, bringing more consumer groups for the brand, and spreading the high-end elegant brand image. In the Tmall singles' day beauty area ranking in 2017, Pechoin has become one of the local brands with a sales volume of 294 million yuan, and also occupied the first place. In that year, the retail sales of Pechoin increased significantly, reaching 17.7 billion yuan, with a year-on-year growth of 22%, which shows that Pechoin has received more and more attention from consumers.

The crossover between the Forbidden City and Pechoin not only aroused the public's love for Chinese traditional culture, but also gained more consumer groups and spread its brand culture to consumers.

### *C. The fan economy are employed to stimulate consumption*

In the era of fan economy, inviting well-known spokespersons is one of the effective ways for a brand to expand its popularity and gain attention. The spokesmen and product experience officers of Pechoin in recent years: Jay Chou, Dilraba, and ONER, are all stars with a deep fan base. The interaction between spokesmen and fans can not only drive consumers to understand the latest trends of the brand, such as the launch of new products and store promotion, so as to enhance the brand awareness, but also stimulate consumers' purchasing desire through celebrity effect, so as to drive the sales of brand products. In the latest observation on Chinese beauty market released by Kantar in 2019, Pechoin occupied the first place in the list of brands with the most consumer choices, which is also the third time for Pechoin to win the title, gaining more than 100 million consumers reach points.

In addition, the young and energetic image of these stars also helps Pechoin shake off the old brand image in the minds of consumers, greatly improving the brand's sense of fashion, and getting closer to the life of modern young consumers.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION**

In the new media environment, while adhering to its own brand culture, Pechoin has been committed to changing its original image and catering to the aesthetics of today's young consumers. In addition to the innovation in advertising, public relations activities, it gains the attention of consumers through IP crossover, a new way of communication, and the integration of nostalgia and innovative elements, which shapes its vibrant and young image among consumers.

Despite the drawbacks in the communication process, such as similar communication content, unclear product segmentation and low conversion rate, there is no denying that Chinese beauty cosmetics brands represented by Pechoin are gradually returning to the vision of consumers, and grabbing a place in Chinese beauty cosmetics market dominated by international brands thanks to the changes of era, policy support and their own efforts.

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