

# Analysis on DingTalk's Marketing Strategy

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## ABSTRACT

In 2020, the epidemic spread all around the world. When people stayed at home to isolate themselves, the workplace apps played an essential role for businesses and schools. DingTalk is one of the workplace apps which help people to work or study online. The theme of this paper is about DingTalk's marketing strategy, including the advantages and disadvantages of marketing strategies, the suggestions for improving its products. By using data comparison and so on, the author studied some product information of DingTalk and drew a conclusion. These statistics and information come from the related articles and Dingtalk websites. This article analyzes the benefits and drawbacks of Dingtalk and the way to improve the brand.

**Keywords:** Marketing strategy, Epidemic, Production's functions, Analysis, Publicity methods.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Currently, with the development of the network, the workplace apps in China have grown dramatically, individuals could transfer files quickly through these platforms and improve work efficiency. Especially during the epidemic in 2020, when people avoided contact with others to reduce infections and had to work or study at home, these platforms are crucial. The products of some companies have attracted the most attention, such as DingTalk by Alibaba, WeChat by Tencent, Feishu by ByteDance and so on.

Based on this phenomenon, the following questions had caught people's attention: the reason DingTalk can be accepted by users, marketing strategies, its advantages and disadvantages, and the improvement of DingTalk. In this paper, the benefits and drawbacks of the marketing strategies, and some suggestions for improving the drawbacks by comparing with the other relevant companies will be discussed. This paper might help some workplace apps to improve themselves and increase the demand as well.

DingTalk is an enterprise communication and collaboration platform developed by Alibaba Group. It was one of the world's largest professional communication and management mobile apps in China with over 100 million users in 2018[5]. Since 2014, DingTalk has kept updating the software version with insufficient improvement, which was one of the essential reasons for the great achievements of this app during this period. Under the conditions of the epidemic in 2020, it introduced a variety of functions, such as Hangzhou health code, DingTalk 5.0 with online office functions, Dingtalk Classroom TV version and so on. With these improvements, it has created a safe and efficient office environment for individuals, enabling people to improve work efficiency.

## 2. FINANCIAL STATUS

This paper will illustrate the financial situation of DingTalk. There were different kinds of workplace apps in China, and "Figure 1" shows the growth of Chinese workplace app market. Clearly, it shows an increasing trend between 2012 to 2020, almost 36 times. Especially in 2020, it was 1810 million USD.

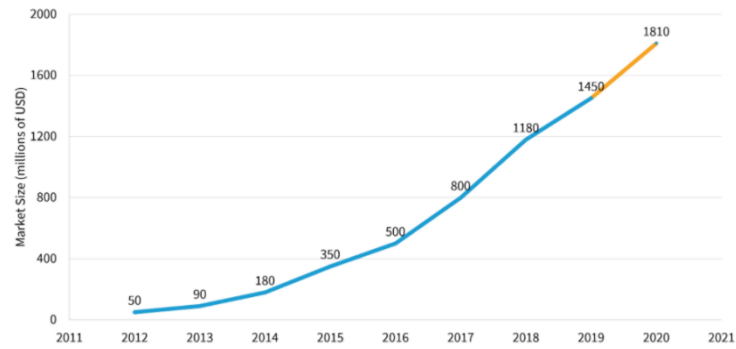


Figure 1 Growth of China’s workplace app market[2].

Among those workplace apps, the DingTalk by Alibaba became one of the major workplace instant messengers in China. "Figure 2" demonstrates that

the monthly unique devices for DingTalk were twice as the figure the No. 2 app, Fetion in 2019.

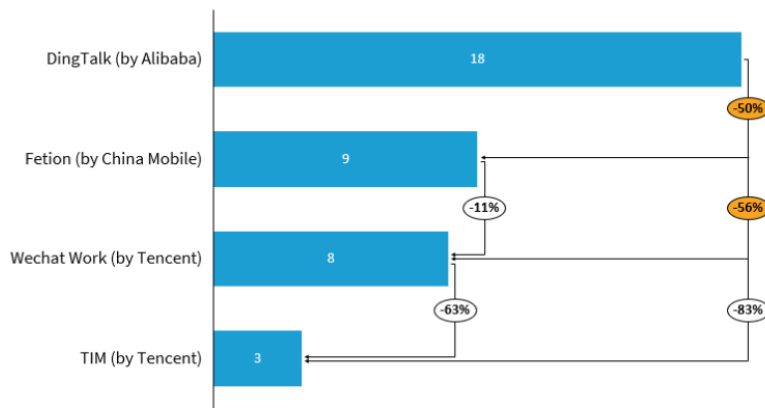


Figure 2 Major workplace instant messengers in China in 2019[2].

In addition, according to DingTalk's official report, the users of this application have exceeded 200 million and the number of corporate organizations exceeded 10 million in 2019. Among all of the products, DingTalk is the most popular one and its market share is the highest in China these years.

### 3. ADVANTAGES OF MARKETING STRATEGIES

#### 3.1 'Spring Thunder' Project

In order to build brand image and improve the reputation of DingTalk, this business help towns and communities in China improve their quality of life through their own products. While improving the reputation of the brand, this strategy also made the publicity for the DingTalk.[7]

DingTalk held the "2020 Spring Thunder Plan — Digital District and Counties Summit" in

Hangzhou on 17 July, declaring that it would provide 100 million yuan (14.097 million USD) in subsidies for 100 districts and counties to provide digital infrastructure for the revitalization of 10,000 villages. In order to improve villager's living standards in a digital way, this project uses DingTalk's to provide a comprehensive service for individuals, such as party building services, government services, public welfare services, labor services and so on. Because of this project, the villagers could address a myriad of businesses at homes rather than going out, which increased happiness.

"Table 1" shows the effectiveness of using DingTalk in Linpu town, Hangzhou. The population of Linpu town is around 100 thousand, more than half of them have become DingTalk users.

Table 1. The effectiveness of using DingTalk in Linpu town[6]

Classification of survey results	concrete data
Total number of online learners	61,519
Village Patrol Daily	12,240 times
The number of patrols	48,960
The number of families using DingTalk credits	9,063 families
The number of individuals using DingTalk credits	18,123

"Table 2" illustrates the improvement of the living standards of individuals. According to the statistics, it is worth noting that the figure for awareness rate of telecom network fraud prevention knowledge increase 32.2% because of the DingTalk, which shows that people know how to protect themselves through learning online.

'Spring Thunder' Project has greatly improved people's quality of life and safety and made great contributions to the safe construction of the village. Because of this project, the DingTalk could promote itself better and make the marketing strategy successfully.

Table 2. The changes in living standards of villagers who using DingTalk in Linpu town

data category	Changing situation	Rate of change
Public security	increase	2.4%
The participation rate of the masses in the construction of peace	increase	36.9%
Awareness rate of telecom network fraud prevention knowledge	increase	32.2%
Warning Instance	decrease	12.47%
Communication network case	decrease	39.3%

### 3.2 Cases of Using DingTalk During the Epidemic in Japan

In the face of the outbreak of the epidemic in 2020, DingTalk quickly adjusted its marketing strategy. It quickly established an online course platform and promoted it to provide a large number of schools in China with an online course platform. Students can attend classes at home, which can reduce face-to-face contact so that effectively prevent the spread of epidemic. More than 50 million Chinese students attended classes online through this platform during that time. Simultaneously, when the Japanese schools faced the epidemic, they also chose to use DingTalk to provide online courses for the students.[8]

For instance, the teachers of Tokyo COSMO School (Japanese language school) used DingTalk to hold online classes for their students. More than 300 students had their lessons at their homes, which greatly improved learning efficiency. DingTalk could help the teachers send the latest news to the students for the first time. As the teachers who worked in the Tokyo COSMO School reckoned that the network platform of DingTalk was extremely

convenient and solved the issues caused by the epidemic efficiently.

In addition, DingTalk provided a variety of functions for schools for free, so that teachers can better carry out the long-distance education. For example, DingTalk's attendance record could help teachers to count attendance, even if it was online classes, schools could still ensure that students are not absent. Video conferences allowed teachers to see the real-time learning of students at any time. Intelligent cloud print is a printing service that helps teachers send documents from mobile phones, computers, etc. to students, and they could have any learning materials if their teachers sent them through DingTalk.

The new and suitable functions are introduced for free at the right time by DingTalk, so that marketing strategies changed immediately, and learning problems during the epidemic have been solved for schools in many countries, which were the reasons for the increase in the utilization rate and international demand of DingTalk.

**4. DISADVANTAGES OF MARKETING STRATEGIES**

**4.1 Insufficient Free Capacity of DingTalk's Disk**

One of the most essential marketing strategies of DingTalk is attracting users with its free functions, and then providing more services to enhance their use viscosity. However, some necessary functions require users to pay, such as capacity expansion. The enterprise storage capacity is 100G[3], while the figure for private capacity is only 2GB. Although the product's file storage capacity could meet the needs of the generally small and medium enterprises, people can only transmit or save their documents online by using DingTalk during an epidemic, which shows the importance of this product's capacity. Especially for domestic consumers, the 2GB capacity is not adequate to meet the demand for file storage.

After downloading the DingTalk, users could know that the enterprise disk support application for paid capacity expansion, but the private disk does not support capacity expansion. This indicates that even if users are willing to pay to expand the capacity, the system of DingTalk doesn't support it. As for the capacity expansion for the enterprise disk, "Table 3" lists the detailed expansion capacity and corresponding prices.

Table 3. Expansion capacity and corresponding prices for enterprise disk

Expansion capacity	Prices (Unit: Yuan/Year)
100G	1,000
300G	3,000
500G	5,000
1T	10,000

Also, when the expansion space expires, it will be withdrawn automatically. And if the total space is less than the used space after collection, the new files cannot be uploaded anymore.

In this sense, the product's free functions are more of a commercial gimmick. The shortage of disk capacity may bring inconvenience to users, and the behavior of charging may also cause discomfort to consumers, reducing the number of people using the product.

**4.2 The Problem of DingTalk's Service System**

The DingTalk won the trust of users through various marketing methods, especially providing online services to businesses and schools during the epidemic. However, due to the myriad of users, its service system could not handle the excessive workload, resulting in the crash of the servers.

In February 2020, DingTalk's servers had problems — the products could not be used normally at approximately 9 o'clock. After the Spring Festival holiday, at least 10 million individuals and organizations used DingTalk to work or study at the same time, which lead to the network temporarily limited. Although the maintainers and employees of this business dealt with the problem promptly, it caused a huge negative impact on a large number of users, their meetings, classes and work had to be terminated at that time. And the whole process took about ten minutes, many of the users chose to use other substitute products, such as WeChat.

Despite DingTalk's publicity increased the demand for its products, the system operation and repair did not match the number of customers, resulting in server problems, so that the customer trust and confidence might greatly reduce.

**5. DISCUSSION**

Feishu of ByteDance[1], which was also called 'Lark'. It is an office tool that ensures efficient collaboration of people around the world and is one of DingTalk's biggest competitors.

DingTalk's disk is insufficient. Feishu might have a better way to deal with. One of its product functions, online cloud storage, could help many various users edit the files together at the same time. What's more, it has efficient content management with a large storage capacity so that the users do not need to worry about the capacity.

In addition, the back-stage management of Feishu had a special function[4]. On the one hand, Feishu had 'batch import into conference room' and 'accreditation application' for the back-stage management; On the other hand, it paid attention to the account security, which shows the back-office system's concern for customer accounts, while Dingtalk's back-stage management did not have these functions.

## 6. CONCLUSION

DingTalk provided recommendations for products through some marketing strategies (such as implementing some charity programs) and took this opportunity to change its strategy based on marketing conditions, which helped DingTalk improve its reputation and visibility. However, its free capacity disk is inadequate for some users. And the service system should be ameliorated to keeping ordering high-quality services to the users.

The Dingtalk could learn from the Feishu. For instance, the research and development department of Dingtalk could develop its functions in the systems, which allows users to operate the files together. In this way, DingTalk might be able to solve this issue.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper is independently completed by Yingtong Zhang.

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