

New Media Communication of Fashion Consumer Goods in the Context of Visual Culture

A Case Study of Bralette Advertising

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ABSTRACT

Contemporarily, the relationship between new media and fashion has become a hot spot. Taking bralette as an example, this paper continues to explore this topic in the context of visual culture. Bralette is a lightweight bra without an underwire, designed primarily for comfort. Bralettes trend has occupied a large number of reports on fashion trends, especially in new media communication. There is no doubt that new media has accelerated the spread of bralette, where visual cultural context satisfies people with bralette's attractive and powerful visual appearance. With all kinds of opinion leaders' endorsements, impacts, and a variety of movies, TV shows and runways, bralette have been widely spread. Furthermore, human beings are more open minded and have a greater level of acceptance than they used to be. People do not limit themselves anymore and they prefer to respect others and decide their own choices. In this essay, we will analyse the relationship between bralette and new media and visual cultural context, as well as the change in attitude of public towards explicit values and conventional traditions. Through the quantitative method of questionnaire survey, this paper investigated the relationship between new media and communication and marketing of bralette. Based on the analysis, we tried to understand the changes of public attitudes towards consumption intention, cultural acceptance and explicit values. These results shed light for enriching the case study of new media and fashion communication.

Keywords: *New media, Visual culture, Communication and marketing, Bralette*

1. INTRODUCTION

With the progress of modern science and technology, digital media technology is developing rapidly, and the Internet mode is also constantly innovating. The traditional communication media is gradually fading out of mankind's vision in the era of new media. Therefore, advertising communication has gradually shifted from the traditional mass media platform to the new media platform. Under the environment of new media becoming the mainstream, the media has carried out a rich and colorful visual presentation. It leads people to enter the multi-dimensional information era dominated by vision [1], advertisers and advertising agencies also widely use visual symbols on new media platforms, so as to transmit their advertising ideas and achieve their ideal advertising effects. Under the background of visual

culture, image culture is developing rapidly, making artificial symbolization become a relatively common cultural landscape, image resources become an inescapable symbol and expression, which brings great progress to people's visual aesthetic and fashion level [2]. In addition, advertising has a visual priority, the linguistic and symbolic meanings brought by vision are more intuitive and vivid, which can mobilize the consumers' sensitivity and understanding of semantics to a greater extent, to make people capture information more easily and quickly [3]. Therefore, the visual information output mode of new media undoubtedly also satisfies the sensory desire.

Bralette was first designed for comfort and good care of women's body. As time goes by, public have wide their support for bralette, and bralette trend is under the hot spot. While bralette is a form of clothes freedom, it is also a form of against towards patriarchal

society. Women has higher status and values now, as well as more power in sex, workplace, family, and society. Women are fighting for their own rights and tend to be braver than ever. So far, Barrette’s trend has occupied a large number of reports on fashion trends. External factors (e.g., media) has affected the development of bralettes trend, new media is one of them, which it depends on the digital technology and internet to communicate or transfer information to audiences [4]. As new media era is full of variations and diversity, the bralette trend spreads rapidly while everyone can post their own opinions [4]. The new media era definitely accelerated the growth of bralette trend as new technology is convenient for public to receive a vast of information, since its main advertising communication mode relies on new media. As time passes, new media is dominated by entrepreneur [5]. More interactivity is involved in new media, as well as communication. In the meantime, bralette advertisement also provides more information by showing the audience the garment, style, color, and uses and reminding consumers the precious information [6]. With the complementary of images, videos, and articles, the public have clearly understood the bralette trend. It is indisputable that the social media platform has provided many brands to advertise their product or trend through more exposure and attention [7]. Besides, bralette has carried out a large number of visual presentation in the advertisement, as a garment with strong symbolic significance and visual impact. The cultural symbolic meaning brought by bralette is also clearly and effectively conveyed to the audience through vision, and has exerted an impact on people's consumption concept, life attitude, life value and other aspects. In the era of new media, bralette has become a kind of fashion and popular consumer goods.

Based on the background of the current new media era and the context of visual culture, this paper will discover the relationship between bralette trend and visual cultural context, and look for a space suitable for the survival and development of bralette advertising. Combined with the development status of new media advertising in recent years, this paper will also discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the appearance of visual symbols in advertisements, including the visual creative thinking that bralette advertising should have. This paper also attempts to formulate solutions to the existing problems, and provide strategic suggestions for the long-term and effective development of bralette advertising in the future.

2. METHOD

In order to conduct a more in-depth study on fashion and popular culture consumer goods in the visual culture context in the new media era, we chose bralette, a dress that is in the forefront of fashion trends. We

mainly conducted the survey by publishing questionnaires and searching for literature. Most of the participants in the questionnaire were young people who volunteered, and the literature mainly came from academic websites.

We had received 319 questionnaires with a total of 23 questions, mainly including three parts: social demographical of respondents (gender, age, and their position in the society), their own perspectives of bralette and wearing freedom (characteristics of bralette, symbolic meaning of bralette, and people's attitude towards bralette), and transmission mode of bralette (media selection, visual cultural context, transmission of cultural symbols).

Table 1. Basic information of survey subjects

Variables	Sample Sizes /percentages
Gender	
Male	48 / 15.05%
Female	271 / 84.95%
Age	
18 and below	28 / 8.78%
18-25	220 / 68.97%
25-35	50 / 15.67%
35-45	17 / 5.33%
45 and above	4 / 1.25%
Position	
Studying	182 / 57.05%
Working	135 / 42.32%
Retired	2 / 0.63%

The majority of the respondents were women accounting for 84.95%, most of the respondents were young female students between the ages of 18 and 25. Only 15.05% of them were men and only 2 of them were retired.

3. RESULT

3.1 Potential conservatism under the popular trend dominated by new media communication

Bralette trend has been taking over a large coverage on fashion nowadays. It has been considered as fashionable to wear bralette, while people are more open minded and judge less. The respondents were mainly young, female people, and represented the new generation, 59.25% of them did not know anyone who was highly antipathetic of the bralette. In other words, people were more open minded and more acceptable towards explicit garments. About 84.33% of them acknowledged bralette from new media platform such as

xiaohongshu, TikTok, Wechat articles, and Instagram. Nearly all of them thought that bralette was extremely visually powerful.

Notwithstanding the popularity of the bralette at present, the results from our 319 questionnaires we have received were under our estimation, however, one particular question was unexpected. That is 90.91% of the respondents thought only people who were in good shape could wear bralette, while more than half of them thought we should respect others to decide their clothes. It was kind of a contradictory since half of them preferred to respect others' choices, but still thought that bralette was for a type of people who was fit. We expected that most people would prefer everyone, all types of body shape, can wear bralette. No matter the person was tall or short, thin or fat, in good shape or in bad shape, could wear bralette. Although the respondents were mainly young people, they still believed that only those who were in good shape could wear bralette. We sometimes saw advertisements promoting that everyone, in every shape could wear bralette. While the media encouraged people to be themselves and ignored others comments, one still cared about their outfit and others' opinion. Nevertheless, without the existence of promotion, the public will still be relatively conservative. Thus, bralette trend was definitely more popular. Though people were still being a bit conservative, the society would accept the explicit garment trend progressively.

3.2 Visual culture has become the common force of commodity attributes and new media communication

In the third part of the questionnaire, we mainly focused on the discussion of the relationship between bralette and media from multiple perspectives in the context of the new media era. According to the survey results, from a media perspective, 98.75% of people thought that the new media era had a great role in promoting fashion and popular culture (e.g., bralette), 98.43% of people thought that new media had become the main battlefield of fashion and popular culture consumer goods. 84.33% of people got to know bralette through new media platforms, while only 8.46% of people got to know bralette through TV, newspapers and other traditional media. Moreover, there were more than 72.41% of people wanted to know bralette through new media platforms. According to the data obtained from the questionnaire, it is found that most people were more inclined to obtain information related to bralette through new media platforms, but paid very little attention to traditional media, which fully indicated that the influence of traditional media on bralette was far less than that of new media.

From the perspective of human beings' sensory desire, most of people thought that bralette

advertisements featuring pictures and movies would attract more attention, with the proportion being 79% and 93.73%, respectively. In addition, 74.92% of the people thought that bralette's ads had a strong visual impact, and 98.75% of the people preferred to obtain information about bralette through vision. In the context of new media as the mainstream, the visual-oriented bralette advertisement had played a very good effect. As a dress with strong visual impact, bralette had made a lot of visual presentation in the media communication, so as to meet people's visual desire.

From the perspective of the transmission of cultural symbols, 66.14% of the people were somewhat interested in Posting photos and comments related to bralette on social media, but they would only look at them instead of taking actual actions. Whereas, 98.75% of the people expressed respect for others and said that free self-display in the new media era was a behavior worthy of encouragement. This showed that people were highly receptive to the bralette cultural symbols. Although many people did not practice by themselves, they showed their respect for others wearing bralette, and supported the symbolic message conveyed by bralette.

4. DISCUSSION

Nowadays is the era of the development of new and old media. The trend of new media is unstoppable and gradually replacing the position of traditional media. Media is a highly influential existence. Only influential media can reflect the value of media existence. Influence is the main goal pursued by the media. From the perspective of relevance, a factor of impact construction, the connection of traditional media is cross-space connection, while the connection of new media is cross-time connection [8]. New media makes people no longer restricted by space when they obtain information, and establishes a closer time connection. Meanwhile, with the progress of science and technology, a variety of scenes from different dimensions make the visual presentation modes of new media advertisements in communication more and more diversified, and more and more visual presentation types are available to the audience more to choose [9]. Most of people have already followed the trend of new media. Bralette is obviously one of the commodities that rely heavily on new media communication to become fashion and popular culture. Therefore, bralette mainly chooses new media rather than traditional media as its main means of communication and marketing.

On the one hand, With the update of image production mode, communication channel and consumption means, human culture no longer revolves around words, but develops towards the direction of image as the center, and realizes the realistic significance of "pictorial turn" [10]. In the process of

shifting the focus of media from traditional media to new media, visual communication (e.g., video, pictures, UI, VR etc.) has been paid more and more attention by various of new media platforms. The form of expression of the advertising screen is also becoming rich and changeable, which can help the masses to receive advertising information from various instantaneous, so as to achieve considerable publicity effect. Therefore, visual culture has formed one of the most prominent features of new media, and has deeply influenced the way people receive information. On the other hand, visual culture also satisfies people's sensory needs. People's vision is more sensitive than their hearing, and advertising is characterized by "instantaneously". If people want to capture key information in fleeting advertisements, they will rely more on vision. Both words and images belong to visual forms. Words are more abstract and rational, requiring people to understand and absorb their concepts, while images are more perceptual and intuitive, making it easier for people to obtain information and form impressions [3]. Bralette is a garment with great visual impact in itself. The content of bralette advertisement not only uses the visual characteristics of new media to achieve its propaganda purpose, but also caters to the psychological needs of the audience and meets their visual desire, forming a benign development cycle.

In the media era, the audience has begun to update the traditional one-way information transmission into two-way information interaction. The feature of information fragmentation is increasingly obvious, and the audience has begun to pay more attention to information. Therefore, the audience's personal will and ideas have been highlighted and strengthened [11]. In order to catch the eyeball of the audience, KOL advertisement not only needs to follow the law of "content is king", but also meets the individual needs of the audience. Therefore, KOL makes full use of images, so as to effectively spread the symbolic meaning of fashion and popular consumer goods. Image symbols can be divided into body language and scene symbols. Body language is a kind of non-verbal symbol, which carries out meaning transmission through human body movements, emotional expressions, clothing appearance and other external features. Scene symbols, by creating an atmosphere similar to the environment in which the audience is in, make the audience have the psychological characteristics of "empathy", i.e., have an impact on the final consumption of the audience [12]. KOL makes the image symbols of commodities widely spread on the new media platform through image shaping, and then promotes the relevant cultural symbols to build positive values in the process of commodity marketing and communication. This symbolic commodity marketing has greatly stimulated the audience's purchase intention. Nevertheless, with the diffusion of advertising information and the abuse of

visual symbols, the potential exclusion of advertising audience is becoming more and more obvious. The emergence of a defensive reading attitude began to re-examine the symbolic meaning of advertising, which led to the value crisis and meaning crisis of advertising visual culture [13]. This poses a higher challenge to the commodity marketing represented by bralette.

5. CONCLUSION

In summary, with the progress of digital technology, we have gradually entered the new era of media, where the impact of the traditional media is increasingly reduce limited by space contact. New media has attracted more and more attention. Its more important significance is to realize rich and colorful visual communication effects, which provides an excellent communication mode for bralette with visual impact. Therefore, compared with traditional media, it prefers new media as its main means of communication and marketing.

When bralette was originally designed, it was a kind of clothing with great care for the female body structure and humanistic care for women. With the development of time, bralette has been accepted by more groups and a dress that everyone in the world can wear, which fully embodies the concept of dress freedom. Bralette has also become a symbol of freedom, equality and openness. On some new media platforms, fashion key opinion leaders will wear bralette to show their special personality, which largely drives the development of bralette and greatly improves the acceptance of bralette by the general public. Bralette advertising makes full use of the visual impact to transmit the symbol meaning of bralette to the audience, so as to have an impact on the consumption concept, life attitude, life value and other aspects of the audience, to obtain the audience's recognition and stimulate the audience's desire to buy.

Taking bralette as an example, this paper discusses the transformation of fashion brand communication in the new media era. Internal and external factors have jointly created the popularity of bralette. It is expected that this study will also help to provide a case basis for in-depth discussion of the relevant research of new media and fashion culture. This topic will also be a topic we will continue to pay attention to in the future.

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