

A Study on the Audience's Attitude Towards the Contents of the “Pop-up Exhibition” in RED

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ABSTRACT

As an e-commerce platform with UGC (User Generated Content) operation mode, the RED has attracted more and more attention in recent years, including visiting exhibition, one of people's most favourite lifestyles. Therefore, whether it is a minority exhibition or “pop-up exhibition”, it can attract different audience because of the notes in RED. After reading a lot of documents, the author found that most of the current research are published by professional scholars or workers, including artists and exhibition planners. This article hopes to understand the attitudes of RED users towards these contents, so as to give better play to the value of this platform. This article mainly adopts the research method of questionnaire survey to further understand audience's attitude and expectation for the future through different questions. The survey results show that most audience hold a supportive attitude towards the relevant contents in RED, because it can provide different information, letting them have more psychological preparation and enhancing their interest. However, there are still some problems in the way of communication, including the authenticity of the contents and the marketing strategies, which need people to find appropriate solutions in the future.

Keywords: *Pop-up exhibition, Attitude, Expectation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The RED was founded in Shanghai in 2013. Unlike other e-commerce platforms, RED started from the community. In 2016, RED matched the contents of the community to users' interests in it through big data and artificial intelligence, so as to improve user experience. After that, it has formed its own operation mode, a double driven development mode of “content and e-commerce” [1]. As a lifestyle community, RED's greatest uniqueness is that users can search for relevant notes about products they want to buy, as well as edit their own feeling about using those goods. By showing the whole process of purchasing, using, evaluating products in the social circle from different users, it will promote their own or others' next consumption. Meanwhile, through the consumer word-of-mouth and overseas shopping data accumulated in the community, the e-commerce in RED analyses the needs of users, in order to ensure that the purchased goods are favoured by users.

In recent years, it cannot be ignored that the art exhibition hall has become a photographing resort. For enhancing the user experience, the content of RED involves not only beauty and personal care, but also tourism, decoration, hotels, fitness and the notes of “pop-up exhibition”. In general, the exhibition notes released by bloggers are divided into recommendation reasons, exhibition tips and today's wear. The work is used as a set, marked with a piece of brand as the protagonist of the picture. Under those exquisite photos of the exhibition, there are usually comments that are not related to the exhibition works: “Do you have a purchase link for clothes?” or “Do you have a colour matching tutorial?” Such sharing continues to be highly praised, because while they recommend clothing and other information, the exhibition is also recommended [2].

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

With the appearance of “pop-up exhibition”, visiting these places has become one of the most popular leisure activities in people's daily life, and many scholars have

carried out the reason for its popularity and the reflection behind it. Firstly, the definition of “pop-up exhibition” comes from its phenomenon and there is no uniform standard, so it also has a certain social process. For example, Lan Qingwei, executive curator of Chengdu Contemporary Art Museum, believes that “pop-up exhibition” refers to an exhibition form that aims to attract Internet users from non-art industries and directly emphasizes the relationship with mass consumption [3], which means “fun” is more important. According to Wang Jingsi’s research, it can be said that this is a social (sub) cultural phenomenon with the rise of social media, Internet economy and new consumption patterns [4]. In the book “The Arts and Events”, Hilary Du cross and Lee Jolliffe pointed out that the concept of “pop-up exhibition” or “made-for-Instagram exhibition” can be traced back to a special displaying way of art works in New York in 2007. However, it was not until the opening of the Museum of ice cream in New York in 2016 that it had really came into the public’s vision, and quickly became a topic with heated discussion on social media [4]. Moreover, Zhao Xue defines that “pop-up exhibition” is a kind of marketing method for art works, which links the needs of different audiences for spiritual and cultural activities [5].

In general, from Wang’s definition, “pop-up exhibition” could be divided into two different characters: online exhibition for commercial purposes and art exhibition that can cause huge effects on Internet. Ma Xuedong also mentioned in his article “Is the spring of exhibition economy coming?” that “pop-up exhibition” can be roughly divided into two categories: first, the exhibition content itself should be simple and easy to understand, and it could be more attractive if it can give audiences an immersive or interactive experience. Second, the status of the participating artists themselves should be high enough, as the influence and effect of their publication could even be better than those of sponsors [6].

In order to explaining the causes of “pop-up exhibition”, many scholars have mentioned the “immersive experience”. From Wu Yugong’s article, he explains that “technique” is the key word as these technological elements can produced more advanced works that may be impossible to do before [7]. According to Lan’s research, he analysed that due to the upgrading and improvement of science and technology, more and more immersive experience is used in exhibitions, and this form of exhibition is more likely to be loved by the audience. For example, one of the most famous immersive installation art exhibition TeamLab, users of RED have released more than 4500 exhibition notes of it around the world, with an exposure of nearly 90 million notes and 300000 collections [8]. And Ma Lin also holds the same opinion that this form breaks the distance between the artist and the audience, and

also reflects the relationship between the development of the art museum and the audiences.

At the same time, the emergence of this trend is inseparable from the rapid development of mobile Internet. From Wang’s research, in 2016, Fei Jiajing said in a TED speech that there have been a large number of art exhibitions specialized for taking photos and they were very welcomed in the past five years, and this time is basically consistent with the appearance of Instagram. The era of picture reading and the rapid promotion of short clip applications have made the young people watch videos in fragmented time and changed their living habits of reading picture information. Many scholars quote Deng Lifeng’s article “How do young people ‘punch in’ and cultural exhibitions ‘attract fans’ ” that many young people transfer their social behaviours to virtual space because of the development of social media, while most of the topics in virtual space rely on the scenes and materials provided by real life [9], and this is the reason why those exhibitions can arouse so many attention. Meanwhile, Wang approves Sally M’ s observation that those e-commerce companies also take photos in these exhibitions from time to time, using those art work or light and shadow as their “background”, so as to increase their exposure.

Nevertheless, what behind the popularity of “pop-up exhibition” is the distribution it has caused. In Li Shaoying’s article, these exhibitions have no clear theme, which essentially deviates from the purpose of the art museum [10]. She also points out that excessive commercial communication and marketing will bring the misunderstanding of “taking photos is viewing exhibition” to potential audiences [10]. From Xu and Chen’s article, they hold the same opinion that this form will not only destroy the professional image of the exhibition, but also confuse the function of them. Additionally, Shi Xiaoqin mentions that most of these exhibitions put too much emphasis on “immersive experience”, thus ignoring their own value and cultural background [11]. Wu criticizes the negative effects of “immersive” too, as some commercial organizations rely on similar ideas and technologies to host commercial exhibitions with only virtual images. At the same time, in order to maximize their benefits, they are not willing to maintain relevant multimedia devices, but directly discard them.

These studies and theories above help us understand some background information about “pop-up” exhibition. However, there still exist some research gaps. Although there are many literatures about the definition and the reason for its popularity, and even some reflections, but all of these are comments come from professional scholars or director of art museum, few studies have been conducted on the attitudes from the audience who used to get information from the

RED. Furthermore, no scholars have done similar research like whether they will approve such contents or not, and their main reasons. This research will study how the contents about “pop-up exhibition” in RED could affect audience’s decision and what their reflections are.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this research, the author adopted the questionnaire as the method of it. It took one week from the preparation of the questionnaire to the collection of all the questionnaires. Firstly, the author roughly understood the attitude of professional art students and exhibition organizers towards these contents through the previous research of press releases and then formed a general framework for the content of questions. Secondly, the author made a questionnaire on an online platform which is powered by www.wjx.cn and put the questionnaire into some groups that contain the users of the RED in WeChat. Finally, 73 valid questionnaires were collected in the whole three days.

4. RESULTS

For the first question, which was about the possibility to do research on RED when people want to visit a “pop-up exhibition”, over 70% of those respondents chose the possibility that could be surplus 50%, and only one person thought that he would not use this application. In the second question, it is noticeable to see that over half of them never heard those exhibitions that has been defined to be the “pop-up exhibition” by many scholars. As a result, solely 21 respondents had gone to some of these exhibitions in the past. Those who did not chose to visit then give their reasons, and nearly half of them believed the marketing strategy had been seriously affected by Internet, so they lost their interest. Moreover, other main reasons were the price of the tickets and many respondents considered that they had been satisfied with the online pictures and introductions. The next question was for those who had visited one, and 47.62% of them just enjoyed taking photos but not had real interest in the content of exhibition. The figure for those who enjoyed the whole experience and set too much expectation for it was at 28.57% and 23.81% respectively. After that, 2 of those who felt not satisfied thought that was because there were too many visitors on site. For those who could accept the form of “pop-up exhibition”, more than 60% of them willed to visit it again if it is free and they were both 4 people wanted to pay for the ticket or did not want to visit it again whether it is free or not. They also chose the huge flow for the main reason, while only 29.41% of them thought these pictures were over processed.

The following question was whether these contents were helpful or not, and almost 80% of our respondents considered that it was useful. The most beneficial thing was that these users could know some basic information such as the opening time and location (85.96%), and also, there were over half of them thought these contents aroused their interest and they could even learn how to take beautiful pictures from them. Nevertheless, in the rest 16 respondents, the proportion of the reason “there were too many visitors on site” and “they had anticipation for the real scene” was at 56.25% and 62.5% respectively, and only 2 of them do not like the exhibition itself.

In the last part, to the question about the proper frequency of such contents in RED, there were 34 people chose “1 in every 15 contents”, and only 18 wanted to see 1 in every 4 contents, which was a high frequency relatively. Therefore, there were 53 respondents hoping to see relative contents occasionally, while there were also 5 people choosing “I don’t want to see them anymore”. Those who believed the contents were valuable accounted for 20.55%. For the reason why many people did not like to see them in a high frequency, most people considered that too many similar contents made them feel tires, and 59.57% of these opponents thought that art could not be commercialized like this, and part of them thought that there was a large gap between the content and reality.

5. DISCUSSION

Through these results, it could be found that more than half of the RED users get accustomed to searching for relevant information when they want to visit an exhibition, which means there are sufficient topic and flow on this platform. However, over half of them have not seen any information about the traditional “pop-up exhibition” such as TeamLab and Rain House, so the quantity of these contents may be controlled in order to keep their interest. Those who have read relevant contents before chose to have a try, which is proved that they can provoke audience’s interest by posting different words and pictures. Some people still don not have curiosity, because most of them have lost interest after reading too many similar contents about the same exhibition. As a result, maybe the help of big data and aesthetic fatigue will cause a contrary effect. Moreover, they also point out that the price of the ticket is higher than their expectation, and some of them just enjoy watching online exhibition to fulfill the spiritual needs. It is noticeable that people who have once visited such exhibition do not want to pay for the ticket again whatever how popular it is, which means the price could be a very important factor for all audience. Although no one deem the real scene is bad, most of them only focus on taking photos rather than enjoy the contents. The reason why they do not feel satisfied mainly comes from

their expectation, including those delicate pictures and some scenes or message that have appeared in the contents of their favourite bloggers. In other words, the strength of fans is powerful, while over processing could give them a huge gap between the reality and Internet, which will lose these fans at last. Furthermore, those “tidy” pictures also give a wrong signal that could make people think there may not be too much audience come to visit it.

These contents in RED could be helpful to over half of our respondents, which means most people support the contents about “pop-up exhibition” and they are proved to be valuable. For instance, almost everyone can get correct information about the following exhibition they want to visit such as address and opening time, which is also the most important. Some of them are interested in some detailed information, such as where can we take the best photo and how to make it, which has become a unique form in RED too. On the other side, some of them think these contents are not helpful and one of the most serious problems is that they will not give them too much expectation. Accordingly, maybe they have been cheated by those contents when they visited their last exhibition. The outcome also shows that nearly half of people tend to see relevant contents in a low frequency, maybe 1 in every 15 contents is suitable. Although they are valuable and attractive, too many of them could not be beneficial to attract more audience as it will cause aesthetic fatigue for the other in a same way. It is also interesting to note that many people think some of the contents have commercialized intention but are not really popularize the art, which means after seeing so many contents, users can judge whether the information is authentic or not, and it can directly affect their determination.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, for RED users, as an increasingly popular lifestyle, the frequency of these contents in RED is also increasing. In consequence, browsing these contents will have a certain impact on their cognition. In the short term, these contents can attract new users because the exquisite pictures and videos can stimulate the spiritual needs of them. However, some contents are not completely accurate, especially the number of visitors and scene layout, which will affect the viewing experience to a certain extent, and even lose part of the audience due to psychological gap. Therefore, it is obvious that the authenticity of information is very important, which means it can be modified slightly, but it cannot completely confuse right and wrong. In the long term, the existence of this information can be a necessary help for many visitors who love to watch the “pop-up exhibition”. However, if the same or similar information is pushed repeatedly, it is easy for users to lose interest, because it also shows which exhibitions

are too popular. As a result, for RED users, solely low-frequency and high-quality content can receive more trust and attention, so as to better attract online audiences to offline, rather than make them keep browsing on the Internet.

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