

Development Analysis of Outdoor Sportswear Based on PEST Model

Taking “The North Face” as an Example

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ABSTRACT

Taking The North Face, a famous American outdoor brand, as an example, this paper analyses the political environment, economic environment, social environment and technical elements while applying PEST model in order to figure out a feasible way to integrate foreign outdoor sports brands into China's local market. It is found that in the post epidemic era, supported by a series of national policies to encourage sports and fitness, the public's attention to health has increased, and sportswear has ushered in a new round of development opportunities. The research shows that according to consumers' preferences and needs, the localization expression of “National Fad” element is an effective way to maximize development advantages. Simplification and induction, reorganization and reconstruction, implying and perfection, conformity and fitness are frequently-used design methods to break through the homogenization design.

Keywords: Outdoor Sportswear, PEST, the north face

1. INTRODUCTION

The PEST analysis method is a simple but important tool. It is widely used to help users understand the political, economic, social, cultural, and technological environment of their situation. The macro environment is also called the general social environment. It refers to the various macro forces that affect all industries and organizations. It can be summarized as the political environment, economic environment, social environment, and technological environment. The specific points of the item analysis model. Using PEST analysis method to analyze the macro environment of NF is one of the important measures to investigate and predict the changes of environmental factors related to outdoor sportswear, and it is also an important step in formulating development strategies.

Founded in 1966, NF is an important member of VFC (VF Corporation), a listed company in the United States. Headquartered in California, NF is committed to providing professional equipment for every harsh adventure of outdoor athletes. As the world's leading outdoor sports brand, NF helps the world explore and

challenge the limits of human potential with products that have been tested and explored by athletes and meet various outdoor needs. Meanwhile, the brand is always committed to protecting the outdoor environment and minimizing the impact of human beings on the natural environment through various sustainable development projects.

A total of 300 valid questionnaires were collected in this questionnaire survey. The survey objects are mainly middle-aged and young consumers in first and second tier cities such as Shanghai, Beijing and Shanxi. Figure 1 shows men's and women's willingness to buy NF. From the survey, it can be seen that in terms of consumer gender: male customers of NF significantly outnumber female ones. Basic information about the sample: Among the male respondents, 31% (N=32) said they had never heard of the brand, 37% (N=38) had some understanding of it, 32% (N=33) had bought it, and about 4% of them were loyal customers of NF; Among the female respondents, 40% (N=79) said they had never heard of the brand, 44% (N=88) had some understanding of it, 16% (N=31) had bought it, and about 1% of them were loyal customers of NF.

Figure 2 shows that in terms of the purchase proportion of outdoor leisure clothing: the main products purchased by the customer group are down jacket and cotton jacket 40% (N=42), T-shirt and polo shirt 22% (N=23), loose coat 21% (N=22) and accessories (bags, hats, shoes, etc.) 16% (N=17), of which the most people buy down jacket and cotton jacket. In terms of purchase channels: more than half of customers usually go to counters to buy products.

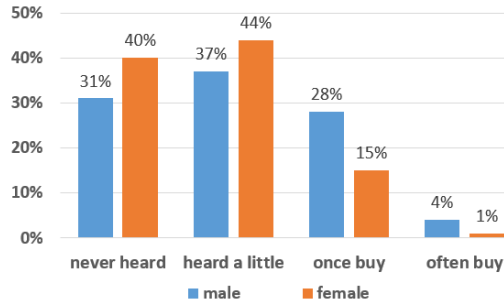


Figure 1. Purchase intention

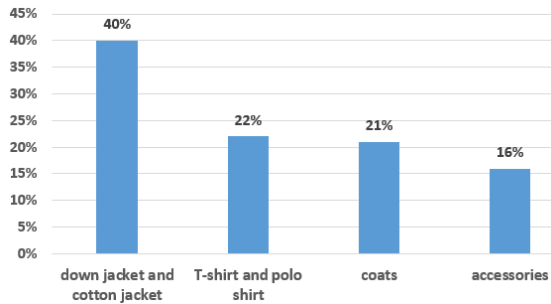


Figure 2. Purchase types

2. PEST analysis of outdoor sportswear

2.1 Policy environment

Thanks to the support of sports tourism related policies, outdoor sportswear has developed rapidly. Scholar Zhang Yufei summarized that since 2016, the state has successively issued a series of policies on sports consumption, sports tourism, national fitness and the construction of a sports power [1]. With the rise of national fitness to the national strategic level and issuance and implementation of programmatic guidance documents such as National Fitness Plan (2016-2020) and “Healthy China 2030” Planning Outline, the development of mass sports in China has entered a new historical stage [2]. These policies encourage people to go out for outdoor activities, which has a strong policy guiding role in promoting the development of outdoor sportswear, expanding the outdoor clothing consumption market and stimulating the public outdoor clothing consumption demand, and will also drive a new round of growth of industrial economy in the field of outdoor consumption.

2.2 Economic environment

Rebound of public participation in outdoor sports tourism in the post epidemic era. A novel Coronavirus pneumonia outbreak broke out worldwide in 2020. To ensure maximum safety and avoid the spread of the disease, the public responded to the national call for home quarantine. Compared with the outbreak, the amount of outdoor activity and exercise decreased, which led to a sharp decline in the purchase of outdoor clothing. In the post epidemic era, the urgent attention to their own health will greatly stimulate people’s enthusiasm to participate in physical exercise. The increased demand for outdoor activities will promote the consumption of outdoor clothing to the greatest extent. [1]Past experience has shown that every epidemic will stimulate the upsurge of public participation in outdoor sports.

Referring to the impact of the epidemic in 2003 on all sectors of economy and society, after the epidemic, outdoor sports supplies have rebounded greatly, and the number of outdoor sports has also increased significantly. For the time being, after home quarantine, people are more longing for free outdoor space, and participating in sports venues is also returning from fixed home living space to outdoor space. Therefore, the public’s attention to health caused by the epidemic will inevitably form a yearning for sports and promote the consumption of outdoor clothing in the post epidemic era.

2.3 social environment

Public willingness for fitness and health increased Scholar Zhao Jianwen collected statistics from a mental health survey conducted by Shanghai Mental Health Center. The survey showed that more than 50,000 ordinary people had psychological stress and emotional bothers. The results showed that about 35% of the respondents suffered from psychological distress, and 5.14% of the respondents suffered serious psychological distress, physical exercise with relatives and friends will be of great benefit to resolve people’s psychological crisis during the epidemic. Previous studies have shown that if you carry out aerobic exercise more than three times a week, the dopamine secreted in your body will be 100% ~ 150% more than average. This hormone that stimulates the brain to maintain an excited can effectively alleviate people’s tension, reduce anxiety, and then effectively maintain health.

2.4 Technical environment

In 2017, the R & D personnel in NF submitted a patent application for “fibers and other structures treated with diatomite particles”. In an interview with the patent, the R & D personnel in NF said that in the sports and outdoor clothing industry, there are various known

grass-roots and middle-level systems, which can transport users' skin and use energy. Raw materials used in textile fibers, bio-based particles work with the body for time to adjust the temperature. Through the accelerated driving of rubber and mold, specially designed natural or rubber insoles, synthetic rubber and other pressure or textile and textile products can be molded [3].

In 2019, the outdoor apparel brand The North Face of the US VF Company launched an outdoor jacket made of structural protein materials [4]. This product was developed in cooperation with Japanese sportswear manufacturer Goldwin and a new generation of biomaterials research and development company Japan Spider. Moon Parka is the first commercial jacket produced using structural proteins produced during microbial fermentation, and this fermentation process does not rely on chemical resources. The outer layer of the jacket is made of Brewed protein 1 jointly developed. The middle layer is made of breathable and waterproof laminate, and the inner filling is made of 900Cleadown filling powder to ensure its thermal insulation performance.

It can be seen that Nano-textile technology allows designers to adjust product weight, elasticity, breathability, structure (knitting or weaving) and texture to meet the activity needs and environmental needs of athletes and consumers. Product designers can even customize fabrics for specific purposes, such as increasing the breathability of aerobic sportswear or enhancing the degree of protection in harsh humid climates. This ability to adjust fabric structural factors is unprecedented in the field of clothing, equipment and accessories.

3. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF OUTDOOR SPORTSWEAR FOR THE NORTH FACE

3.1 Building brand popularity

Brand is an extremely important part of sales activities. In terms of outdoor product brands, consumers often have high recognition and loyalty. The quality, design level and service implied by brand need long-term investment and accumulation from enterprises. Of course, the feedback of consumers will also be directly proportional to the publicity. [5]

In this context, the differentiated competition of outdoor sports brands at home and abroad has become the key to business success. Based on excellent national traditional culture, clothing innovation is the only way to promote the integration of foreign brands and domestic culture, which is bound to drive a new round of "National fad" consumption wave in the outdoor field. "National fad" is formed by the combination of "nation"

and "fashion", which refers to a fashion brand that can reflect Chinese culture and design characteristics. Chinese symbols, trend elements and high-quality products are the three key elements of "National fad", and Chinese local culture is its basic cultural connotation; [6] the concept of "National fad" first came from the United States and derived from the sports of surfing and skateboarding. Therefore, in the field of clothing, it is internally reasonable to choose the integration of outdoor sportswear and Chinese symbols.

3.2 Meeting different consumer needs

When the author read related reference materials, I found that the discussion on outdoor style is mainly limited to the function of outdoor sportswear. Therefore, it is undoubtedly a good way to expand the market by giving consideration to leisure and fashionable design and breaking the restrictions of outdoor clothing, so as to make consumers calmly deal with the indoor and outdoor. Only by breaking through the obstacle of product simplification can we support the long-term operation and development of the brand. Only by meeting the needs of different scenarios, both professional and superficial consumer markets can we attract larger and more complete customer clusters. Based on the outdoor, the brand can combine the fashion and leisure character of general fashion to build a one-stop product line with complete categories and perfect products [5].

3.3 Using diversified designs

As China has become the second largest economy in the world, the consumption level of Chinese people has been significantly improved, and their appreciation and aesthetic standards have also been continuously improved. However, in the face of the homogenization of outdoor consumer clothing, the consumer demand of a large number of consumers has begun to shift from focusing on the use of products to focusing on both design and function. The following are several common design schemes, one is to simplify and summarize. Simplification induction is a process from complex to simplify. Generally, it is simplified through decomposition, deletion, exaggeration, replacement, combination, etc., to remove redundant graphic elements. Without changing its essence, it can be integrated into the main features of the pattern, so that the pattern has a sense of modeling and space for moral association. The designer first finds and extracts the elements with a sense of strength in the traditional patterns, and then simplifies the lines to find the source of the sense of strength. Taking this opportunity, they exaggerate them and create unique patterns. The second is the restructuring method. Deconstruction and reorganization is not to add new visual elements, but to repeat or reconstruct and redesign on the basis of

original elements [7]. Form impact visual form with connotative culture. The third is the pursuit of perfect ideas and methods. The idea of pursuing perfection is to put the meaning of beauty behind the pattern. The idea of pursuing perfection is a comprehensive expression without objective restrictions. The design concept is not limited to one style, it spans time and space, and even merges unrelated things together to form a brand-new, complete and unified picture form.

4. CONCLUSION

Professional outdoor sports clothing brands have long stressing functionality because of their design and development. If their design elements are directly applied to the clothing design of fashion brands, it is often easy to see that the functionality of outdoor sports clothing abrupt, or even mere decoration and stacking, but not playing practical roles. The stacking of patterns will cause aesthetic fatigue. The National fad culture should not only reveal the symbolic nature of Chinese elements, but also pay attention to expressing deeper cultural level.

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