



Research on Marketing Strategy of Universal Studios and Fonte in China's TikTok Platform

Jiahao Kong^(✉)

Business and Administration, Hong Kong Metropolitan University, Hong Kong 999077, China
s1238105@hkmu.edu.hk

Abstract. In the following article, the author mainly analyses the relationship between the development of the current entertainment industry and the Development of Internet platforms, especially short video platforms. And with the establishment of the United States, the first entry into the Chinese market universal Studios, Beijing. And Huaqiang Fonte Group, which is rooted in Chinese consumers. Explore the differences between their strategies and analyse them. Some are focused on making their pitches more local, while others are trying to expand their IP awareness to attract consumers. Some like to invest, invite some celebrities, KOL to their enterprise platform, and so on a lot. The author continues to explore who is more efficient, who performs better, and ultimately what is a good marketing strategy for short video platforms. The foreign brand Universal Studios has done a good job in Beijing, but this local method of Fanta is more realistic and practical.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy · Universal Studios · TikTok

1 Introduction

Marketing is an important strategy in the business battlefield, and large companies also attach great importance to it [1]. Universal Studios is the world's largest movie theme park, operated by Comcast's NBC Universal. With Disneyland and Carnival, they are known as the world's three theme parks with extreme global influence. Universal Studios was initially located in northwest Los Angeles. At the beginning of the 20th century, film producers were eager to find a natural environment for filming there and gathered, which made this land gradually become a world-famous movie "citadel". One of Hollywood's feature films, Monte Cristo, was made in 1908. And in 1928, a film enterprise line-up headed by Paramount and other "eight film companies" was formed. They produced thousands of excellent works that became representative works in the history of film and made the influence of American spirit throughout the world [2]. With the passage of time, that place also become an iconic resort. Universal Studios mainly focus on amusement resorts, but also have film distribution and launch peripheral products like models, books, and collections. Most of their products surround several IPs—Fast & Furious, Transformers, Marvel Universe, and so on. Indeed, all of these parks are constantly innovating through the template of the entertainment economy, which absolutely

© The Author(s) 2023

Z. Zhan et al. (Eds.): SEAA 2022, ASSEHR 675, pp. 1021–1027, 2023.

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-494069-05-3_122

leads the local economy and related consumption grooming. Universal Studios Park has strong differentiation and recognition due to its close proximity to film production and IP image. It is the theme park closest to the production process of the film itself, and as a feature of the park, it is the largest film and television studio in the world and the largest theme park with a film theme as the core. Universal Studios Park conforms to the definition of theme park itself, which is bound to a specific industry and has a distinct theme. At Universal Studios, visitors can learn more about the making of movies, experience special effects, and have adventures as characters in the movies. While learning the behind-the-scenes story of film production, participants also have the characteristics of immersion tourism and a strong sense of experience.

Universal Studios chose to locate a store in Beijing, China, its parks could be run more intelligently. China Unicom's internal network stress tests for global resorts ensure a good 5G network experience for visitors. Combined with 5G + MEC, 5G slice, 5G private network, and other technical means could improve the intelligent network adjustment scheme for large online meetings for customers [3]. The intelligent temperature measurement scheme for epidemic prevention and control in the park. Intelligent AR\VR and the application of population big data would connect with the construction of intelligent centres and marketing big data platform systems in the resort. Through Unicom 5G intelligent robot auxiliary platform and intelligent knowledge base construction.

Recently there are more and more theme-based parks like Disneyland worldwide, Ocean Park in Asia, etc. In China, mainland. According to the data of research and market in the United States, the market size of China's theme park in 2020 (by sales) reached 8.5 billion Dollars (about 54.8 billion RMB) and is expected to reach 13.8 billion dollars (88.99 billion RMB) in 2027. A massive expansion of Chinese theme parks is looming [4]. But why does China, as a country that values ideology very much, put so much effort into promoting American culture? That is because China's GDP per capita has reached \$10,000. With the upgrading of consumption and the rise of Generation Z, youths will be more enthusiastic about the emotional premium brought by consumption itself, which is a good time for the explosion of theme parks. Moreover, if digging into the perspective of equity structure, people will find that the shareholders include Beijing Universal Studios, Beijing Culture Investment and Development Group, Tongzhou Modern International New City Investment and Operation Co, LTD. And American Global Group. Among them, China holds 70% of the shares, while the US holds 30%. China has a leading position. Thus, theme parks incorporate a large number of Chinese elements. In the first phase of Universal Theme Park, Chinese elements account for 35%, which are mainly reflected in scene design (performances, parades, fireworks, etc.) and visual aspects (architectural forms, catering types). Even though there are few original amusement projects from China to the pursuit of authentic flavour and experience, amusement projects based on American movies are mainly introduced.

In the past, China's theme park industry generally emphasizes the property of real estate rather than tourism (part of the rapid grooming trouble) and theme park lacks IP, which is related to the domestic economic development level and the late development of the theme park industry. Since the development of theme parks and the establishment of business circles will improve the value of residential property to some extent, in the past, supporting real estate often began to make profits, and it was easy for theme parks

to stop operation. In recent years, through the further regulation of relevant national policies and rules, this phenomenon has been significantly improved, and the future of domestic theme parks may usher in a new stage of development. In the past, China's theme park industry was generally short of its own IP, with low service quality, single profit model, and serious homogenization of content. In the construction, there is also low efficiency of design and construction, poor tourist experience and other defects.

However, Huaqiang Fanta's appearance makes things take a turn for better, it is one of the most successful theme park brands in China in recent years. Huaqiang Fanta is an enterprise specializing in the whole industrial chain from theme park creative design, research and development, content production, construction and market operation. Adhering to the concept of "craftsmanship casting fine cultural products and telling good Chinese stories", Huaqiang Fanta is an enterprise specializing in theme park creative design, research and development, content production, construction and market operation. Huaqiang Fanta Park has a relatively mature and influential IP—"Bear haunt" in China. In the context of lack of IP cultivation, lack of IP empowerment means and overall immature environment, relatively mature IP can bring huge advantages for theme parks in China [5]. Fanta is a series theme park brand created by Huaqiang Fanta Culture and Technology Group Co., LTD. It owns eight theme parks with completely independent intellectual property rights, including "Happy World", "Fantasy Kingdom", "Water Paradise", "Silk Road God painting", "National colour Spring and Autumn Festival" and "Oriental Vision". It has invested and built theme parks in more than 20 cities. Huaqiang group, as the domestic theme park from the creative design, content of research and development, production, construction, marketing the operation of the whole industry chain to the enterprise [6]. They have a complete set of design, manufacture and export of large-scale cultural theme park of science and technology enterprises, by creating one of the theme parks, bring more joy to all parts of the country.

2 Literature Review

No matter domestic or abroad, predecessors have analysed the economy of theme parks and their advantages and gaps. Most previous studies focus on their IP buildings and analysis of theme parks, while few have in-depth discussions on the marketing strategies of new media and Internet platforms. This paper will try to fill in the deficiency in this aspect. The author will more focus on the comparison between Universal Studios, a foreign enterprise in China, and theme park-FANTA, a local enterprise, in their marketing strategies on the mobile application-TikTok. That is because besides the quality of its own products, what kind of marketing strategy in new promotion channels is still very important. The author chose TikTok as the focus of the analysis in their marketing strategy because most apps are like discovery channels. The biggest feature of TikTok is a creative content platform that gathers a large number of young people to record and share their lives. Moreover, it is a super-rich media content platform with pictures, sounds and multiple interactive experiences.

Only when Universal Studios' TikTok account creates short videos with rich content and high quality can it have the potential of long-term realization. At the beginning, the short videos related to the resort involve handling pictures and videos of foreign Universal

Studios directly. And Universal Studios' official "down-to-earth Internet celebrity" style promotional short video has been criticized as old-fashioned. Marketing "overturned". After the storm, Universal studios is determined to improve. Huanjie LIN, president of China Theme Park Research Institute told that generally, theme parks are the most popular within half a year of opening, and then the heat is reduced. It depends on the cyclical fluctuations of new projects and Internet marketing topics during the trial operation period, which is also a good time for brands to rub against traffic. For now, TikTok has quite a bit of UGC talent writing, not just official propaganda. One TikTok user joked, "It feels like the whole world went to Universal Studios in Beijing, but I didn't." As for the content of business cooperation, relevant officials said that they had invited bloggers and a large number of celebrities to the park to shoot short videos and to expand the influence of the studio by taking advantage of the fans effect and dividends from the TikTok platform.

3 Methodology

According to author's observation and search, striplings who have been to Universal Studios have displayed photos of "encountering stars" on social media platforms, such as many Chinese entertainers who are developing in Hollywood, Bingbing Li, Ziyi Zhang... Netizens directly left comments on the video saying, "Universal Studios has become a mecca for chasing artists and stars from all walks of life." On the basis of the platform, the "Beijing Universal Studio" area further enhances the topic heat so that the netizens who have not yet gone to feel the immersive experience in advance. From graphic and video planting to one-click ordering, the ticket transaction speed expands the consumption scene in the way of audio-visual combination, shorting the consumption link.

The TikTok's marketing timeline is, since universal studios come to Beijing, a group of universal studios content focus on propaganda trill in media, and marketing material dries up, facing "hard bricks without straw" embarrassment. These accounts in the clock strategy directly handling the foreign video footage of universal studios, a severe lack of localization. But there is all of a sudden, the movie IP Megatron, as the first villain in the Transformers, is vicious and hateful. Such a villain, however, in the video of Universal Studios Park released, the character who let people be afraid even hate suddenly to appear in life. Under the huge exoskeleton equipment, is a lovely, humorous, a bit like an old Beijing alley friend in funny drama. There are dozens of short videos about it, which instantly get thousands of views. This creates a conflict between fear and love for viewers, making him more likable and desirable than a righteous hero like Optimus Prime. This is the secret of conflict and contrasts. Just captured the hearts of those who like to view such short TikTok videos. Universal studios this operation, experience and feeling is very good. There is more rare that plenty of visitors coming for this amazing Megatron, then immediately produce hundreds of content and spread spontaneously. The Megatron becomes a joke factory, these people unknowingly did free publicity for TikTok market of Universal Studios.

The marketing inspiration of this event is that the content communication of enterprises is very limited and input to customers most of time. How to create conditions and

produce high-quality and productive content is the key to gain victory [7]. The strong contrast attached to this innovative marketing and the social nature of creating communication topics are the reasons for Universal Studios' popularity. The suitability of IP itself is also the key to determine the effect of communication. In fact, this relatively low-cost marketing method could get huge attention, and get traffic by relying on the controversy caused, it seems to be a reasonable online marketing strategy. This is essentially what marketing all about—inspiring UGC content and letting users produce their own content.

In the sinking market, Huaqiang Fanta has always been the strongest brand. According to their statistics, nearly half of the cities that operate Fonte Park are third-tier cities and below. According to the observation, even though 4 videos were banned and removed in TikTok earlier, this may be due to copyright issues, or just the official fear of revealing the plot project videos and affecting the experience effect. Huaqiang Fanta, on the one hand, TikTok customized its theme challenge from several TikTok KOLs. As soon as the content was released, it continued to spread like a snowball and finally attracted as many as 387,000 creative videos. This powerful ability to drive ordinary users to participate in the production of content brought 1.18 billion views to the challenge. On the other hand, TikTok's powerful artificial intelligence technology (including filters, motion capture, voice recognition, etc.) allows users to add Fanta's original music [8]. Through a variety of interactive gameplay, users who participate in this activity will not only see the hard advertisement of Fonte brand appearing for a few seconds. In fact, a number of creative videos shot in Fanta have become popular with TikTok. Soft content placement allows users to experience all the fun of Fanta-land in TikTok. More importantly, tens of thousands of users watching the challenge spontaneously imitated and innovated to shoot more videos, and actively used Font theme stickers and customized background music. This kind of deep experience of the brand relying on creative content makes the majority of users have a deeper memory of font brand. This is similar to the marketing of many entertainment and leisure companies.

There are also plenty of eye-catching videos, such as Fanta's official selection of particularly exciting projects. With the permission of the experimenter, a camera is installed on the device to record the entire experience. The reaction of the participants, facilities of fast fierce, let the brush such short video to share or mention to friends, and young people between the itching, virtually [9], both to increase the interaction between the traditional amusement park operator and potential customers, make the topic, and low cost in planted the seeds in heart to the viewer.

4 Discussion

This paper mainly studies the differences between universal Studios, a foreign cultural industry, and the largest theme park industry in China in marketing strategies on the Internet and short video platforms. There is no single best way for a company to promote its products and services. What the enterprise can do is to let the local audience keep in touch with the brand, which requires a lot of localized creativity and elements. For example, idol Megatron, a well-known idol of Universal Studios, was invited to communicate with citizens in Beijing dialect and filmed as a short film, which greatly increased the flow and exposure rate of Universal Studios Theme Park. For example, with

the development of technology, many companies choose to use technology to empower their marketing. Huaqiang Font is one such company. They choose to develop many new technologies such as Motion capture, voice recognition and original music on TikTok. It will also arouse the audience's sense of participation and make daily life connected with the theme park.

In addition, both have a very similar strategy is to invite some KOL and flow stars to do publicity and promotion for them. And it's not done in the traditional way [10]. Many Internet celebrities with their own fan effect attracted the attention of the audience and fans in a second when they came to the two theme parks to shoot some park experiences and even experience roller coaster and rafting games in the first person. This first-person immersion into Tours and experiences has helped Universal Studios and Huaqiang Fonte gain traction on short video platforms like TikTok. The strategy of capturing a lot of attention at a fraction of the cost and planting the seeds of expectation in the minds of potential consumers has been a triumph in the Internet age.

5 Conclusion

At present, with the rapid development of The Times, the traditional marketing mode, such as subway advertising and distributing leaflets, has gradually declined for enterprises. This research is to provide an Internet-based marketing strategy analysis for the traditional theme park industry under the new background. The author checked the official TikTok accounts of Universal Studios and Huaqiang Fonte, consulted relevant materials and reports written by predecessors, and referred to some analysis of marketing strategies. For example, an ideal marketing should be in line with local life and reality. The author find that universal Studios and Huaqiang Font have done very well in marketing on short video platform, with their own ways and routines, and both of them have considerable followers. The official account of Beijing Universal Studios Resort has 290,000 followers so far. However, due to the regional autonomy system in practice, that is, one account is set up in each province or region, Fang Te has six main accounts, each of which has about 60,000 to 110,000 followers. For the theme park industry, is already a considerable number. But at the same time, although the brand construction direction of the two is the same, both want to be a practical theme park close to the people, but the marketing strategies and methods are slightly different. Fanta knows the Chinese market better, and is good at using domestic daily bloggers and communities to promote in a low-cost, high-engagement way. Universal studios, on the other hand, was unable to keep up, choosing IP names like Megatron and Paul Walker from Hollywood. Although also do well, but at present completely into the domestic market and household name there is a certain distance. In the future. The author also plan to do a more in-depth study of Universal Studios separately, especially to provide some direction for its further development. Whether to dig deeper into those Hollywood characters or create a character designed for the Chinese market.

References

1. Chen, Z. M. (2018). *Research on theme park advertising strategy in new media era*. Xiang Tan University.
2. Wang, J. H. (2020). *Universal Beijing Resort*. Beijing Review.
3. Han, Q. (2022). *Behind “Fantastic Adventure”—The construction of Beijing universal studios theme park by China construction second engineering bureau, a view of labour unions*.
4. Wang, J. L. (2018). *Study on the development strategy of tourist resorts from the perspective of “experience” economy*. Zhejiang Industry and Commerce University.
5. Liu, N. L. (2021). *Huaqiang Fanta: Domestic IP “bears” strong growth*. China Culture Daily.
6. Chan, G. (2018). *Research on the competitive strategy of Huaqiang Fanta theme park business in East China*. Lan Zhou University.
7. Sun, B. (2021). *Universal studios of Beijing style*. China Economic Weekly.
8. Zhang, C. (2018). *How does rural tourism take advantage of TikTok marketing*. New Agricultural Development Report.
9. Fan, Y., & Wang, X. M. (2016). *Research based marketing strategy in TikTok short videos*. Shenyang Aerospace University.
10. Song, Y., & Zhang, C. Z. (2015). *Marketing communication with organic combination of content, scene and users in TikTok*. Communication University of China.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter’s Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter’s Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

