



The Influence of Wechat Article Advertisement on Consumers' Purchase Intention on Wechat Public Platform

Taking the Fendi Ski Series as an Example

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Abstract. Nowadays, WeChat plays an essential role in people's daily life. All kinds of companies also use WeChat to operate, including selling products on the small program, maintaining relationships with customers through chat, and putting advertisements on official platforms. Advertisement is an important part of a company. This article reviews the literature on the wide use of WeChat, the role of advertisements, and the new trend in the clothing industry, which is discussed in this article. However, there is still some blank on the WeChat advertisement. In order to fill the gaps and help companies earn more revenue, this study takes the advertisement of Fendi's ski series product launched on WeChat as an example to explore the effectiveness of the WeChat advertisement. The survey method is used in this study, and data are collected and analyzed through online questionnaires. The result of the study shows that the attractiveness of the advertisement will increase the possibility of purchase behavior. At the same time, some factors influence the appeal to potential customers. The length of the advertisement on WeChat is a crucial determinant. The longer the advertisement, the more impatient a reader is. Many people will lose interest in it if the advertisement is too long. The people with different salaries have different motivators not to buy the products. In addition, brand awareness and people's interest in the style of products also play an important role.

Keywords: WeChat · Advertisement · Purchase intention

1 Introduction

WeChat is a free application that provides instant messaging services for intelligent terminals. It has many functions and purposes, like chatting, making friends, and paying online. It was created by Tencent in 2011. As of the second quarter of 2016, WeChat has covered more than 94% of smartphones in China, with 806 million monthly active users. Users cover more than 200 countries and more than 20 languages.

In 2012, WeChat developed WeChat public platform function. WeChat public platform is an application platform that developers or businesses apply for on the WeChat

public platform. Businesses can put some text, pictures, voice, and video on the WeChat public platform to advertise. Individuals also can share everything on it if the application is passed. Since the WeChat public platform was created, all kinds of brands have actively applied for it. The business that has a public platform put many advertisements in its official platform on WeChat. Advertisements can be taken in any form. The most popular form is a short article with text, pictures, and sometimes videos. The potential consumers who follow the public platform can receive the WeChat article.

Almost all big marketing companies in China have their own public platform. This article focuses on FENDI's advertisements through WeChat public platform. FENDI is an Italian luxury brand affiliated with Moët Hennessy-Louis Vuitton Group (LVMH), founded by Adele Fendi in Rome, Italy, in 1925. According to the official website of FENDI in August 2021, Fendi's main products include fur, women's shoes, accessories, watches, perfumes, etc. Many new products of them and new series products appear in the WeChat articles.

In recent years, with the approaching of the Beijing Winter Olympics, skiing has gradually appeared in the public eye. It is no longer just a niche, unpopular sport. More and more people in China have joined the ranks of skiing. From a global perspective, the ski market in North America and Europe has entered a relatively stable state, and the ski market in Japan and South Korea is even declining. China is the only high growth market, and the growth in China will become global growth. Therefore, major European and American ski brands have also started to layout the Chinese market.

Similarly, luxury brands have also joined the hot topic of skiing. Starting in November 2021, luxury brands have successively launched a series of products specially created for skiing. Fendi was also getting in on the act. In December 2021, Fendi launched its first ski series of clothing and accessories. Then Fendi promoted this ski series on the WeChat public platform in the form of WeChat articles.

2 Literature Review

Nowadays, WeChat is almost an organ for us, and advertising plays a significant role in the development of the company. Therefore, many scholars have carried out studies on the role of WeChat for us and the role of advertising for the company. According to Tu's study, WeChat has truly become a way of life, mediating information dissemination public discussion, thereby promoting the public sphere and creating new forms of daily interaction as its slogan says, "WeChat, a new way of life" [1]. WeChat official platforms have also become a must-use function for everyone. It has become a very influential new media platform with a total audience of more than 10 million people. The study of information transmission on WeChat and other social media platforms has become a scorching topic in the academic world. In the study by Xu et al., there is a power-law relationship between the page views of WeChat official platforms and time, and the attractiveness of information and the activity of WeChat users have a significant impact on the scope and efficiency of information transmission [2].

For every company, advertising has always played a vital role. Fatima and Lodhi took the cosmetics industry as an example to study the relationship between advertisement and consumer buying behavior. These results suggested that advertising is beneficial in

raising awareness of potential consumers, which in turn prompts them to buy a product [3]. Due to the development of the internet, mobile social networks have emerged as an innovative advertising channel. Therefore, more and more companies are advertising and marketing through WeChat public platforms on WeChat. Based on the SOR (stimulus-organism-response) model, Lu, Qi, and Qin found that people's perceived value on WeChat is positively affected by perceived usefulness and enjoyment, affecting the advertising effect [4]. Companies are expected to make people perceive value through new popular trends. According to Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, in today's highly competitive fashion market, companies in the fashion industry need to constantly "update" their product ranges [5].

In February and March 2022, Beijing hosted the Winter Olympics. According to the study of Zhao and Liu, the successful bid for the Winter Olympic Games has extensively promoted the construction and popularization of winter sports in China and greatly encouraged people to participate in it [6]. Therefore, the skiing industry has developed dramatically. According to Wang's study, the number of skiers and ski resorts in China has grown. The proliferation of ski resorts has made China the country with the most significant number of ski resorts globally, including a shift in the regional distribution of ski resorts and the rise of ski resorts and ski towns [7]. In addition, the clothing industry has also seized on the trend to expand its market in China. More and more brands are launching ski clothing and equipment. These include some luxury brands.

The results of Chu, Kamal, and Kim's study showed that luxury brands should (continue to) use social media advertising because brand-conscious users are likely to respond positively to social media advertising and may act on that information. As a result, luxury marketers can use social media advertising to inform and educate potential users [8]. In Zhang, Li, and Hamari's study, social media's temporal flexibility, spatial flexibility, mobile lifestyle, and advertising relevance on mobile platforms have a significant positive impact on consumers' purchase intention [9]. There are many social media for companies to implement online market. WeChat is one of them. According to the study of Liu, Perry, and Gadzinski, WeChat is very different from western social media in terms of features and usage and has special advantages over other social media for luxury consumers and brand managers in China and elsewhere [10].

These studies and theories have helped people learn a lot about this topic. They can know the use of WeChat and the impact of advertising on the company's sales. However, still, some research gaps remain. We found that the company's advertising in WeChat as a form of an article is mainly through the public platform. However, no one has studied the effect of WeChat article on consumer purchases. The study of the influence of WeChat article advertisement on consumers' purchase intention through WeChat public platforms can let the marketers know consumers' thoughts on this kind of advertisement. So as to help them better operate WeChat public platforms and improve revenue. In order to meet the expectation of this study, this study will take the advertisements of Fendi ski series products launched at the end of 2021 on the WeChat official platform as an example. This study will be conducted by issuing and collecting questionnaires.

3 Methodology

In order to better carry out the research, the author used a questionnaire survey to collect data. Two parts are included in the questionnaire. At first, respondents are required to read part of an advertisement, the ski series product of Fendi launched on the WeChat official platform. Then they have to answer the first part of questions related to the advertisement that they just read. The second part questions are the basic demographic questions. The questionnaires are launched on the WeChat platform. The collection period is 24 h. Initially, the total amount of the collection was 107. Then 2 of them were eliminated because they are not effective. In one, all the questions were answered with one option. In the other, all the answers showed obvious regularity. These two types of answers are considered invalid. Therefore, the effective response rate is 98%.

4 Results

Respondents are from all over China. Most of them are female, over 25 years old, and have a full-time job. About 80% have more than 6,000 RMB salary one month. More than half of them is in bachelor's degrees. Everyone uses WeChat and watches WeChat official platforms. About half of them use WeChat one to two hours a day and watch official platforms for ten to thirty minutes a day. More than a third of the respondents use WeChat official platforms as a way to access product information. However, more people read official platforms without any reason. They just simply open casually to relax and entertain to kill time. About a third of respondents are interested in ski sports, and the other one-third is not interested in ski sports. The remains have a neutral attitude on ski sports. As for the brand Fendi, most of the respondents know it.

This tested article advertisement attracted more than 80% of the respondents. About two-thirds of people like the style of this advertising, including color, font, layout, etc. They also like the text contents or graphics in the advertisement. The main reason people do not like this advertisement is the long length. Four-fifths of people would click the "small procedure" function in the article to know the furthermore information about the products. More than two-thirds of people have positive attitudes towards this tested article advertisement, including being willing to share them with others, having the possibility to buy them, and wanting to see similar ads.

Among the respondents who are not interested in the article advertisement, only about 17% of them may buy the products. However, among the respondents who are interested in the article advertisement, about 66% of them may buy the products. Those with a monthly salary of less than 3,000 will not buy the products. But those with a salary of 6001–9000 RMB one month are most likely to buy. For the respondents who have a salary between 9001 RMB and 12000 RMB, the most common reason why they will not buy the products is that they think the price is high. For some people whose salary is more than 12001 RMB, they do not ski; therefore, they will not buy the products. The people who like ski sports are interested in this article advertisement.

5 Discussion

This study takes the ski series product advertisement launched on the WeChat official platform as an example to find the relationship between advertisements on WeChat and consumers' willingness to buy the product. Many survey results are used to analyze the effectiveness of the advertisements on WeChat and the reasons. There is a main result that the people attracted by the advertisements are more likely to buy the products than the people having no interest in the ads. This result claims that if the content of the advertisements is attractive enough, the potential consumer's purchase willingness will increase. However, still, some discussions can be made.

Some respondents are not or less interested in this advertisement. From the survey, there are some reasons. Most of them feel that they do not have the patience to read such a long article advertisement even though it is just a small section of the whole advertisement on WeChat. Nearly half of them have no interest in the ski sport, or they do not like the Fendi brand. This result may bring a negative effect that the good content will be ignored by the readers who think it is too long to read. Thus, the company loses potential consumers just because of the advertisement's long length. Therefore, the company can take some measures like shortening the advertisement, making it short and concise, and standing out their focus.

Many people will still not buy even though they are interested in this advertisement. One reason is that many of them think these products are expensive for them. However, it is an inevitable problem. Because Fendi is a luxury brand, the price is reasonably high for the ordinary. However, it is a great business opportunity for the usual clothing brand. They have a comparative advantage in the price compared to the luxury, like Fendi. They can design, produce, and sell these products at a low price to attract consumers. Moreover, there is another important reason why the people like the advertisement but will not buy the product. They do not do ski sports. However, this issue cannot be solved by a single company. It is controlled by the whole society. Indeed, this sport is not very popular in China, and many people living in the south of China have fewer opportunities to access to do this sport. However, the ski spots have a popular and positive trend in China due to the Beijing Winter Olympics. For the companies, they can just follow the newest trend, and the ski trend will be a good choice within several years.

The people who know this brand Fendi have more possibility of buying the product than those who do not know this brand. This is because the former people have brand awareness of Fendi. They know it and even are familiar with it. Brand awareness is of vital importance for companies because potential consumers will more likely buy a known brand's products. Companies can increase their brand awareness as much as possible through many approaches, like using social media to be exposed to the public. They can also put advertisements on places that potential customers can access, like placing billboards on busy streets and commercial centres of the city. Sponsoring some activities is another way to increase brand awareness too. They can raise money for charities, support sporting events, etc.

Besides the potential consumers' preferences, the key element that determines the purchase behaviour is their financial situation. According to the survey, the people who have a 6001–9000 RMB monthly salary have the highest possibility to buy the products. In fact, a 6001–9000 RMB monthly salary is not sufficient for people to buy luxury

products easily. However, the possibility for them to buy the products is even twice more than the possibility of the people who have more than 12001 RMB monthly salary. This is because people at this wage stage tend to spend on impulse. After busy work, they want to satisfy themselves through impulse spending. What is more, they care about face, and they want to be looked good by other people to prove their status. This phenomenon is good for companies.

People who earn less than 3,000 RMB a month will not buy these products because they cannot afford them, but because they do not like the brand Fendi or do not do ski sports. It represents that many consumers in China have a severe face problem. They are unwilling to admit that they have no money to buy but find other reasons instead. Or because they don't know Fendi is a luxury brand and do not the rough price of the product, they think the price of the product is in the normal level. On the contrary, cannot afford is the main reason for the people who have a 9001–12000 RMB monthly salary. For the people who have a salary of over 12001 RMB a month, money is not a big problem for them to buy these products. The most representative reason why they do not buy these products is that they do not ski. It claims that when more and more rich people ski as ski sports get popular, the ski products will be sold well in China. Companies can just wait for the trend to get popular and for more and more people joining in.

This article advertisement will attract all respondents who like skiing. This is because people are always appealed to what they like. The more possible they read the advertisement, the more possible they will purchase. Therefore, companies can timely follow the newest fashion and capture the preference of potential customers. Then, they write the article related to the preference and launch them on the WeChat official platforms to attract potential customers.

6 Conclusion

The research of the advertisement launched on WeChat by official platforms and the possibility of the purchase behaviour is studied as the example of Fendi's ski series product advertisement. According to this study, people who are interested in the advertisements are more likely to buy the products than the possibility of those who think this advertisement is boring. One of the most important reasons why this advertisement does not attract some people is that its length is too long. Thus, in this fast-paced world, people do not have the patience to read all of them. Besides financial situation, the familiarity with the brand Fendi and the interest in the sports ski are also significant determinants of the possibility of purchasing.

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