

# ANTA's Marketing Strategy in Domestic Market Based on SWOT Analysis

-- Take High-tech Products for Instance

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**Abstract.** ANTA, a well-known Chinese sports brand, received unprecedented attention during the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. The volume of sales of its high-tech products, on the other hand, has not increased as much as that of its low-priced products. The goal of this study was to figure out what was causing the low sales volume of ANTA's high-tech products. The Marketing Mix Theory was used to analyse the situation of ANTA's high-tech products in this study. This research identified ANTA's current shortcomings by utilizing the SWOT analysis and a combination of data from Anta's annual report and data from the Internet. The most important measure Anta should take, according to this research, was to increase the research and development investment. As a result, this research could assist ANTA in increasing high-tech product sales and provide other domestic brands with a method to solve a similar problem, while also filling a theoretical void in the sport products field.

**Keywords:** Marketing Mix Theory, SWOT Analysis, Marketing Strategy, Domestic Sports Brand, ANTA Sports.

# 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

The Olympic games draw attention from all over the world, and the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing did not disappoint. Since ANTA was the official partner of the Chinese Olympic Committee, it was also a great opportunity for ANTA SPORTS to showcase its latest high-tech sports products, especially since Chinese athletes won a total of 15 medals [1]. ANTA received a lot of attention and exposure during the Winter Olympic Games from all over the world. The ANTA WeChat index increased by 213 percent month over month on February 4, the day of the opening ceremony, to 132 million [2]. On February 8, spokesperson Gu Eileen won the championship, and the WeChat index stepped to its highest level in nearly a year, reaching 205 million [2]. With so much exposure, ANTA's newly designed high-tech sports products worn by Olympic athletes were able to reach a large portion of the public.

For the past 16 years, ANTA has been the official partner of the Chinese Olympic Committee [3]. ANTA, on the other hand, has not gotten nearly as much attention in the last 16 years as it will in 2022. ANTA's sales increased as a result of its exposure during the Winter Olympic Games. Furthermore, the 2022 Winter Olympics were held in Beijing, China's capital, which heightened people's patriotic fervor. The sales figures from the ANTA T-mall online shop convincingly show ANTA's marketing success during the Beijing Winter Olympic Games. The total sales of the ANTA T-mall online shop reached 104RMB million, up 29 percent from 15 days prior to the opening ceremony [4].

ANTA Sports Products Limited is a Chinese multinational sports equipment company headquartered in Jinjiang. As of 2019, it is the world's largest purely sports equipment company by revenue and the third-largest manufacturer of sporting goods overall, only behind Nike and Adidas [5]. ANTA Sports aims to unlock both the mass and highend sportswear markets [6].

### 1.2 Research Gap

As the official partner of the Chinese Olympic Committee for several decades, ANTA has played a significant role in the field of sport products. A great deal of research was conducted on ANTA Sports, including its brand marketing strategy, brand positioning, and multi-brand strategy. In the year 2020, Shaobo Wu conducted research on the marketing strategy of ANTA Kay Thompson Products [7]. In 2015, Zheng Xiang et al. compared ANTA's brand positioning to that of Nike [8]. ANTA's multi-brand strategy was investigated by Xiaoyun Liu from the standpoint of financial performance [9]. However, with extensive marketing, increased exposure and competition, ANTA's main problem is that it has encountered the newly discovered problem of low sales of high-tech products during and after the Beijing Winter Olympic Games.

The sales volume of ANTA's low-priced goods from T-mall online shop has achieved a huge growth during the Beijing Winter Olympics Games, some products have even reached the monthly sales of tens of thousands of pieces. In sharp contrast, high-tech products have encountered a downturn in sales even though most products are seasonal products and endorsed by many athletes, which only achieved a few or dozens of monthly sales during the Winter Olympics.

Hence, this situation leads to a main problem that consumers did not accept ANTA's high-tech products. ANTA's low-cost products account for most of its sales, and the unsellable high-tech items will prevent the company from making more profits. In particular no study, to our knowledge, has considered the problem of ANTA's high-tech products' sale. Then create a research question about how ANTA could improve its high-tech products' sales.

This research constitutes a relatively new area which has emerged from ANTA's high-tech products' sale and has made a few significant contributions to this field from domestic brands.

It could not only assist ANTA in increasing high-tech product sales and providing other domestic brands with a solution to a similar problem, also fill a theoretical void in the sport products field.

#### 1.3 Fill the Gap

There are many alternative methods are available for solving this problem, one approach to solve this problem involve the use of Marketing mix theory.

The topic for discussion is how could ANTA improve consumers' willingness to buy the high-tech products. For this study, it was of interest to investigate whether the consumer purchase behavior can be partly explained by the Marketing Mix Theory. The marketing mix is a conceptual framework that marketing managers use when making the key decisions about allocating products to meets customers' requirements. Palmer commented that the traditional marketing mix consists of 4 elements which are product, price, promotion, and price [10]. In this paper, all of the elements from Marketing Mix Theory will be used to analyze the consumer purchase behavior.

This research hypothesizes that the Product part that involves the appearance and sports technology has the greatest impact. The Promotion part that involves endorsement, sales service and after-sales service plays a second important role.

Though this research has provided a solution for ANTA, this method still needs to be tested whether it will be proved effective. Hence, this research would utilize the SWOT analysis to validate whether our hypothesis would be helpful to ANTA's problem of the unmarketable high-tech products.

## 2 Literature Review

#### 2.1 Definition & Development

Research on Marketing has a long history. In 1953, Neil Borden first put forward the term "marketing mix". In 1960, E.J. McCarthy proposed the famous 4P combination in the "Basic marketing", includes Product, Price, Place, Promotion. Marketing Mix Theory has been a foundation model for businesses [11]. Recent theoretical developments can be divided into 4 parts: a) 4Ps b) 7Ps c) 4Cs d) 4R [12].

#### 2.2 Important Results

In recent years there has been an increasing amount of literature on the marketing strategy based on the Marketing Mix Theory.

Many researchers have applied Marketing Mix theory to the product aspect and discovered the impact of product strategy. Fang and Xie, for example, found that product and price strategy has a greater positive marketing impact on the international express logistics market segment than promotion and location strategy in 2021. Expanding the scope of business and increasing the types of products available could help the company better meet customer needs, resulting in increased profits [13]. Jiaxin Yan also demonstrates the importance of product strategy in the field of digital music, where competition is fiercer than ever. She has demonstrated that upgrading NetEase cloud music's social product strategy is beneficial because it can help the company gain high-value social traffic [14]. For price strategy, many studies in different fields have proved the important influence of price strategy. Xiyu Mei, for example, has conducted research into the emerging tea industry's marketing strategy for 2021. Honey snow ice city has successfully created a great experience for customers and opened the market, according to her research, relying on the price advantage [15]. Furthermore, consumers are more tolerant of negative news about the Honey snow ice city due to the lower prices [15]. However, a year later, Yong Hu maintained that consistently pursuing the low-price strategy would have an impact on the company's actual revenue. In 2021, he claims that determining the sales price based on market price changes can help businesses maximize profits while minimizing risk [16].

In terms of promotion, several academics have examined the situations of numerous businesses and found that using a promotion strategy can result in increased volume. Dongwei Hong, for instance, studied the international mobile phone market and KONKA mobile phones in 2019 to demonstrate the importance of promotion strategy [17]. In addition to online e-commerce channels, he claimed that KONKA mobile phones should increase publicity and resource investment on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat, such as cooperating with local famous online celebrities to increase exposure and visibility [17]. Hanaysha and others' research in the retail market in 2021 also confirmed the accuracy of this view with an example. They discovered that the intensity of advertising has a positive effect on consumers' purchasing behaviour [18].

For place aspect, a common idea is that place strategy could strengthen brand image. For example, Xiaoxue Tan in 2015 made an analysis about ymatou, a cross border ecommerce platform, and came to conclusion that the proper place strategy could make the overseas shopping process smoother [19]. For example, Xiuhui Li in 2021 analyzed the film marketing strategy and proved the importance of Place strategy. "Wandering the earth" is a movie released in the 2019 Spring Festival, which was an appropriate release date and a great place strategy. The proper place strategy helped the film to recover costs and make high profits [20]. However, Hanaysha et al. contend that the effect of place strategy differs among different industries in 2021. In retail market, in line with the historical literature, distribution intensity has a negative effect on purchase decision [18]. After one year, Runqi Huang and Haitao Chen founded the important role of channel strategy in we media marketing. They asserted that multi-platform communication and accurate selection of appropriate platforms can strengthen the brand pluralistically [21].

### 2.3 Summary

Collectively, these studies outline a critical role for Marketing Mix Theory. They did researches in different industries and analyzed the importance of Product, Price, Promotion and Place strategy in different degrees. In the past several decades, what has a lready known about Product and Promotion Strategy are largely based upon empirical studies that investigate the role they played in gaining more profit. For Price and Place Strategy, most of the theories of are however focused on explaining how they act on the function of getting more customers and market share. However, as technology advances and the information age deepens, there is a small body of literature that is concerned with the application of Marketing Mix theory for High-tech sports product market. In this research, Hanaysha and others' experience could be seriously considered since there is a link between the retail market and the sporting products retail industry.

In this research, the Product aspect includes high-tech products' quality, technology feeling and comfort levels. The discount and price strategy are included in the price aspect. The Place aspect contains the various distribution channels. This research focuses on the relationship between the above factors and consumers' purchase intention of ANTA's high-tech products.

### 3 Method

#### 3.1 Research Design

The use of qualitative case studies is a well-established section on multi objects based on volumes of sample points and data. However, for this research, I'd like to utilize the SWOT analysis.

The method applied to this research is qualitive analysis----SWOT analysis. SWOT analysis is a strategic planning and strategic management technique used to help a person or organization identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats related to business competition or project planning. [22].

Based on the Marketing Mix Theory, the object of this research is to study the relationship between Product, Price, Promotion, Place, and the consumers' purchase intention of ANTA's high-tech products, which indicates that the object is simple. Hence, SOWT analysis is suitable for this research and its combination with Marketing Mix Theory would lead to an important finding in the understanding of the consumers' purchase intention of ANTA's high-tech products.

It is worth discussing these interesting facts revealed by the results from Wang. Wang in 2020 made an analysis on the marketing strategy of H real Estate Project based on 4P marketing theory [22]. According to the SWOT analysis, he claimed that in recent years, the strength that dominant position of real estate enterprises in the market is inseparable from the stable economic development situation of the country, low education and poor marketing ability of marketers will indirectly reduce customers' purchase intention [23]. The lack of direct selling center will bring bad experience to customers, which is the threat faced by the company [23]. Depending on those factors, he came to conclusion that the real estate enterprises should seriously considered the formulation of price and improve the scope of marketing, which will eventually have a positive impact on real estate business [23].

#### 3.2 ANTA sports

#### 3.2.1 Basic Background knowledge.

ANTA was founded by Shizhong Ding in 1991, ANTA Sports Products Limited is a Chinese sports equipment multinational corporation headquartered in Jinjiang [4]. Founded in 1994, its operations involve the business of designing, developing, manufacturing, and marketing products, including sportswear, footwear, apparel and accessories under its own brand name. After completing the acquisition of Amer Sports, the company expanded in branding and owns more than 25 sporting apparel and equipment brands, ranging from Arc'teryx, Salomon to Wilson [4].

### 3.2.2 Annual Revenue.

As mentioned, ANTA is the world's largest purely sports equipment company by revenue as of 2019 [4]. Its annual revenue has increased year by year and reached 49328RMB million in 2021 [3].



Fig. 1. The growth curve of ANTA's annual revenue [3].

Based on Figure 1, it could be seen that before the Winter Olympic Games, ANTA already has achieved stable and growing annual revenue in the past 5 years, which shows ANTA's fine financial performance. What's more, just one year before the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics Games, ANTA's annual revenue met a huge growth, the growth rate and absolute value of this data have both reached the highest level in recent five years.

### 3.2.3 Effects from 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.

For the past 16 years, ANTA has been an official partner of the Chinese Olympic Committee, demonstrating its commitment to Chinese athletes. ANTA was once thought to be an ordinary sports brand with a medium and low-end positioning, despite the fact that it was a COC official partner. However, in recent years, ANTA's marketing strategy and product research and development have resulted in increased revenue and attention. ANTA's efforts over the years were finally rewarded at the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. ANTA leaves a lasting impression on the audience thanks to its comprehensive and expansive marketing strategy: ANTA is present in every shot of the Winter Olympic Games. The total sales of the ANTAT-mall online shop reached 104RMB million, up 29 percent from 15 days prior to the opening ceremony [3].

#### 3.3 ANTA sports

#### 3.3.1 Strengths.

Great quality is an important factor that contributes to the sales of ANTA's hightech products. The previous questionnaire showed that 95% of interviewees purchase ANTA's high-tech products because of its excellent products quality. Additionally, 90% of the interviewees praise the comfortable fitting of these products. The quality of products has a medium effect to the consumer purchase intention.

Additionally, ANTA's extensive marketing has brought great attention from all over the World. Not only did ANTA continue to support Chinese athletes by becoming the official partner of COC for 16 years, but also sign Yibo Wang as ANTA's global chief brand ambassador [23]. All these marketing methods has brought more consumers' purchase intention to ANTA. The marketing has a medium impact to the consumer purchase intention.

Great number of offline physical stores have been established by ANTA. The target number of stores in 2022 is between 11470 and 11690 [23]. What's more, ANTA has not only set up its own official online stores on traditionale-commerce shopping platforms such as T-mall and jd.com, but also developed small programs on WeChat, a social software, to expand its sales channels. Various distribution channels are a great benefit to ANTA's place strategy. The distribution channels affect the consumer purchase intention moderately.

### 3.3.2 Weaknesses.

Despite ANTA's high-tech products' reputation for quality, the questionnaire indicates that they lack the scene of technology and special design. The appearance of ANTA's high-tech products did not satisfy 65 percent of interviewees. Although product improvement necessitates investment in research and development, research and development costs accounted for only 2.3 percent of ANTA's annual revenue in 2021 [3]. It's no surprise that customers are dissatisfied with ANTA's high-tech products' design. The absence of a technological and design scene has a negative and significant impact on consumers' purchase intention.

The high cost of ANTA's high-tech products is also a drawback of these products. Consumers find it difficult to accept winter coats that cost several thousand yuan. It would also have a negative effect on consumer purchasing intentions. The high price has a moderately negative impact on the purchase intention of consumers.

#### 3.3.3 Opportunities.

As previously stated, products with a greater sense of design and technology should be taken into consideration. Appearance determines consumers' first impression of the product, the improvement of design and technology for the high-tech products would be beneficial for the consumers' purchase intention. More R&D investment would lay the groundwork for bettering products. The improvement of design for the high-tech product would have a positive effect to the consumers' purchase intention to a large extent. What's more, more discount of the products needs to be implemented. In the light of the negative effect to consumers' purchase intention from the high price, appropriate discounts will lead to an increase in sales. It would bring a moderate influence on the consumers' purchase intention.

Sports product enterprises need to make rational use of various marketing channels to make target customers better understand the projects they launch and the products they provide. The convenience of marketing channels is the first consideration. Hence, more brick-and-mortar stores need to be constructed. Considering the relatively higher income and purchasing power of residents in first tier cities, ANTA also need to lay more emphasis on developing the number of stores in these areas. It would also lead to a moderate and positive effect to the purchase intention.

#### 3.3.4 Threatens.

The high-tech products of ANTA's main competitors are Nike's. Thousands of consumers have purchased high-end products in Nike's Taobao online shop, according to data from Nike's T-mall online shop, even when some of them cost more than 2000 yuan.

### 4 Results

With the ever-changing market environment of high-tech sporting goods and the deepening of marketing theory, the high-tech sports products of ANTA are facing great challenges and tests. Nowadays the market competition situation of the sporting goods industry is becoming white-hot. In this situation, ANTA's marketing strategy, which is based on SWOT theory, must be in line with the market environment. Price, Promotion and Place aspects all have effect on the consumers' purchase intention.

The following three conclusions can be drawn from the above SOWT analysis and research on ANTA's high-tech products:

First and foremost, the product aspect is the most important of the "4Ps" factors. ANTA needs to improve its scientific and technological awareness, as well as the design of its high-tech products. R&D investment is inextricably linked to this progress. In order to produce products that are approved by consumers, more attention and funds should be paid to R&D investment.

Furthermore, the price of the products has a secondary impact on the purchasing decisions of consumers. It is also critical for ANTA to recognize that product price setting and sales revenue have moderate effects on the profitability and growth of the company. Market conditions and consumer acceptance should be considered when setting prices. After a reasonable discount is given, sales will increase.

At last, the place strategy also has a moderate effect on the purchase intention. Based on the existing various online channels, ANTA needs to develop more physical stores in first tier cities. More stores mean more opportunities to interact with customers, which lays an important foundation for ANTA to improve the sales of high-tech products.

### 5 Discussion

The 4P marketing theory is utilized to analyze the marketing strategy for ANTA's hightech products. More theoretical application is needed to better guide the development of practical work in terms of how to design and implement more comprehensively and deeply in practice. The following are the topics of discussion:

To begin, this study hypothesizes that the product attribute of appearance and sports technology have the greatest influence on consumers' purchase intent. A second important role is played by the promotion aspect, which includes endorsement, sales service, and after-sales service. The product strategy validates the initial assumptions after conducting the entire research. However, the secondary role is not endorsement and sales service, but the price strategy based on discount and the distribution strategy of expanding stores.

Furthermore, the questions posed in this study are more closely associated with the characteristics of ANTA's high-tech products, but they are not particularly representative or referential for products and industries lacking similar characteristics. When comparing the findings of this study to those of previous studies, there are still some similarities and differences.

Expanding the scope of business and increasing the types of products available, according to Fang and Xie, could help the company better meet customer needs, resulting in increased profits [12]. This research supports the idea that improving the design of a high-tech product will increase consumers' willingness to purchase it. Coincidentally, the improvement of products can promote the sales of logistics companies and sporting goods companies

It is worth discussing these interesting facts revealed by the results of Xiyu Mei, who came to conclusion that relying on the price advantage, Honey snow ice city has successfully created the great experience for customers and opened the market [14]. In this research, discount also plays an important role in leading to an increase in sales.

The present study confirmed the findings about the place strategy. Hanaysha et al. contended that distribution intensity has a negative effect on purchase decision [17]. Nevertheless, more brick-and-mortar stores need to be constructed in first tier cities to make a moderate and positive effect to the purchase intention' of ANTA's high-tech products. Since this research and his research are aimed at different fields, disagreement is inevitable.

The effectiveness of the marketing measures mentioned in this research still needs to be verified in practice. It is expected that with the development of the sporting goods industry and the continuous innovation of marketing theory, the marketing measures and contents will be more comprehensive and applicable in the future.

### 6 Conclusion

This research analysed the consumers' purchase intention to the high-tech products launched by ANTA during and after the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games, when the company has gained great exposure and attention from all over the world. Using the Marketing Mix theory, this study tests whether the Product component, which includes appearance and sports technology, has the greatest impact, and the Promotion component, which includes endorsement, sales service, and after-sales service, has a secondary impact. This study confirmed that the most important thing for ANTA is to devote more time and resources to research and development investment to produce consumerapproved products. Appropriate discounts and the opening of more physical stores in first-tier cities would both help to boost sales volume.

The gap raised in this study are carried out in the combination with ANTA's hightech products and the characteristics of ANTA's marketing strategy, but they are not necessarily reflective for products or businesses that do not share these characteristics. As a result, it also shows that the research can't fully support the comprehensive application of all other types of products in the sporting goods industry. For example, these conclusions are not particularly applicable to low-cost products or foreign enterprises that do not intend to carry out large-scale marketing in China.

The result of this research appears consistent with the Marketing Mix Theory. It not only provides ANTA with a series of methods to improve the sales volume of high-tech products, but also foreshadows the difficulties that domestic brands may face in the future when launching high-tech products. At the same time, it fills the vacancy that most researchers focus on the research of ANTA's marketing strategy and ignore the product sales and product strategy, and it complements the application of Marketing Mix Theory in the sporting goods market.

Admittedly, there are many limitations in present study. The analysis method used in this study is qualitative analysis, but the qualitative method brings about several limitations. The main limitation is that this study is influenced by subjective viewpoints, which are based on prior experience and knowledge. Another limitation is that the results are theoretical, implying that the application still requires more exhaustive and meticulous design. The final detailed limitation is that the questionnaires were distributed to customers who have purchased ANTA high-tech products, so they may be more inclined to give the answers that are advantageous to ANTA because they had already purchased the products.

Firstly, qualitive analysis might prove an important area for future research. Since qualitative analysis and quantitative analysis are integrated, the complementary quantitative analysis makes the qualitative analysis more scientific and accurate. It can promote the qualitative analysis to draw extensive and in-depth conclusions. Future research should consider a wider range of questionnaire respondents, as previously suggested. Sending questionnaires to consumers who have not purchased ANTA's hightech products and gaining the reasons for not buying these products from their answers. By combining these new findings with the existing results, this research would put forward more detached and constructive recommendations.

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1586 Y. Nie

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