



Research on the Marketing Strategy of Beauty Brands in the Background of Social Media

—Take “Colorkey” as an Example

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Abstract. With the improvement of people’s living standards and the gradual increase in purchasing power, women’s demand for color cosmetics products has gradually increased, which has brought development opportunities for establishing and developing domestic color cosmetics brands. Domestic make-up brands are developing rapidly, and many consumers have also recognized many brands. Domestic beauty brands have achieved rapid development with the help of the “Internet +” model and various social media marketing. Taking the Colorkey brand as an example, this paper analyzes the current situation of the Colorkey brand’s social media marketing strategy through literature analysis and case study methods. According to the brand, there are problems such as excessive network marketing, product quality not keeping up with marketing speed, and difficulty getting rid of labeling. The paper gives some optimization strategies: implement moderate marketing, improve product quality, promote brand transformation and upgrading, and combine online and offline marketing. It is hoped that it can provide a useful reference for the marketing strategies of domestic beauty brands.

Keywords: Social media, Marketing strategy, Beauty brand, Colorkey

1 Introduction

In the context of the rapid development of the Internet in the 5G era, marketing planners have to face new opportunities and challenges. Social media platforms are widely used in brand marketing and play a pivotal role in brand performance. The domestic beauty brand Colorkey stands out among the fiercely competitive domestic beauty brands in recent years and still occupies a place under the squeeze of well-known domestic beauty brands such as Perfect Diary and Huaxizi. This article aims to analyze Colorkey’s marketing strategy in the context of social media and make recommendations.

1.1 Research Background

From a macro perspective, after the reform and opening up, China's economic development has ushered in a high-speed period, followed by the continuous increase of Chinese people's disposable income and the emergence and change of new waves and forms of consumption. The growing consumer demand and desire of the people make my country's consumer market continue to be injected with new vitality and bring new opportunities.

From the perspective of the development of the advertising industry, under the above background, with the rapid development of the Internet, social media marketing, as an emerging marketing model, is highly valued by major enterprises. "China Internet Development Report (2021)" shows that by the end of 2020, China's Internet penetration rate has reached 70.4% [1]. According to the "2020 China Advertising Industry Market Prospects and Investment Research Report (Simple Version)" released by the China Business Industry Research Institute, traditional radio and television advertising revenue has declined, while new media advertising revenue has grown significantly. In 2019, the national advertising revenue was 207.527 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 11.30%. Among them: traditional radio and television advertising revenue were 99.885 billion yuan, a year-on-year decrease of 9.13%; new media advertising revenue obtained by radio and television and online audio-visual institutions through the Internet was 82.876 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 68.49%; Other advertising revenue from advertising, etc. was 24.766 billion yuan, a year-on-year decrease of 9.41%. At the same time, from the perspective of income composition, traditional radio and television advertising income accounted for 48.13% of the total income, and the proportion of new media advertising revenue continued to increase [2]. It can be seen that social media marketing has great advantages and future development in today's environment, and the research on new media marketing strategies is of great significance.

From the perspective of the development of the beauty industry, with the improvement of people's living standards and the increasing consumption power, women's demand for beauty products is also increasing, which has brought development opportunities for the establishment and development of domestic beauty brands. According to the "Domestic Beauty Insight Report" released by Tencent, 42% of consumers are more inclined to buy domestic beauty brands, which also means that domestic beauty brands have a lot of room for development. As a new face among domestic beauty brands, Colorkey has achieved certain achievements and has broad development prospects. Founded in 2018, Colorkey is a make-up brand under Meishang (Guangzhou) Cosmetics Co., Ltd. By catching the opportunity of social media marketing. It appears in the public's field of vision and gives full play to the advantages of social media. By rapidly increasing its brand awareness by presenting its products and services to consumers through various channels such as recommendations from major platforms, KOL bloggers, or live broadcasts.

1.2 Literature review

The article by Yang Xiaoman and Song Shaoyi studied that under the background of the Z generation, “national trend” has become a new fashion vane, with a very wide audience, so the domestic make-up can continue to expand the market size. Among them, the domestic make-up brand Huaxizi has an absolute share in the market. It focuses on analyzing the marketing strategies of Huaxizi under the background of the Z Generation, including strengthening brand awareness, building a popular model system, joint cross-border cooperation, establishing brand image personality, and improving user brand experience. At the same time, it expounds on the single channel and serious product premium that still exist in Huaxizi’s marketing strategy and proposes solutions. Finally, four suggestions were put forward through the Huaxizi brand mapping of the entire Chinese domestic make-up brand to strengthen the Chinese story, use digital technology, improve product quality, and strengthen communication with users. And hope that more domestic beauty brands will rise in the future, continue to explore oriental aesthetics, and stimulate brand innovation. Enhance the brand image of domestic cosmetics, increase consumer recognition, and finally build a national trendy beauty brand with an international level.

The articles by Wei Wenqian, Li Xu, and Wang Tianze mainly focus on how the beauty brand Perfect Diary conducts online marketing with the help of Internet+ and major platforms. It mainly analyzes the marketing strategy of Perfect Diary: firstly, setting up an official account and cooperating with beauty experts to deploy Xiaohongshu in the early stage; secondly, hiring a large number of celebrities as product endorsements and online live broadcasts to promote sales, public domain traffic and private domain traffic combines these methods. Then, it analyzes the marketing problems of Perfect Diary, such as excessive publicity, uneven product quality, no brand style, and a single marketing model, and suggests solutions to the above problems.

Jianing’s article mainly analyzes enterprises’ strategies for marketing using social media. Firstly, it expounds on the connotation of social media and corporate marketing. Then, it analyzes the influence of social media on enterprise marketing, including subverting the traditional enterprise marketing mode. Enterprise marketing will fall into the dilemma of transforming communication mode into commercial communication and lacking marketing. Then some suggestions and methods are put forward on the above issues: first, sharing marketing methods to improve the influence of products; second, building a new social media platform to ensure maximum communication effects; in addition, creating hot topics to expand promotion in the circle of friends, and push advertisements in the circle of friends, to trigger discussions, etc.

1.3 Research gap

Most of the researchers’ articles focus on the marketing strategies of beauty brands. These articles generally choose a brand or a specific product based on different era backgrounds, such as the Internet + era, 5 G era, post-epidemic era, etc. Focus on analyzing the marketing strategies and shortcomings of the brand or product, and suggest suggestions or solutions. Many articles selected top brands such as Perfect Diary and

Huaxizi, and fewer rookie brands such as Colorkey were analyzed. Most articles on social media marketing focus on how social media has changed traditional marketing methods and how to implement social media marketing.

Few articles deal with the research on marketing strategies of beauty brands in the context of social media.

1.4 Research framework

With the widespread popularization of social media as the background, through literature analysis and case study, this paper first introduces the development status of today's beauty brands industry, especially Colorkey. Secondly, the strategic analysis of social media marketing by Colorkey. Then analyze the existing problems of Colorkey's social media marketing. Finally, optimization suggestions and solutions are put forward for the existing problems of Colorkey.

2 Methods

2.1 Case study

Case analysis, also known as case analysis or typical analysis, is a scientific method that does in-depth and meticulous research on representative things or phenomena to obtain a whole understanding [3]. This article will take Colorkey's marketing methods in social media as a case to analyze its current marketing strategy's advantages and existing problems. From this, the marketing methods of beauty brands in the background of social media and the problems needing attention are obtained to maximize the brand benefit and product promotion effect.

2.2 Literature analysis method

Literature analysis refers to finding out the nature and status of the research object and drawing one's own opinions from it by studying the collected literature [4]. Based on a comprehensive collection of relevant literature, through induction, analysis, and identification, this paper systematically and comprehensively describes and comments on the research achievements and progress of a certain discipline or subject in a certain period. It is characterized by in-depth analysis of past and present research results, pointing out the current level, trends, problems to be solved, and future development directions, and putting forward own opinions, opinions and suggestions. According to relevant theory, research conditions and actual needs. Comment on various research results, and provide the basis or conditions for current research. Through the research and analysis of articles, data, and industry reports in the field of social media marketing, advertising development in the beauty industry, the market scale, and future development prospects of social media content marketing, this paper comes up with the strategies and existing problems of using social media marketing by Colorkey and beauty

brands. And based on these studies, optimization schemes are proposed for the existing problems.

3 Results

3.1 Colorkey's brand development status

Colorkey is a make-up brand founded by Meishang (Guangzhou) Cosmetics Co. Ltd. in 2018. It integrates the world's top suppliers and brings together experts in various fields such as cosmetics, fashion, design, and quality control. The frenetic color burns the world and unlocks young women's self-independent and cool beauty.

In the short years since its establishment, according to Colorkey's official announcement, the brand's annual sales have grown steadily, from 300 million sales at the beginning of its establishment in 2018 to nearly 1 billion in 2019 and then to 2020. The sales volume of the flagship store on Tmall exceeded 15.5 million, and it was firmly ranked as the TOP 1 in the lip gloss category of Tmall make-up category. In the highly competitive domestic beauty market, the vertical growth of sales has enabled Colorkey to gradually catch up with other top domestic beauty brands, such as Perfect Diary and Huaxizi, in just a few years. Because of its rapid expansion, it has great potential among domestic make-up brands. At the same time, whether it is Weibo, Xiaohongshu, or TikTok, the mainstream social media software, Colorkey is also a face that often appears, making it a model for social media marketing.

3.2 Colorkey's Social Media Marketing Strategy

3.2.1 Enter the short video platform.

Like many cosmetics brands, Colorkey has settled in major short video platforms in China. Establishing official brand accounts, it publishes products and content and carries out the corresponding marketing and promotion. Taking TikTok as an example, as of August 26, 2022, Colorkey's official account has had 2,122,500 followers. It is ranking in the beauty category has surpassed Perfect Diary and Huaxizi, the leading domestic beauty brands. It has become the top domestic beauty brand on the list and ranked more than Armani, Lancome, Dior, YSL, and other well-known foreign brands, ranking fourth on the list. The popularity index of the brand's official account is 216,000, an increase of 2.40% compared with other beauty brands on the list. According to the big data weighting algorithm principle of the brand hot bucket list, it can be seen that the official brand account of Colorkey ranks at the forefront of the beauty category in video production, consumption, and video discussion on the vibrato platform. And the popularity of video content released on the vibrato platform keeps rising instead of falling and growing steadily. This can greatly improve the pushing and spreading of product content. Besides TikTok, Colorkey has done well on other new media platforms. Take Xiaohongshu as an example, the number of users of Xiaohongshu has reached 250 million in early 2019, of which more than 90% are women and more than 70% are the young. Such groups naturally have huge demand for American products. Colorkey has

217,000 fans on the official account of XiaohongBook, nearly thousands of notes have been shared, and 1.22 million likes and collections have been obtained.

3.2.2 Cooperation with KOL accounts.

The normalized promotion of beauty products is based on the positioning and quality of beauty products, looking for KOL accounts in the beauty industry to cooperate to increase advertising investment. Colorkey is also the same. In 2021, Colorkey partnered with the head beauty KOL expert “Huang Hao Li Hai” on the TikTok platform to promote a new series of lip glazes, “Black Satin Lip Glaze”. It has achieved outstanding results of 60,000 likes for a single video, about 9,000 products sold on the platform, and cumulative sales of nearly 700,000 yuan. Colorkey, which has achieved excellent results in the normal media delivery strategy, is different from other beauty brands in extensive media delivery. It is not limited to traditional marketing methods. It chooses to escape the inertia of beauty brands in marketing delivery. On the TikTok platform, Colorkey makes effective use of fan portraits. In cooperation with KOL accounts, Colorkey chooses to find KOL accounts that are highly compatible with fan portraits and products. Under the premise of not destroying KOL’s content style, the product is softly embedded in the content created by KOL for promotion. Compared with other brands, which are based on the attributes of products, Colorkey’s move is based on the attributes of fans. From the perspective of delivery effect, although the sales volume of non-vertical accounts such as dramas is not as good as that of vertical accounts such as beauty, it has achieved a huge breakthrough in brand exposure and promotion effect.

3.2.3 Live Online Sales.

In 2018, Colorkey entered Taobao at the beginning of its establishment and used the form of online live broadcasts to promote new products, conduct live make-up tutorials, and live color tests. Live broadcast sales are more interactive than tedious online browsing and purchasing products. In the trial and explanation of beauty bloggers, consumers can fully understand the functions and effects of products. Colorkey evaluates product performance and compares it with other similar products on TikTok and Taobao through live broadcasts by merchants, users and celebrities, intuitively summarizes the consumption experience, guides consumers to consume, and accumulates loyal fans of the brand. It uses the low-price sales of beauty video live broadcasts as a selling point to attract young customers with low spending power. By cleverly seizing the consumer objects that match its products and taking advantage of the brand’s price to gain a firm position in the market. And through the form of live video, the brand topic Weibo and TikTok have been screened. Live broadcast marketing has low-cost and high-income characteristics as a new social media marketing method. It is a unique and extremely cost-effective marketing method for social media marketing. Colorkey has achieved great advantages in social media marketing with the help of live broadcasts and has attracted a group of consumers.

3.2.4 Cooperate with different IP.

In order to increase the brand's topicality on social media and improve brand awareness, Colorkey has cooperated with a large number of different IPs (intellectual properties), launched different series of co-branded products for co-branded marketing, and used the synergistic communication effect between brands to help the brand get out of its original promotion circle. Based on effectively realizing the interaction between different audience groups and the interconnection of consumer groups, Colorkey breaks through the boundaries between brands and scenes, using IP and social media platforms to create new selling points. For example, the "HelloKitty series joint lip glaze" was jointly launched with Japan's Sanrio, and the "Pikachu series" was jointly launched with the classic animation Digimon. Borrowing co-branded products to tap potential consumers that may exist in other groups, and using IP's background and communication advantages on social media platforms for secondary diffusion, enhance brand awareness and product sales.

4 Discussion

4.1 Colorkey's problems with social media marketing

4.1.1 Too much marketing leads to a decline in consumer favorability.

Colorkey knows that marketing plays an important role and significance for brand development in the beauty industry. Therefore, Colorkey has implemented the concept of "marketing is king" in the process of social media marketing. The choice of this strategy has indeed played a very positive role in the growth of Colorkey. But from the prospectus of domestic beauty brands in recent years, facing the environment of increasingly expensive traffic, many domestic beauty brands still choose to spend more money on promotion, but the effect is small. Statistics show that the marketing expenditure of a beauty brand soared from 1.25 billion yuan in 2019 to 2.05 billion yuan in 2020, but the increase of 800 million yuan only attracted 100,000 new customers. This proves that simply relying on too much marketing is no longer a wise thing to do. For example, on social media such as TikTok, Colorkey's intensive push of short videos to promote brand content has had the opposite effect. Although high-frequency content push can increase the brand's exposure in a short period. However, excessive marketing has reduced consumers' favorability of the brand. Studies have shown that consumers are mostly skeptical or negative about over-marketing brands, and some consumers even think that the quality of their branded products is defective. Colorkey's intensive marketing on social media has largely reduced the impact of its advertising on consumers. At the same time, in terms of cognition affects consumers' judgment of the brand. When advertisements flood consumers' social media, it is easy to stimulate consumers' resistance to the brand, which negatively impacts Colorkey's long-term stable development.

4.1.2 Hard to get rid of the labels of celebrities and influencers.

Colorkey mainly relies on online marketing, cooperates with KOLs to recommend products, and invites celebrities as its brand spokespersons to sell products through the “fan economy”. Brands do gain support from their fans in the short term. But the influence of celebrities and KOLs generally only have short-term effects. There are countless internet celebrities born in the era of live short videos and countless outdated internet celebrities who have been eliminated. The establishment of a brand image should start from the brand itself rather than blindly consuming external traffic so the brand does not attract consumers. Internet celebrities bringing goods has also become the most common way to bring goods in the new media era. You can see Internet celebrities bringing goods by opening live broadcasts on social media. Other brands use the same method and can also see Colorkey’s marketing method. At the same time, the labels of Internet celebrities and celebrities can blur the brand image, and people tend to have less positive associations when they see such endorsement products.

4.1.3 Product quality can’t keep up with the speed of promotion.

Although online marketing can inform consumers about a brand, attracting consumers to repurchase or get a higher degree of recognition is still in the control of product quality. If a brand focuses on product promotion and not product quality, the more publicity it makes, the more disgusting consumers will be.

Data shows that in 2020, the R&D expense rate of domestic top beauty brands is 1.28%, accounting for only 1/50 of marketing expenses [5]. The Internet is full of consumer complaints about products, and they even call it “marketing with heart and products with feet”, Colorkey is also one of them. Consumer dissatisfaction has a lot to do with insufficient R&D investment by brands. Moreover, most domestic beauty brands are currently produced by agency factories. Although it can reduce costs and improve price competitiveness, it is also prone to quality problems. Brands represented by Colorkey have fully captured the psychology of consumers through various promotions and price reductions. At first, consumers may buy branded products, but from the quality point of view, one purchase may be enough to persuade them to quit. This will affect the repurchase rate and the brand’s reputation, which will have a negative impact on the brand.

4.2 Colorkey’s social media marketing optimization strategy

4.2.1 Implement moderate marketing.

Moderate marketing strategy means that in order to achieve marketing goals, marketers spread the right information in the right scenario (time and space of distribution) with the right product at the right price, market it to the right people, and give them a reason to buy and let them buy. They perceive the existence of this reason to realize customer value and customer satisfaction [6]. Although Colorkey’s current marketing method is effective, long-term implementation will inevitably be tired of user groups and consumers. Therefore, it is necessary to choose a cost-effective marketing method, reduce the number of advertisements, highlight the advantages of domestic brands,

seize the brand characteristics of precision marketing, improve the quality of publicity, accurately push advertisements to target groups at the right time and place, and arouse their desire for consumption. The specific methods can refer to the following: (1) Focus on establishing a sound marketing mechanism. Strengthen the training of marketing personnel to improve their professional level in marketing; establish a sound assessment mechanism for marketing personnel. Expand the assessment indicators, and give material and spiritual rewards to promote the improvement of marketing personnel's work enthusiasm. (2) Strengthen the scientific implementation of brand strategy, strengthen communication with other domestic beauty brands, and focus on the coordinated development strategy of brands; in terms of brand promotion, focus on establishing brand image. (3) Adhere to the sustainable network marketing strategy. In product promotion, the principle of seeking truth from facts should be adhered to, and the product's efficacy should not be arbitrarily exaggerated. In the marketing promotion, the product's unique selling point should be highlighted to attract consumers' attention; to achieve green marketing, do not make false publicity, and avoid using short-term marketing [7]. (4) Focus on publicity on "domestic beauty brands". Based on the consumption habits of domestic consumers and the usage habits of social media platforms, the publicity methods are simplified and accurate delivery is achieved. At the same time, it can use domestic unique materials, such as domestic IP, domestic channels such as bilibili video platform, etc., to closely combine its own advantages with the actual situation of domestic beauty brands, so as to maximize the marketing effect.

4.2.2 Improve product quality.

Product quality greatly impacts the repurchase rate and brand reputation [8]. Therefore, the following optimization suggestions are put forward to Colorkey: (1) Increase investment in research and development. The cosmetics industry is a technology-intensive industry with relatively high requirements for technology and machinery. Only mature technology and high-quality machines can produce good products. (2) Establish a consumer feedback platform. Receive and analyze consumer feedback in real-time, solve problems and implement them on products, improve the sense of the use of products, and allow consumers to respond to feedback. (3) Establish a comprehensive quality management system applicable to the enterprise. (4) Establish a strategy of full participation in total quality management, and adopt incentive policies to encourage all employees to participate in quality control work [9].

4.2.3 Adjust the brand positioning and enhance the level of the brand.

If Colorkey wants to become the market leader, it must transform and upgrade the brand. Faced with the market situation where local beauty brands can only retreat to low-end products in the Chinese beauty market, Colorkey's brand upgrade road is more and more challenging. If Colorkey wants to go out of the domestic market and enter the international market, it needs to improve the brand's style and the brand's market positioning. In the face of the marketing chaos on social media platforms, Colorkey needs to remove the labeling and promote the brand. Labels such as "new cutting-edge" and "personality" replace the original label of "low-cost substitute for high-end

brands”, adjust the brand’s marketing strategy in the market, cancel the original imitation marketing strategy, and strive to become the leading brand in the beauty industry.

4.2.4 Expand new marketing channels.

Although Colorkey was born on the Internet, and the social media marketing model has a good effect in the early stage, a single marketing model is not conducive to the long-term development of a brand. Online and offline publicity have their advantages. Online publicity has no time and geographical restrictions, while offline can enhance customers’ experience. Therefore, Colorkey can consider a combination of online and offline methods [10]. Use the official accounts of the brand’s major platforms to promote offline activities and encourage fans from all over the world to go to the offline event site to purchase with the help of new product trials, feedback from old customers, offline discounts, and other methods. Customers who purchase products can receive small beauty gifts by forwarding the publicity to their circle of friends, thereby attracting more local customers to buy products.

5 Conclusion

With the improvement of people’s living standards and the gradual increase in purchasing power, women’s demand for color cosmetics products has gradually increased, which has brought development opportunities for establishing and developing domestic color cosmetics brands. Colorkey, as a hot domestic beauty brand, bears the important task of the rise of China’s domestic make-up and has won a place in the fierce beauty market with its extremely high-cost performance and the use of social media marketing. Social media marketing has entered a new stage, and domestic beauty brands represented by Colorkey have also exposed their problems. Therefore, brands should increase investment in research and development, improve product quality, and strictly control the production and research and development of products. The quality of the product directly determines the reputation of the brand. In marketing, brands should pay attention to appropriate marketing, combine online and offline, and expand new marketing channels. Faced with all kinds of doubts, brands should respond with actions, expand offline while maintaining their advantages in online new media channels, and achieve the best integration of online and offline operations. At the same time, the brand should change its marketing model and stop relying on the traffic of KOLs and celebrities to sell products. It is hoped that domestic beauty brands represented by Colorkey can fully improve their deficiencies and make domestic make-up bigger and better in the context of social media marketing.

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