



Analysis of Brand Crossover Co-branding Marketing Strategies Take Uniqlo as an Example

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Abstract. This paper firstly adopts a combination of literature research and case study method to analyze the current situation of cross-border marketing of brands, based on which the main marketing model of cross-border marketing, the DFA (Differentiation-Freshness-Approbation model) model, is established. Through a specific analysis of the current background, brand needs and marketing strategies of Uniqlo brand, the cross-border co-branding approach used by Uniqlo brand was further verified by substituting it into the DFA model, and the final conclusion is that cross-border marketing not only needs to conform to the DFA model, but also needs to continuously refine the tonality between brands in the marketing process based on the DFA model, create its unique cultural attributes and enhance its brand marketing influence.

Keywords: cross-border marketing · Uniqlo · marketing strategy

1 Introduction

Under the rapid development of the Internet era, the competition in the economic market is intensifying, and the needs of consumers are constantly upgrading, and in order to cope with the changes in the market, enterprises are constantly seeking new marketing methods and strategies, thus the cross-border marketing model between brands has also emerged. In recent years, the cross-border marketing model of brands has become a common economic phenomenon, but from the current point of view there are also some problems. Such as some cross-border marketing did not achieve good marketing effects in marketing, noise for a while, but ultimately did not produce good marketing effects, the second is the brand side in cross-border marketing loss of subjectivity, so that the marketing effect did not achieve optimal. In this article, we take the collaboration between Uniqlo and Ultraman to launch a joint collection as a concrete example, and use the DFA model as a guide to further explore the new marketing strategy of cross-border marketing.

2 The Current State of Cross-Border Marketing for Brands

2.1 Background of Cross-Border Co-branding Marketing

Cross-border marketing is a marketing approach that combines brands from different industries based on the same or similar consumer points and combines them in the form of co-branding with their respective representative products.

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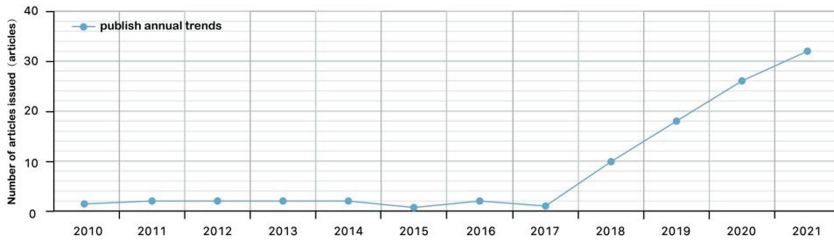


Fig. 1. Trend in the number of articles published on cross border co-branding themes (Data from HowNet)

The term ‘co-branding’ has its roots in the history of fashion, dating back to the 1930s. The brand’s master designer, Italian designer Elsa Schiaparelli, first conceived of the idea of co-branding in 1937 with fellow surrealist Salvador Dalí in the form of the eye-catching “lobster suit” [1]. The “lobster suit” was a refreshing change of pace for the public at the time. In 1965 Pop artist Andy Warhol’s ‘Campbell’s Soup’ was co-branded with a clothing manufacturer, resulting in the ‘Campbell’s Soup Dress’. -The Souper Dress’, for example. As can be seen, co-branding began as a grafting of artworks onto clothing brands, and eventually became a manifestation of the spiritual and material values of the brands’ IPs in the process of interpenetration.

2.2 Analysis of the Current State of Cross-Border Co-branding Marketing

A search of the Knowledges database (deadline 1 July 2021, all literature from 2000 onwards) using the keyword cross-border joint names detected a total of 75 relevant results. Of these, 62 were journals; 8 were master’s theses; and 5 were in the newspaper category. Analysing the published literature data of cross-border marketing in the past 10 years (as shown in Fig. 1), it can be found that the number of papers related to cross-border marketing started to show an upward trend gradually after 2017, after showing a flat trend before 2017. It can be seen that as the cross-border co-branding of brands is gradually and commonly used in the Internet, the related literature is also gradually rising. Analysis of cross-border co-branding theme distribution to obtain keywords (as shown in Fig. 2), respectively: consumers, cross-border co-branding, co-branded line cards, co-branded cards, cross-border marketing, brand image, fashion brands, the Great White Rabbit milk sugar, strategic marketing and so on (as shown in Fig. 3). Based on this, further analysis of the top ten keywords publication number trend graph, it can be seen that from an overall perspective, the number of comparative keyword publication also shows an upward trend. The data shows that cross-border co-branding is still a hot marketing approach in marketing strategies and is likely to remain a key form of marketing performance in the coming years.

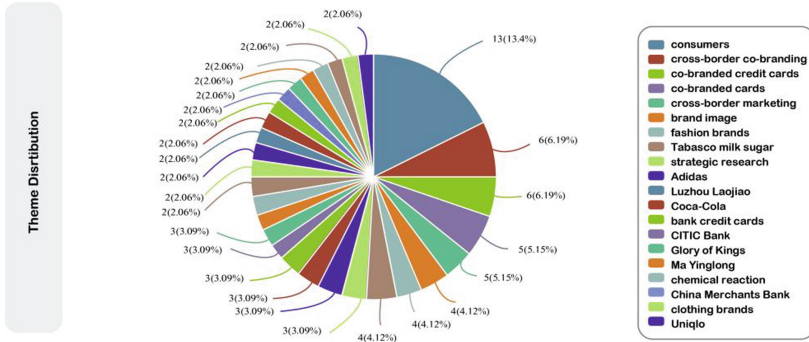


Fig. 2. Cross-border co-branding theme distribution and keyword acquisition (Data from HowNet)

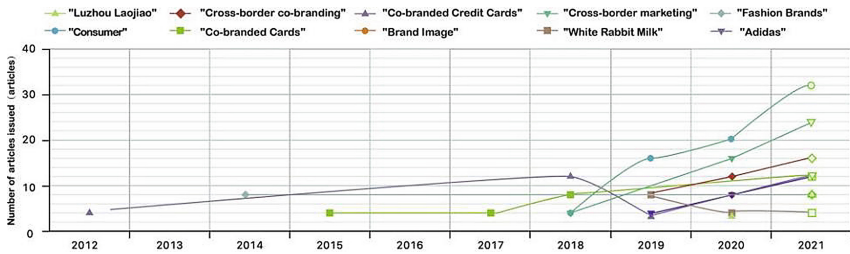


Fig. 3. Trends in the number of publications for the top ten keywords (Data from HowNet)

3 Cross-Border Marketing Tools - DFA Model

The AIDA model, also known as the “AIDA” formula, is based on the marketing model summarised by international marketing expert Heinz M. Goldman, and refers specifically to the four processes that consumers generally go through in the process of consumption: Attention, Interest, Desire and Action. Interest, Desire and Action [8].

Based on the AIDA model, the author further proposes the DFA model (as shown in Fig. 4), which means that the cross-border marketing of brands is essentially accomplished through three aspects, namely (1) the brands in the co-branding can clearly present “differentiation” (Differentiation); (2) The co-branded product then creates a “freshness” in the consumer’s mind about the original brand concept.; and (3) the consumer’s sense of identification with the co-branding and the product. These three aspects complement each other to make the brand co-branding more effective.

Specifically, there are three aspects to thinking about cross-border co-branding from three different perspectives. The first aspect - that the brand in the co-branding can clearly present “Differentiation” - is to think from the brand’s perspective and answer the question of what and how the brand should ask in the cross-border co-branding. The first step is why? The explanation for “differentiation” is that differentiation in itself is a symbol of brand independence, and that the reason why many big brands are invincible in the market is that they are able to capture the characteristics of brand differentiation.

The most important reason why small brands are popular is that they do not see through the surface of things, do not grasp the essence of things, grasp the variety, not the core and unique. Therefore, differentiation is an important factor in differentiating a brand from other brands, and it is also an important point in not losing dominance in brand co-branding. Only with differentiation will the brand not lose its distinctiveness and independence in the first step of co-branding. What is the second step? "Differentiation" is explained by the fact that a brand needs to capture the attributes that best reflect the brand according to the corresponding attributes of the brand, and then make the most of this, i.e. the brand is differentiated.

The second aspect - that the co-branded product then creates a 'freshness' in the consumer's perception of the original brand concept as an innovation - is mainly thought of in terms of the product produced, answering the question of what the product needs to have when it is sold. It is an important factor in the selling of a product. "Freshness" is not limited to the novelty of something, but rather to whether the product can be sparked by the collision between two brands. The product itself is a representation of the brand's philosophy, and where old ideas have failed to create new consumer desire, brand co-branding allows the product itself to draw on the commonalities between the two brands in the co-branding. When working together, brands must take into account the tone of voice between them, whether they have common values or whether they are in a complementary position in terms of consumer orientation. After considering these factors, the products of the two brands need to reflect the characteristics of the two brands, or how to combine the two brands into one tone, and the second need to compromise at the same time also need to pay attention to whether the products reflect the image of the two brands, if only focus on reflecting the image of one of the two brands, and weaken the side of the consumer will be difficult to buy for products that do not match the brand concept. By taking these factors into account, the co-branded product will not compromise the original design concept, but at the same time add new design ideas that will give the original brand a new lease of life, which in turn will give consumers a sense of freshness that will translate into consumer power to buy the product.

The third aspect - the consumer's sense of identity (Approbation) with the brand association and the product - is mainly from the point of view of the consumer who buys the product, answering a psychological question that arises when the consumer buys again. The third and most important aspect is that of the product. In economics, Marx states that "the W-G is the thrilling leap of the commodity, a leap which, if unsuccessful, breaks not the commodity, but certainly the owner of the commodity." In the same way, the success of a thrilling leap for a commodity depends to a large extent on whether the consumer is willing to pay for the commodity, i.e. whether the brand association, the product, conveys a sense of 'identity'. From the consumer's point of view, the first two aspects are also important factors in whether consumers express a sense of identity and whether they buy the product. Therefore, all three aspects are essential to the co-branding. The three aspects are also a cycle, from the brand to the product to the consumer, and if this round of co-branding is successful, the next cycle from the brand to the consumer will follow. The Uniqlo co-branded collection is a very clear example of the DUF model.

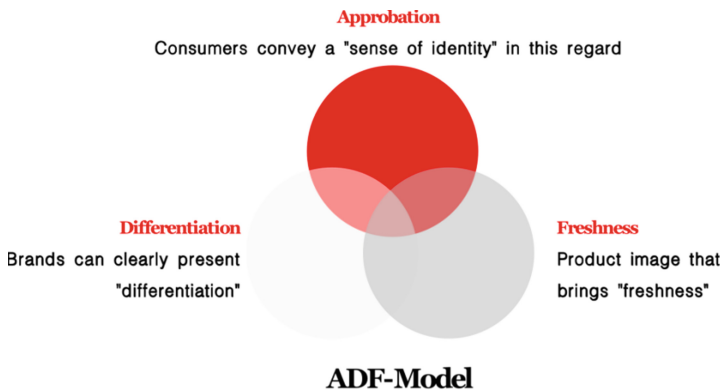


Fig. 4. DFA model graphics (self-painted)

4 Analysis of the DAF Model for Cross-Brand Co-branding: The Case of Uniqlo

The Uniqlo and Ultraman co-branded series in the case is mainly marketed by co-branding the clothing with animated scenes. The marketing video presents a scene from Uniqlo's reenactment of Ultraman, in which an evil force is about to attack the Uniqlo building, followed by Ultraman appearing on time to protect the Uniqlo building. By evoking the memories of consumers as a marketing point to attract them to buy. And through this approach has been recognized by the majority of netizens, netizens have said after watching it, "This ad is surprisingly better than the main show," and also teased, "I didn't expect that the first time Deja fought with Belial was in the Uniqlo ad." Ultraman, the animation, should be said to have been throughout the childhood from post-90s to post-00s and even post-10s, which shows its huge fan base.

The UT collection is mainly "simple" in style, and this time the Ultraman T-shirt is also a simple print with a classic anime character scene. UNIQLO has long been collaborating with these established and famous IPs, in order to borrow the traffic and popularity of these IPs, to awaken the childhood feelings of the audience, and to enhance the presence of the UT collection in the meantime. Secondly, it is also to boost the brand's sales and occupy a certain position in the fast fashion market through the linked marketing of these IP co-branding collaborations, coupled with the exclusive prices of the UT collection.

Analysed in the DFA model, the cross-border marketing approach of Uniqlo and Ultraman also basically meets the three characteristics of Differentiation, Freshness and the three characteristics of the crossover marketing approach are "Differentiation", "Freshness" and "Approxobation". From the aspect of Differentiation, the Uniqlo and Ultraman co-branding is different from the luxury models or designer co-branding in apparel co-branding. It is more about pursuing different ideas and style, forming a new tone and attraction for the consumer brand, and then making consumers desire to consume and act on this product. In terms of freshness, the co-branding approach was disseminated through the advertising video, which combined the element of Ultraman with UNIQLO's logo, invisibly connecting consumers to the two and capturing the

essence of freshness and trendiness when buying clothes. From the aspect of approval, UNIQLO has not abandoned its original design style, and through the printing method, it has not broken the original UNIQLO's consistent claim of comfort and practicality, but also enabled the brand to make a variety of different styles to try. The aim is to attract different levels of consumers, and then to expand the circle of consumers. Cross-border marketing is not simply a union between two brands, but to better meet the needs of users, so that users have a sense of identity and resonance with the brand, and truly help users to realize the value of landing [2]. In addition, Uniqlo has not lost its dominant position in marketing through the cross-border association with Ultraman. In contrast to another marketing approach, there is a competitive relationship in the marketing of similar products, for example, the milk tea industry, such as the co-branding of tea and tea, the two co-branding needs to pay attention to whether the two achieve a mutually beneficial marketing results, the two are the same brand in the milk tea industry, its own consumer demographic structure similarities, so in the co-branding to break the original consumer perception, but still need to adhere to this The brand personality, not to be co-branded marketing and the loss of its original brand tone, in the further expansion of the brand consumer circle at the same time, grasp the operation of the original consumer crowd, which is also cross-border co-branding need to pay attention to.

5 Conclusion

Cross-border co-branding The current co-branding market still has consumer significance, in the face of a new round of marketing competition, cross-border marketing has become more and more diverse, cross-border co-branding is not only a means of consumer renewal, but also shows the cultural collision between different brands and brand culture [3], and co-branded products not only in the social level to trigger the attention of the consumer masses, but also enrich the cultural connotation of the brand, when cross-border When cross-border marketing becomes part of a brand's marketing approach, the personality of the product that has a good impact can also be developed into one of the brand's tones, expanding the possibilities for the original brand and thus further increasing its influence. However, the DFA model should be met but at the same time attention should be paid to whether there is consistency between the brands in terms of brand image or culture, to meet the mutual benefits between the two brands while creating a better brand culture and image, so as to achieve maximum resource integration.

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