



Airbnb Plus Helps Airbnb Expand Market Share

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Abstract. Airbnb, one of the representatives of the sharing economy, has now achieved remarkable growth worldwide. Since its inception in the United States in 2008, Airbnb has successfully connected travelers and homeowners with empty rooms for rent through its unique model, providing users with a variety of accommodation options. With the ever-changing travel market and the emergence of new competitors, Airbnb needs to continuously innovate and optimize its services to meet users' needs and maintain a competitive edge. This article studies Airbnb plus and compares it with Airbnb and finds that the emergence of the Airbnb plus program has brought brand image and competitiveness enhancement to Airbnb, which makes Airbnb more advantageous in competing with other travel and lodging platforms, and is able to attract more users and partners.

Keywords: Airbnb, Airbnb plus, sharing economy, network effect, Customer satisfaction

1 Introduction

Against the backdrop of globalization, [1] the rapid development of the tourism industry and people's pursuit of personalized and differentiated travel experiences have driven changes in the accommodation booking market. As an important part of the sharing economy, online accommodation booking platforms have gradually risen and received widespread attention. Among them, [2] Airbnb, as one of the world's leading online accommodation booking platforms, has rapidly captured the market and triggered profound changes within the industry by virtue of its innovative business model and superior user experience [3]. Airbnb's success lies not only in its innovative business model [4], but also in its precise grasp of the changing needs of consumers. The traditional hospitality industry often lacks a personalized, localized service experience while meeting consumers' basic accommodation needs. Airbnb, on the other hand, provides more flexible and diversified accommodation options by connecting hosts and tenants [4], and enables travelers to deeply experience local culture and lifestyles. The emergence of this model has not only broken the monopoly of the traditional hotel industry, but also injected new vitality into the development of tourism.

However, with the rapid development of Airbnb, it also faces some challenges and problems. For example, how to ensure the authenticity and safety of the listings, how to maintain the balance of rights and interests between hosts and tenants, and how to optimize the user experience of the platform [4]. The existence of these problems not only affects the sustainable development of Airbnb, but also poses new challenges to the entire online accommodation booking market. After the study of related literature, [5] the Airbnb Plus program has successfully helped Airbnb to expand its market share by improving the quality of its listings, providing host support, marketing and branding, and other aspects. This program has not only enhanced user experience and satisfaction, but also increased the platform's order volume and revenue, laying a solid foundation for Airbnb's continued growth.

An in-depth study of Airbnb not only helps us understand its business model, development strategy and market performance, but also provides us with insights into the sharing economy, online accommodation booking market and consumer behavior. This is of great theoretical and practical significance for understanding the current trends in the tourism industry, promoting innovation and upgrading of the tourism industry, and providing consumers with a better and more personalized travel experience. The purpose of this paper is to investigate how Airbnb plus brings Airbnb an advantage in the sharing market and occupies more market share by studying and understanding the contents and differences between Airbnb plus service and Airbnb basic service.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Sharing Economy

Sharing economy refers to the efficient allocation of resources and maximization of value through the sharing of idle resources, skills and services. [6] Sharing economy connects the supply side and demand side through the internet platform to realize the sharing of resources and mutual benefits. Over the past three decades, with the rapid development of science and technology, especially the popularization of the Internet and mobile Internet, [7] the sharing economy, as a new type of economic form, is rapidly emerging globally. Sharing economy not only changes people's lifestyle, it also has an impact on economic development.

With the continuous progress of technology and the digitization of information products, electronic intermediaries such as Amazon and Google have risen rapidly [8]. Sharing economy started to enter a rapid development stage and more and more sharing economy models emerged such as Airbnb, uber such internet platforms. In the future, [6] the sharing economy will achieve wider coverage and deeper penetration and become an important part of people's daily life.

2.2 Network Effect

The impact of the internet on the lodging industry is the rise of online room-sharing business models. airbnb is the most successful room-sharing platform, [2] it allows

people to rent out their homes for short-term travel purposes, it has changed the way the bed and breakfast industry operates,. It has brought opportunities to B&Bs, but also challenges.

The internet has increased the exposure and visibility of B&Bs. Through online platforms, B&Bs are able to easily reach potential customers worldwide and attract more tourists to choose their accommodation. In addition, the Internet provides B&Bs with more convenient and faster booking and payment methods, which increases the booking rate and revenue of B&Bs. Secondly, the Internet provides more intelligent management tools for B&Bs. [7] Through data analysis and marketing tools, B&B operators can more accurately understand the needs of customers and develop more effective marketing strategies and service programs. At the same time, the Internet can also help B&Bs automate booking and customer management to improve operational efficiency and service quality.

However, the Internet also brings certain risks and challenges to B&B operation and management. Problems such as cybersecurity and false evaluations have brought some pressure on B&B operation management[7]. In addition, the number of B&Bs on the Internet platform is large and the competition is exceptionally fierce, and B&Bs need to constantly innovate and improve their service quality in order to stand out in the market.

2.3 Airbnb

Airbnb stands for AirBed and Breakfast, and the company's main service is to provide travelers around the world with information about diverse accommodations and help them with the online booking process through its website and mobile apps. [9]On Airbnb, travelers can find and book various types of accommodations such as apartments, villas, houses, B&Bs, rooms, and more. In addition to accommodation booking services, Airbnb also offers other travel-related services such as finding local experiences such as food tours, cultural tours, outdoor adventures, and more. In addition, it provides travelers with several travel-related tools and resources such as trip planning, budget estimation, and social media sharing. [3] provides a convenient and diversified accommodation booking platform for global travelers, as well as an opportunity for landlords to rent out their vacant properties to travelers.

According to [10], Airbnb was founded in 2008, and as of 2017 it has more than 1 million hosts offering more than 3 million properties in 52 countries and 150,000 cities, especially after 2011, the number of Airbnb listings has increased by as much as 30 times. Compare this to the hotel industry, such as Marriott, which was founded in 1972 and has over 6,500 hotels in 130 countries and territories. [4] The fact that Airbnb has all these resources in less than 20 years is enough to show that it is growing very fast.

Airbnb's innovative services are manifested in several ways, and these innovations have not only changed the way people travel and stay, but also created new value and experiences for hosts and travelers [4]. Firstly, [10] Airbnb adopts a sharing economy model, matching idle resources with demanders through an online platform to

maximize the use of resources and economic efficiency. This model breaks the boundaries of the traditional hotel industry, providing travelers with more diverse and personalized accommodation options [3], while also creating an additional source of income for hosts.

Secondly, Airbnb has established a comprehensive trust mechanism to ensure the security of transactions between hosts and tenants. Hosts need to pass cell phone verification and identity verification, while tenants can learn about the host's reputation by checking the host's reviews and communication records. This trust mechanism enhances the sense of trust between users and improves the security and reliability of transactions. In addition, [11] Airbnb also provides rich listing information and user reviews to help users make better choices. Users can choose different types of listings according to their needs [1], such as apartments, villas, and single-family houses, and they can learn about the actual conditions of the listings by checking the reviews of other users. This transparent presentation of information increases user satisfaction and trust.

Airbnb's innovative services cover a wide range of aspects such as the sharing economy model, trust mechanisms, personalized choices, diverse payments and cultural cooperation. These innovations not only enhance user satisfaction and experience, but also promote the change and development of the travel and accommodation market.

2.4 Airbnb Plus

Airbnb Plus is a new grading standard introduced by Airbnb for hosts looking for more aesthetically pleasing listings, better service, and a more soothing lodging experience. [5] There is a "+" badge on the Airbnb platform. Each Airbnb Plus-qualified listing has been hand-selected to meet more than 100 strict requirements for cleanliness, comfort and design. These listings are also unique in terms of design, aiming to give users a refreshing experience. Specifically, [5] Airbnb Plus listings offer more diverse products and equipment, such as irons and hairdryers, cooking facilities, high-speed Wi-Fi, etc., to ensure a great stay for tenants. At the same time, [12] hosts are required to provide complete kitchenware dishes, keep the refrigerator clean and free of dirt, bedrooms need to be equipped with closets and ironing boards, provide clean bath towels and toiletries, etc., and even the mattresses must meet certain standards. In addition, [5] hosts must also have a guest rating of 4.8 or higher, which guarantees the quality of the host's service.

Airbnb Plus not only provides a quality accommodation experience for tenants, but also brings many advantages for hosts. [13] Eligible listings will be featured on the Airbnb Plus page, enjoying the best listing promotion resources, including design consultation, high standard photography services and exclusive customer service support. This helps to increase the exposure of the listings and attract more potential tenants.

Airbnb Plus, an innovative service launched by Airbnb to meet the needs of high-end travelers, provides hosts and tenants with a better accommodation experience through strict screening and quality services [13]. In addition to the basic

accommodation booking service, Airbnb has introduced many innovative additional services. For example, it offers a variety of payment methods and special offers to meet the needs of different users. At the same time, Airbnb has also launched a series of unique "ace" listings and experiences in cooperation with cultural IPs around the world, bringing travelers an unprecedented stay experience.

2.5 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction refers to the index of a customer's perceived effect of a product compared to his or her expectations [14]. Customer satisfaction is of paramount importance to organizations. Firstly, [15]customer satisfaction helps to promote customer loyalty by building stable customer relationships, enhancing customers' trust and reliance on the firm, which in turn increases the probability of customers repurchasing and recommending the product or service, reduces churn, and saves the firm marketing costs. Secondly, customer satisfaction helps companies to solve customer problems and feedback in a timely manner, so that they can better understand the market demand and improve their products or services. In addition, customer satisfaction is also an important reflection of the brand image and reputation of the enterprise, through the provision of high-quality products and services and the establishment of effective customer relations, the enterprise can enhance its own brand image and reputation, to attract more potential customers.

To improve customer satisfaction, companies can adopt a variety of strategies, [15] such as maintaining good communication and feedback mechanisms, responding to customers' questions, suggestions and complaints in a timely manner, and continuously improving their products or services based on customer feedback; providing customized services, and offering personalized products or services based on customers' specific needs; develop contingency plans to deal with customer complaints in a timely manner to ensure that customer issues can be resolved within a short period of timer.

Customer satisfaction is a complex and multidimensional concept that is influenced by numerous factors [14]. Among these factors, the following are usually considered to be the most influential on satisfaction: product quality, service quality, price and value perception, brand image and reputation, and customer expectations and fulfillment. The importance of factors may vary from customer to customer, [15] therefore companies need to consider multiple factors when measuring customer satisfaction and make targeted improvements and optimizations based on the characteristics of their target customer groups.

3 Discussion

Hypothesis 1: The growth rate of service satisfaction of Airbnb plus is higher than the service satisfaction of Airbnb.

In February 2018, Airbnb launched Airbnb Plus, the brand's highest quality accommodation for guests looking for a beautifully decorated and comfortable place to stay. Compared to the standardized Airbnb services, Airbnb plus has adopted more multiple strategies and measures in optimizing the user experience [13], such as authenticity of listings, personalized listings, quality customer service, cultural depth, and safety and security, etc., which are carried out throughout the entire process of the user from searching for a listing to completing the stay.

The first is to ensure the authenticity of listing photos and descriptions. Airbnb plus assists hosts to provide high quality, authentic listing photos and detailed description information, which helps users to better understand the listing and increase booking satisfaction [15]. Landlords are provided with the best resources for the promotion of their listings such as design consultation, high standard photography services and exclusive customer service support. The provision of these resources [12] enables landlords to better showcase the features and advantages of their listings, and at the same time, landlords participating in the plus program must have a tenant rating of 4.8 or higher, which helps to build a trusting relationship between users and the platform. The second is personalized listing recommendations, in which Airbnb uses intelligent algorithms to recommend the listings that best meet users' needs based on their search history, preferences and behavior. This personalized recommendation greatly saves users' search time and improves the success rate of booking. The third is quality customer service. Airbnb plus provides consumers with more intimate customer service, professional and efficient customer service team [13], which is able to answer users' questions and deal with users' complaints and problems in a timely manner. It helps to increase user satisfaction and loyalty. The fourth is the introduction of socialization and local culture. Airbnb also introduces local social and interactive features, more intimate weekly host services, direct communication with hosts, local activity recommendations, etc., which makes the travel experience richer and more interesting. Airbnb Plus also focuses on integrating with the local culture to provide a unique local experience for hosts [13]. This experience not only allows hosts to gain a deeper understanding of the local customs, but also makes their travel experience richer and more memorable. This unique experience is also one of the most important factors in increasing consumer satisfaction. The fifth is diverse security measures. In order to protect the rights and safety of users, Airbnb has taken a series of measures, such as a strict listing audit system, identity verification system, insurance program and so on. These measures help reduce users' perception of risk and increase confidence in using the platform.

The company's data shows that [16]. The 10 markets with the most Airbnb Plus listings are Los Angeles, Cape Town, Rome, Melbourne, London, Sydney, Shanghai, Austin, Bali and Toronto. Globally, [12] the number of Airbnb Plus listings has grown by 800%, from 2,000 to more than 15,000. [16] Airbnb has launched Airbnb Plus in 164 cities around the world and plans to expand Airbnb Plus to more than 700 cities around the world. A global survey by Airbnb showed that Airbnb Plus listings receive nine times more online views than regular listings, with booking rates increasing by 70 percent.

The relationship between service quality and consumer satisfaction is evident in Airbnb Plus, a special grading standard on the Airbnb platform. [13]Airbnb Plus not only provides more aesthetically pleasing listings and excellent service, but also ensures that tenants can enjoy a more comfortable stay. There is undoubtedly a strong positive correlation between this fully upgraded service model and consumer satisfaction[14].

Hypothesis 2: Airbnb with exceptional local experiences is more likely to attract travelers who prefer in-depth travel experiences.

With the rapid development of the global tourism industry and consumers' escalating demand for travel experiences [9], travelers are no longer satisfied with traditional hotel accommodations, but are more inclined to look for accommodations that are more unique and closer to local life [1]. Against this backdrop, Airbnb has quickly emerged as the preferred choice of many travelers with its unique shared accommodation model.

Airbnb offers a lodging experience that is very different from traditional hotels, [9]emphasizing integration with local culture and providing travelers with an opportunity to deeply experience the local lifestyle. This special local experience not only includes accommodations with local characteristics, but may also include in-depth exchanges with hosts, participation in local cultural activities, and tasting authentic cuisine. This type of experience allows travelers to gain a deeper understanding of the local culture and the unique charms of different regions.

Airbnb is undoubtedly highly attractive to travelers who prefer in-depth travel experiences. They are no longer looking for a simple accommodation, but want to know more about the culture and lifestyle of a city or region, and Airbnb makes it easier for travelers to have this kind of in-depth travel experience by connecting hosts and travelers and providing a platform for both parties to get to know each other and communicate with each other [9].

4 Conclusion

The study of Airbnb is of great practical significance in promoting the innovation and upgrading of the tourism industry, enhancing consumer experience and promoting sustainable economic development. Through the research on Airbnb and Airbnb plus, we can explore how to provide more flexible and diversified accommodation choices under the premise of guaranteeing the authenticity and safety of the listings; how to optimize the user experience of the platform to enhance consumer satisfaction and loyalty; and how to balance the rights and interests of the hosts and tenants to promote the sustainable development of the platform. These research results can not only provide reference for Airbnb's own development, but also provide useful inspiration and reference for the development of the entire tourism industry. Through in-depth analysis of its business model, development strategy and market performance, we can better understand the development law of sharing economy and online

accommodation booking market, and provide strong support and guarantee for promoting the innovation, upgrading and sustainable development of the tourism industry.

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