The Marketing Ideas and Strategies of Live Broadcast Delivery Based on Consumer Psychology

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Abstract. Live broadcast e-commerce has developed rapidly, which has also attracted the attention of many researchers. However, most studies do not fully consider the psychology of consumers. This paper analyzes three marketing methods commonly used in live broadcasting: scarcity marketing, authority marketing and interactive marketing, and explains the psychological mechanism behind them, such as scarcity effect, loss aversion and trust transfer. Based on these analyses, this paper finds three main problems: poor product quality makes consumers lose trust; Impulsive buying and regret lead to high return rate. Additionally, all the live rooms look the same, boring consumers. To solve these problems, this paper puts forward three suggestions: first, the anchor should show the production process of the product, so as to build trust. Second, slow down the pace and explain the product in detail so that consumers will not regret buying it. Third, let the audience choose different viewing angles, and everyone can watch the live broadcast in their own way. These suggestions aim to help the live streaming industry focus more on long-term relationships with consumers instead of just quick sales.

Keywords: Live Streaming e-Commerce, Consumer Psychology, Scarcity Marketing, Trust Mechanism, Impulsive Buying

1 Introduction

Live e-commerce has become a major force in China's retail landscape. From 2019 to 2024, the market scale increased by more than 12 times, and by 2025, it has exceeded 5 trillion yuan, accounting for nearly one third of online retail sales, with an estimated 660 million users [1]. This new type of business has played a positive role in promoting consumption, expanding employment and economic development.

However, the live delivery of goods not only affects consumers' attention, emotion and decision-making impulse, but also faces a series of challenges: false publicity and product quality problems lead to the loss of consumers' trust [2]. The high return rate after impulsive consumption affects the efficiency of the industry [3]. The homogenization of content in the live studio is serious, and consumers are gradually suffering from aesthetic fatigue. To a large extent, these problems lie in the fact that practitioners' cognition of consumer psychology remains on the surface control of rapid transaction, lacking understanding of deep psychological needs.

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With the development of practice, academia has paid great attention to live e-commerce. Existing studies are mainly carried out from the perspectives of marketing strategy, anchor characteristics, trust mechanism, and Consumer Regret. However, there are still two deficiencies in the existing research: first, the integration of the perspective of consumer psychology needs to be strengthened; second, most suggestions are too broad, such as strengthening supervision and improving content quality, and failing to design targeted strategies from the perspective of consumer psychology.

Based on this, this paper focus on the following questions: what psychological needs of consumers have been hit by the marketing measures of live broadcasting with goods? What psychological conflicts are caused by current practice? How to design optimization strategies from the perspective of consumer psychology?

The structure is arranged as follows: the next part discusses the psychological mechanism of three marketing measures: scarcity effect, authoritative marketing and social interaction; The third part diagnoses three major problems: lack of trust, impulsive regret and homogenization; The fourth part puts forward suggestions from the dimensions of trust promotion, immersive live broadcasting, and multi perspective selection.

2 Marketing Measures and Functions of Live-streaming E-commerce

The rise of live e-commerce represents a complete change in the trading location. In traditional e-commerce, consumers interact with static product pages. However, in the live broadcast, consumers are faced with the dynamic display of the anchor, the real-time rolling comments and the constantly updated inventory of goods. Wang et al. showed that the interactivity and real-time nature of live streaming fundamentally change consumers' shopping decision-making process [4].This change in the shopping environment generate several marketing strategies. This chapter discusses three core marketing measures from the perspective of consumer psychology, and analyzes the mechanism behind them.

2.1 Scarcity Marketing

Scarcity marketing is a strategy by which marketers deliberately limit the quantity, time or price of products to create an atmosphere of tight supply and thus influence consumer decisions. In live broadcast marketing, scarcity marketing usually takes the form of limited time, limited quantity and limited price, which is strengthened by countdown and decreasing inventory display, so as to create a tense atmosphere.

The reason why scarcity marketing is effective lies in two psychological mechanisms of human:

First, the scarcity effect. Research shows that people value things more when they think those things are hard to get [5]. When an anchor says there are only a few items left, viewers start to believe the product is more valuable—because if everyone is buying it, it must be good. This feeling becomes even stronger when viewers see real-time notifications of other people's purchases on the screen, which makes the product seem even more popular.

Second, loss aversion. People are more sensitive to loss than to the same benefit. The countdown order in the live studio takes advantage of this: when consumers see the last three seconds, their focus shifts from what can be gained by purchasing to what will be missed if they do not purchase. From the perspective of loss aversion, Leng et al. confirmed that live e-commerce can promote impulsive consumption by stimulating consumers' regret for missing purchase opportunities [6].

Chen et al. confirmed that the scarcity marketing strategy will significantly affect consumers' impulsive buying behavior [7]. This impact is achieved by enhancing consumer participation and emotion. In the real-time interactive environment of live broadcast, this effect will be further expanded.

2.2 Authority Marketing Based on Trust and Expertise

Authority marketing in live streaming is built on the foundation of trust and expertise. In practice,

Many anchors use differentiation strategies to create professional images. Beauty anchor establishes professional cognition through direct color test and composition explanation; The food anchor shows the credibility of product quality by entering the factory to see the production process. At the same time, the anchor becomes the gatekeeper of the selection, and the live broadcast of the official store of the brand is transmitting the same signal to consumers: you can buy with confidence.

The effectiveness of authority marketing can be explained through two psychological mechanisms. First, it can reduce information asymmetry. When shopping, consumers lack information, especially in categories with high professional threshold such as beauty, digital and health products. At this point, an anchor who looks professional and speaks clearly plays the role of expert consultant. Liu et al.'s research shows that the professional explanation of the anchor can improve consumers' sense of trust and then more want to buy [8].

The second is the trust transfer mechanism. Duong et al. analyzed the trust formation process in live e-commerce from the perspective of trust transfer [2]. When consumers trust a specific anchor, this trust will be transferred to the products recommended by the anchor. This is why the sales revenue of the head anchor products is high.

Third, brand trust. When consumers enter the live room of the official flagship store, because the brand itself has good products and good quality, everyone trusts it, which leads to the increase in the sales of the anchor. Chen et al. research on Oriental selection shows that the fit between the professional image and brand of knowledge anchors is one of the key factors for their success [9].

2.3 Interactive Marketing of Sense of Belonging and Emotional Connection

Interactive marketing in live streaming fosters a sense of belonging and emotional connection. In practice, phrases like "Type 1 if you want!" and "welcome new family members into the live studio" are the daily interactions of live broadcasting with goods. The live studio has also designed a variety of interactive ways such as likes, rewards and prize draw. These interactions can not only activate the atmosphere, but also build social relationships and shorten the distance.

The effectiveness of interactive marketing can be understood through several psychological mechanisms. A study by Liu et al. showed that the interaction in the live streaming can significantly improve consumers' psychological experience of being with others [8]. Huang et al. further confirmed that social presence in live streaming enhances consumers' immersive experience and positively influences their purchase intention [10]. When the barrage rolls and the anchor responds to fans' messages, consumers are no longer looking at their mobile phones alone, but in a lively shopping party. This feeling can bring pleasant emotional experience, and then enhance the purchase intention. Wang et al. further confirmed that anchor interaction orientation affects consumers' impulse purchase intention by activating both cognitive trust and emotional arousal, highlighting the dual-path mechanism of live interaction [11].

Second, when the anchor chats with fans in a friendly tone and cares about their lives, the audience will have the illusion that the anchor is my friend. Yan et al. found that the anchor's attraction partly comes from the establishment of this kind of friend relationship--fans should pay for the goods recommended by "friends" [12]. This connection is often more persuasive than rational product explanation.

3 Challenges and Problems in Live-streaming E-commerce

3.1 Lost of Trust

Live e-commerce highly relies on the trust relationship between the anchor and consumers. However, false advertising is reducing this trust. When consumers receive goods that do not match the anchor's description - whether in terms of quality, function or authenticity - they will experience a sense of betrayal. Consumers not only lose trust in the product, but also question the credibility of the anchor and even the whole live streaming platform.

This reflect the betrayal effect. When consumers establish trust with hosts through interaction, they form a psychological contract - an intangible agreement about relationship expectations. Duong et al. found that trust is formed through many ways, including the professionalism, authenticity, and responsiveness of the anchor [2]. When this trust is broken due to product issues, the psychological contract also is broken. This sense of betrayal will be more severe than dissatisfaction with ordinary products. Once trust is destroyed, rebuilding it is extremely difficult. Consumers who have experienced issues during live broadcasts are not only unlikely to purchase the products of the anchor again, but also become more suspicious of other anchors. This distrust poses a significant challenge to the entire industry.

The breakdown of trust will lead to two consequences. Firstly, the repurchase rate has decreased. Consumers who have experienced disappointment are unlikely to purchase products from the same anchor again. Secondly, reputation deteriorates. Consumers who feel betrayed often share negative experiences on social media, affecting potential customers and damaging the reputation of the anchor.

3.2 Regret and High Return Rate after Impulsive Consumption

When consumers calm down after the live broadcast and realize that they don't really need the purchased product, they will begin to regret it. Therefore, when consumers regret their purchase, they often initiate a return, which brings logistics costs and efficiency losses to the seller. If returns are not allowed at this time, consumers may also leave negative comments, which will affect the reputation and future sales of the anchor.

Wang et al. pointed out that the return rate of live streaming e-commerce is as high as 30-50%, significantly higher than the 10-15% return rate of traditional e-commerce [11]. This indicates that post-purchase regret and high return rates are core challenges facing the live streaming industry.

This phenomenon can be explained by the cooling off effect. During live shopping, the anchor affects the user's emotions. Chen et al. research has confirmed that live streaming marketing promotes impulse buying by enhancing consumers' emotions [7]. When the live streaming ends, consumers are no longer exposed to the persuasive appeals of the anchor, and their emotions return to calmness. In a calm state, they may evaluate their purchasing decisions more rationally. After rational thinking, they realize that they don't need this product at all, they will have a sense of regret. Barta et al. studied the consequences of regret in online shopping and found that regret significantly predicts return behavior and the spread of negative reviews [3].

The consequences of this pattern are substantial. High return rates bring significant costs to sellers, including transportation costs and potential damage to goods. For consumers, the experience of regret and returns will reduce their willingness to participate in live shopping again.

3.3 Serious Homogenization and Consumer Numbness

With the development of live streaming e-commerce, live streaming rooms have become similar. Whether the audience enters beauty live streaming, food live streaming, or clothing live streaming, they all have similar formats, languages, and products. First, the sales language are similar. Almost every live streaming room uses a countdown, a reminder of "only X orders left" and "This is the lowest price in history". Second, the products sold are similar. When a product becomes popular in a live broadcast room, other anchors quickly followed and sell the same or similar product.

This can be explained by two psychological mechanisms. Firstly, diminishing marginal utility. Consumers will feel excited when experiencing the countdown for the first time. Experiencing it 100 times will make people feel bored. As consumers are repeatedly exposed to the same marketing tactics, they will not be influenced by these tactics and will not purchase products in the live broadcast room. Secondly, the loss of novelty. The initial appeal of live streaming sales largely came from its novelty. As this form becomes standardized, the novelty decreases as these products are everywhere.

The consequences of homogenization are significant. Firstly, audience loss. When consumers feel that all live streaming rooms are the same, their frequency of opening live broadcasts will decrease. Because they know what they see inside are still familiar routines.

Secondly, the conversion rate has decreased. Even if consumers click into the live broadcast room, they are not as easily impulsive to buy as before. The same countdown and the same 'only X orders left' have been heard too many times, and consumers have already developed immunity.

Thirdly, industry competition level increase but returns decrease. When consumers lose interest in live streaming, a large number of anchors compete for a gradually decreasing audience, increasing investment but decreasing returns. Anchors who cannot create differentiated features will gradually be eliminated in this competition.

4 Suggestions

4.1 Trust Enhancement

As discussed in section 3.1, trust in live streaming e-commerce is fragile. When consumers receive products that do not match the anchor's description, they experience a sense of betrayal, which breaks the psychological contract between them and the anchor. This not only reduces the repurchase rate, but also damages the reputation of the anchor through negative comments.

To enhance trust, Anchors and platforms need to pay more attention to the control of product quality, rather than relying on promotional scripts to make impulsive consumption. Only when consumers feel that the product is consistent with the publicity and the quality is guaranteed can trust be established and maintained.

Wang et al. emphasized that balancing sales stimulation with maintaining consumer trust is crucial for the long-term sustainable development of the live streaming industry [11]. Reducing the high return rate caused by impulse purchases is not only about cost control, but also about building long-term trust relationships.

4.2 Slow Down the Pace and Provide In-Depth Explanations

Section 3.2 points out that purchase regret is one of the main challenges of live streaming e-commerce. The high-pressure and fast-paced environment, while driving impulse buying, also leads to returns when consumers realize they don't need the product after calming down.

To reduce purchase regret and return rates, anchors need to adopt a slow pace to conduct more in-depth product exploration. Spend more time on each product. Provide a detailed explanation of the product's features, materials, and usage methods, and answer consumer questions.

4.3 Multi Perspective Live Streaming

To address the issue of homogenization and consumer numbness discussed in section 3.3 proposes that homogenization and consumer numbness are significant challenges in the live streaming industry. When all live streaming rooms look and feel similar, consumers lose interest and engagement decreases. This indicates the need for innovation to make the live streaming experience more unique and appealing.

One strategy is to offer more diversified viewing experiences. By allowing viewers to access different perspectives or tailor their viewing experience according to their interests, live streaming can become more engaging and better meet diverse consumer needs. Such innovation not only helps combat homogenization but also increases consumer interest in live shopping.

5 Conclusion

This paper mainly studies the role of consumer psychology in the live delivery, and how to improve the marketing strategy based on consumer psychology. This paper first analyzes three common marketing methods in live broadcast delivery -- scarcity marketing, authority marketing and interactive marketing, and explains the psychological mechanism behind them, including scarcity effect, loss aversion, trust transfer and social presence. Based on these analyses, this paper identifies three major problems in the industry: the loss of trust caused by product quality problems, the high return rate after impulsive consumption, and consumer numbness caused by similar content.

The main conclusions of this paper are as follows: first, scarcity marketing is effective because it makes consumers feel that goods are scarce and difficult to grab, and they are afraid the product sold out, so they will order the product quickly; Authoritative marketing is effective because consumers believe that professionals will transfer their trust in anchors to products; Interactive marketing is effective because it allows the audience to have a sense of belonging and emotional connection. Second, these marketing methods also bring problems. When the goods are inconsistent with the description, consumers will feel betrayed and no longer trust the anchor; When consumers spend impulsively, they tend to regret and return after calming down; When all the live rooms use the same routines and scripts, consumers will feel bored and lose interest. Thirdly, to solve these problems, this paper puts forward three suggestions: building trust by showing the production process; Slow down and explain the product in detail to reduce regret; Provide multiple viewing angles, allowing consumers to choose how to look.

Future research can further explore the psychological differences of different groups in live shopping, or verify the suggestions by collecting data from real live platforms or doing experiments, so that the research results can be of greater help to academia and industry.

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