

Research on cosmetic marketing from the perspective of social media: based on the difference analysis of emerging brands and luxury brands in China

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Abstract. In contemporary society the social media is very popular, many brands in China choose to promote their products through social media, such as Tik Tok, Xiaohongshu and Weibo. Nowadays, some luxury brands have also invested in the promotion of social media. So, what are the similarities and differences between some local brands in China that have sprung up and appeared in recent years? This paper will analyze their effects and benefits through their differences in promotion. Luxury brands this article wants to analyze: Estee Lauder, emerging brand this article wants to analyze: Perfect Diary. This paper will analyze the marketing strategies, marketing differences, marketing trends and marketing deficiencies of emerging brands and luxury brands respectively. In the process of analysis, this study will use comparative investigation, case study and case analysis. It is true that different brands have different strategies for promotion. In the social media era, there are many different promotion methods. According to different brands and budgets, companies can choose the marketing method that can maximize profits.

1 Introduction

In the rapidly developing field of "social media", social media platforms have played a key role in shaping brand narrative and consumer participation. This phenomenon is particularly obvious in China, where platforms such as TikTok (TikTok's China rival), Xiaohongshu and Weibo have completely changed the way brands establish contact with their audiences. These platforms provide dynamic and interactive channels for brands to spread their information, interact with consumers and influence purchasing behavior. With the development and wide application of digital technology, the online economy has shown a vigorous growth trend, and the development of digital economy in China is an excellent case. According to the White Paper on the Development of Digital Economy in China (2021), under the overlapping influence of COVID-19 epidemic at home and abroad and the global economic downturn, China's digital economy can still go upstream. In 2020, the digital scale will expand to 39.2 trillion Yuan, accounting for 38.6% of China's total GDP, and it will maintain a high growth

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trend of 9.7%, which is more than 3.2 times the nominal growth rate of GDP in the same period [1].

In recent years, not only emerging local brands in China have gained popularity and market share by using these platforms, but also mature luxury brands are increasingly accepting new media promotion strategies promoted by these platforms. This strategic shift has caused an interesting question, that is, the similarities and differences of the promotion strategies adopted in positioning different brands in the cosmetics industry. For example, although emerging brands may focus on creating highly engaged content to resonate with young and trendy audiences, luxury brands may give priority to maintaining their reputation and exclusivity, even in a fast-paced, informal digital environment.

This paper discusses the subtle situation of social media marketing in cosmetics industry, focusing on luxury brands and emerging brands operating in China market. Specifically, this study investigates the luxury brand Estee Lauder and the new brand of Perfect Diary in China. Through in-depth study of their marketing strategies, this study aims to identify and analyze the differences in their methods of placing videos and graphics on social media, and how these differences affect their overall promotion effect and brand awareness.

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the marketing strategies of luxury brands and emerging brands in cosmetics industry, and highlight the shortcomings of their respective promotion strategies, trends and methods. By doing so, the research aims to fully understand how different brands control the competitive landscape of social media marketing under the constraints of their unique brand image and marketing budget.

In order to achieve these goals, this study adopts a mixed method of comparative investigation, case study and case analysis. The comparative investigation method is helpful to evaluate the marketing practices of luxury brands and emerging brands side by side, so as to clearly identify the contrast and overlap. The case study method provides insight into a specific brand and captures the complexity of its strategy and results. Finally, the case analysis method analyzes these strategies to extract broader trends and lessons related to the entire cosmetics industry.

The structure of this paper first provides the theoretical framework of social media marketing under the background of cosmetics industry. The next step is to make an in-depth analysis of the selected brands by using 4P theory, and analyze their methods in content creation, influencer cooperation, marketing benefits and promotion activities. Subsequent chapters will compare the marketing effects of these brands, draw lessons from their success and identify areas that need improvement.

2 Literature review

2.1 Emerging brands and luxury brands

Emerging brands: Emerging cosmetics brands usually refer to those small companies that have newly entered the cosmetics market in recent years and independently focused on the beauty line. These brands usually distinguish themselves through innovation, authenticity and strong digital influence, and subvert the market with novel ideas and solutions. These emerging brands are not bound by traditional formulas. They update their products through market feedback quickly and can rapidly adapt to the market demand for products, such as exquisite packaging, inclusiveness and personalization. Emerging brands focus on building communities around their products. Emerging brands are price-friendly, targeting students and those who are eager to become beautiful but have limited funds. They often keep open communication channels with customers, encourage feedback and actively participate in dialogue. This two-way interaction helps them improve their products according to

customers' preferences, cultivate a sense of belonging, and loyal fans among their customers. For example: Perfect Diary, Flower Knows, Timage, FLORTTE, etc.

Luxury brands: luxury cosmetics brands occupy a unique and prestigious market segment in the beauty industry. These brands are synonymous with high quality, uniqueness and excellent performance. Luxury cosmetics brands usually have a long history. They are usually famous for their rich heritage, high quality prices and emphasis on elegance and exquisiteness. This historical background enhances their credibility and attracts consumers who value heritage and craftsmanship. Luxury brands are usually priced at high prices, and their brand positioning is aimed at mid-to high-end customers and picky consumers who seek excellent quality and are willing to pay a premium. Exquisite packaging and exquisite in-store experience further enhance the luxury experience. Luxury brands are usually sold only in selected high-end boutiques, department stores or exclusive online portals, further maintaining their image of scarcity and desirability. For example: Chanel, Lancôme, Dior, lamer, etc.

2.2 Media marketing

Since the media, that is, user-generated content platforms, such as Tik Tok, Little Red Book, YouTube, X, Facebook, Instagram and so on. It plays a vital role in the modern marketing field, especially in the cosmetics industry. These platforms democratize content creation and dissemination, enabling individuals to influence public opinion and shape brand awareness more directly than traditional media. Brands contact online celebrity on various platforms through intermediary media, so that they can promote their products on the home page in the form of videos and pictures and texts, so as to improve brand awareness and credibility. Social media pushes different videos by accurately analyzing users' preferences and pushes videos to potential customers with accurate brands more accurately.

3 Social-media marketing strategies of emerging brands

Perfect Diary is a brand of Guangzhou Yixian E-Commerce Co., Ltd., which was established in 2017. It deals in cosmetics and is committed to creating a series of high-quality, well-designed and easy-to-use cosmetics products for the new generation of women in Asia.

3.1 Price

In the development process, the Perfect Diary mainly insists on setting its image as fashion and youth, and the target consumers are generally younger consumers, and the target people are generally younger, mostly around 17-26 years old [2]. And played the slogan "The younger generation should not be bound by the outside world. But should strive to break through themselves and actively explore the possibility of life". The target consumers of the perfect diary are mainly younger people, such as high school graduates or young people who have just stepped into society. Therefore, when pricing products, the price range of the whole line of beauty products of the perfect diary is basically 40-200 RMB. In the middle price range of domestic beauty products. Low-priced places such as FLORTEE: the price of a single product is 20-80, and in high-priced brands such as Timage, the price of a single product is between 150-300. The perfect diary has received the love and support of many students and people who have just started to contact beauty.

3.2 Place

The sales channels of Perfect Diary are very comprehensive, which are divided into offline distribution, online sales and offline franchise stores. They mainly sell through e-commerce platforms such as Tmall and JD.COM and their official websites. Perfect Diary also uses social e-commerce platforms such as WeChat and Xiaohongshu. These platforms enable Perfect Diary to have closer contact with consumers and improve customer participation. So that they can actively get feedback from consumers to improve their products and meet the needs of the market. Perfect Diary has also opened physical stores and experience centers in major cities in China, such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, to cooperate with online marketing channels to provide consumers with a better product experience. The offline entity experience store opened by Perfect Diary provides an immersive brand experience, allowing customers to try products before buying, so that they can have a certain intuitive feeling about the products, so as to enhance their love for their products, strengthen brand awareness and cultivate loyal customer groups.

3.3 Product

The product range of Perfect Diary is relatively limited. It mainly focuses on beauty products, such as lipstick, eye shadow, foundation and loose powder. However, the perfect diary has won the favor of many consumers through exquisite and unique packaging, such as the puppy plate and the tiger plate, which make the perfect diary a hit by combining IP and rich colors, attracting many loyal fans. Since its inception in October 2018, Perfect Diary has cooperated with British Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art and other brands or jointly launched product ideas such as design patterns, lipsticks, eye shadows, perfumes, etc., interpreting China culture from the perspective of the new generation, integrating traditional culture with Chinese and Western cultures, and shaping the brand connotation of Perfect Diary [3].

3.4 Promotion

Since its inception, Perfect Diary has been widely publicized and promoted on the Internet. They have reached cooperation with celebrities in the beauty industry through platforms such as Tik Tok, Xiaohongshu and Weibo, and released promotional videos, unpacking videos and evaluation videos to consumers through personal accounts of online celebrity and celebrities, using the online celebrity effect to help brands expand their influence and popularity. The brand also enhances its brand style by hiring Zhou Xun as a brand spokesperson and enhances its appeal through the fan effect of new generation stars such as Zhengting Zhu, Lusi Zhao and Jingyi Ju, so that the perfect diary is favored by young consumers. Whenever there are various consumption festivals, Perfect Diary will attract consumers to buy and stock goods through price discounts, promotions and membership allowances, such as discounts of over 300-50 and over 200-30.

3.5 Marketing benefits & profits

Perfect Diary effectively combined with high-quality products to attract the public through 4P marketing strategy and quickly became the representative of emerging cosmetics brands in China. Since it was put on the market in 2017, it took only 18 months to become the number one cosmetics brand in Tmall. On November 19, 2020, its parent company Yixian E-commerce was listed on the New York Stock Exchange, becoming the first beauty brand enterprise listed in the US stock market in China.[2] Since January 2019, Perfect Diary has expanded the development of physical stores in China, covering first-tier cities, and gradually

opened up second-to fifth-tier cities. For example, Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Foshan and Yangzhou have opened stores in nearly 90 cities across the country. And in many cities, Perfect Diary has two or more stores located in different areas for customers to experience. These stores include not only ordinary stores, but also concept stores, such as Chunxi Road Store in Chengdu and Wujiaochang Store in Shanghai. They have unique designs and additional functional areas, such as punch points and experience areas, to provide customers with a richer shopping experience.

4 Social media marketing strategy of luxury brands

As a global leader in high-end beauty market, Estee Lauder has a wide range of business lines, including skin care (accounting for 56% of sales in FY22), makeup (26%), perfume (14%) and beauty care (4%), and owns Estee Lauder, Clinique, MAC, La Mer, Jo Malone, Aveda, Bobbi Brown and Too Faced. The company operates in 150 countries, 27% of its revenue comes from America, 44% from Europe, Middle East and Africa, and 30% from Asia-Pacific region [3].

4.1 Price

Estee Lauder adopted a premium pricing strategy that reflected its luxury image. Their product lines are roughly divided into two lines: main line and sub-line. The main line positioning is mainly luxury, high-end, repair and anti-aging. The consumer groups targeted are celebrities and high-end people, and the price is on the high side. The secondary line is positioned to meet the needs of the public for skin care, and the consumer groups are positioned in young people and middle-income people. [5] On average, the price of Estee Lauder items ranges from 300 to 1500. The high price point is proved by the perceived value generated by excellent quality, innovative formula and effective results. This pricing strategy strengthens the exclusiveness and attractiveness of the brand. Despite the high price, Estee Lauder ensures that consumers feel great value in their purchases. This is achieved through the efficacy of the product, the luxury experience provided and the good reputation of the brand. Limited edition products and high-end cooperation also contribute to this value concept.

4.2 Place

Estee Lauder's products are selectively distributed to maintain an exclusive aura. These products can be bought in high-end department stores, professional beauty retailers and selected online platforms, such as high-end department stores, professional retailers, high-end perfume shops, pharmacies, famous salons and spas. This careful choice of distribution channels ensures that the brand is associated with the luxury shopping environment. With its strong international influence and popularity, Estee Lauder uses flagship stores in prime locations all over the country as brand display and sales. It is also very popular in duty-free shops at airports and uses tourism retail to reach global consumers. Estee Lauder realizes that online shopping is becoming more and more important, so it has a strong influence on e-commerce platforms, including its official website and third-party websites such as Sephora. They provide a seamless online shopping experience, and usually integrate AR tools for virtual try-on and personalized recommendation.

4.3 Product

Estee Lauder's product line is very extensive, so as to meet the diverse consumer needs of different consumer regions, different consumer demand ages, different consumer genders and consumer demand groups. Covers various cosmetics such as skin care, make-up, perfume and hair care. Estee Lauder has not only women's products, but also skin care products for men, and advocates that men also have the right to pursue beauty. Estee Lauder's products are famous for their high quality, and the unique raw materials and technologies belonging to its own brand are introduced to highlight the uniqueness of the brand. For example, one of Estee Lauder's most enduring legacies appears in the form of "brown vials". In 1982, Estee Lauder launched a classic product-Night Repair Cellular Recovery Complex, which is the first science-based essence that can repair skin appearance at night. Since then, the essence of Little Brown Bottle has been continuously upgraded. By the time of Advanced Night Repair Synchronized Recovery Complex II, many innovative technologies have been integrated and more than 25 patents have been obtained worldwide. This product can help promote the natural synchronization of skin repair at night, thus making the skin look younger [4]. Estee Lauder has invested heavily in research and innovation to stay ahead of beauty trends and consumer demand. This includes the use of cutting-edge technology and high-quality raw materials. Estee Lauder often introduces new products and limited editions to keep fresh and up-to-date product portfolio. Enhance the overall customer experience and cultivate a loyal fan base.

4.4 Promotion

Estee Lauder's advertising campaign is characterized by high-quality publicity, thus highlighting the luxury and exquisiteness of the brand. In the early days, they used a large number of traditional media such as print magazines, TV advertisements and local advertisements to promote their brands. When the media era came, Estee Lauder quickly followed the trend of the times. Digital marketing through social media platforms, beauty blogs and influential people. In the past ten years, Estee Lauder has hired many diverse endorsements and created diverse brand images, such as Yang Mi, Sean Xiao, IU, and Michelle Phan, who have top influence from all over the world. Through the choice and application of Estee Lauder spokesperson, we can see Estee Lauder's smart marketing strategy, which enables Estee Lauder to succeed in the international market. After the influence of digital marketing has increased, Estee Lauder often cooperates with the well-known online celebrity and influential beauty master's to enhance its reputation and influence. These endorsements help to establish ambitious connections and resonate with a wider audience, including young, digital-savvy consumers. Estee Lauder will also carry out strategic promotion activities at festivals, product launches and other key moments, offering special offers or gift awards. These activities help to promote sales while maintaining the brand reputation.

4.5 Marketing benefits & profits

Estee Lauder effectively combines high-quality products, high-quality pricing, selective distribution and complex promotion through 4P marketing strategy to maintain its position as a leading luxury cosmetics brand. Through continuous innovation, strategic pricing, controlled position and influential promotion, Estee Lauder continues to attract consumers and maintain its reputation in the highly competitive beauty industry. In addition, Estee Lauder has won a worldwide reputation for its products, because the company has been committed to strict product innovation, bringing new formulas to meet the changing needs of

its extensive customer base and fulfilling its mission as a socially responsible company. With the increasing beauty demand of consumers in China, Estee Lauder Company has actively invested in promoting the competitiveness of China market. In recent years, the development of Estee Lauder Group has been smooth sailing, and the market share of its brands has been at the forefront of the industry. China has become the second largest international market of Estee Lauder Group [3].

5 Differences between emerging brands and luxury brands

5.1 Marketing channel differences

In contrast, emerging brands are more focused on online promotion and sales. Compared with luxury brands, emerging brands have limited funds. They are more focused on online marketing, live marketing and other ways to increase their sales. Although a small number of emerging brands have also set up offline monopoly experience stores, customers who go to experience them will eventually choose to buy online because these emerging brands often offer great price concessions and promotions online. Moreover, many stores do not have the ability to open their own offline stores, but choose to stay in domestic beauty collection stores, similar to Wow Colour and colorists.

Because luxury brands have sufficient operating budget, they can open counters in busy shopping malls in major cities while developing online sales channels, so as to ensure brand style and enhance brand credibility. Consumers are more inclined to try out their curious products offline before deciding whether to buy them, especially luxury cosmetics, which have a higher unit price. Because everyone's skin, skin color and usage habits will determine the practicality of the product for individuals, luxury brands have well met the needs of consumers for offline experience. In addition, luxury brands rarely get any discount online, so people are more inclined to go to the counter to buy and enjoy the brand's service and experience.

5.2 Differences in marketing methods

Luxury goods tend to look for world celebrities to endorse products in marketing, so as to promote brand awareness and product sales. For example, luxury brands are now more inclined to find Korean groups to endorse products to promote. Because Korean groups have a wide range of fans all over the world, brands can quickly gain the attention and purchase of fans to support their favorite stars. The promotion of luxury brands focuses on their brand style, thus highlighting the promotion of brand tonality. Thereby highlighting the uniqueness and exclusivity of the brand [4].

Emerging brands are more focused on cooperating with online celebrity on social media such as Tik Tok, Little Red Book and Weibo. These platforms provide brands with direct access to millions of users and attract many potential consumers. They are more inclined to promote with the current video trends, such as get ready with me, unboxing new products, to introduce or expose products in videos through online celebrity, so as to achieve the effect of increasing sales. Based on the shopping experience, it is insecure and can only rely on other consumers' shopping evaluations to understand the goods, so brands will manipulate comments to attract more consumers [6].

6 Marketing trends & shortcomings

6.1 Shortcomings of emerging brands & improvement strategies

For emerging brands, they can't just rely on online celebrity's influence to increase their sales, because this is not a stable promotion method. When online celebrity's influence is greater than the brand's influence, if there is any negative impact on online celebrity, the brand is easily implicated by online celebrity's word of mouth. Emerging brands should enhance their brand influence, thus expanding their loyal fan base. They can enhance the credibility of the brand and increase the dependence of fans by opening offline experience stores. In 2021, Ai Media Consulting conducted a survey on the main channels for domestic consumers to buy cosmetics. The results show that 63.3% of consumers will choose to buy on the integrated e-commerce platform, and 43.3% will choose to buy online at the counter. Although more people choose online shopping, offline shopping is still the choice of many people [7, 8].

6.2 Deficiencies of luxury brands & improvement strategies

Nowadays, many quoted brands in China, South Korea, Europe and America have made products with low price and high effect and quality. In today's economy is not so prosperous, many loyal fans of luxury brands choose to try or continue to buy these offering products and give up buying high-priced items [9]. Luxury brands should enhance their brand uniqueness and exclusivity and reduce the loss of consumers and attract new consumers by introducing irreplaceable products. And luxury brands should increase the promotion of products through social media, so as to increase brand sales. Among the collected questionnaires, 279 had the experience of purchasing cosmetics, accounting for 83.28%; There are 180 copies, accounting for 53.73%, who buy cosmetics because of the influence of net red [10]. Thus we can see the importance of video promotion for brand promotion products.

7 Conclusion

This paper makes a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the differences in marketing strategies between Perfect Diary, an emerging brand, and Estee Lauder, a luxury brand. In a word, as brands cope with the complexity of media, the strategic differences between luxury brands and emerging brands become more and more important. This paper aims to describe these differences and provide a roadmap for effective social media marketing strategies, so that these brands can learn from their successful digital marketing and identify areas that need improvement.

To sum up, through the analysis of Perfect Diary and Estee Lauder in many aspects, this study has certain research value. Unfortunately, because of the limitations of the research, only one brand is analyzed on behalf of emerging brands and luxury brands. Compared with today's massive cosmetics brands, it has certain limitations. Each brand will adopt different marketing strategies according to its own situation, so this article will inevitably have some shortcomings. However, the author hope this article can give some hints to emerging brands and luxury brands in the formulation of Internet marketing strategies in China, so that they can get better development.

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