

Research on the Evaluation of Beauty Market: From Traditional Media to Digital Platforms

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Abstract. The development of the internet allows digital social media platforms to increase their influence on daily life, and social media platforms also influence consumer behavior patterns. To cater to consumers, brands also need to make corresponding changes, but the direction of marketing and promotion to digital platforms does not mean that traditional media has been completely replaced. Social media is an opportunity as well as a change, and the advantages and risks coexist. Therefore, this study aims to explore the transition from traditional media to digital platforms, the synergistic effect between the two in the beauty market, and the impact on factors such as consumer purchase behavior. This study analyses the key findings of the past five years through a systematic literature review on factors such as the digital transformation of traditional media, the pros and cons of digital social media platforms, and their relationship to consumer purchasing behavior, and summarizes these studies. This study reveals the importance of using both digital social media and traditional media in the beauty market and suggests that brands should adopt multi-channel marketing strategies to reach a wider audience.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Over the past two decades, the beauty industry has undergone a major transformation as a result of the internet explosion and changes in consumer behavior, moving away from traditional marketing methods such as TV, print, and radio to digital platforms. According to Zion Market, the global beauty and personal care market is valued at approximately USD 520.98 billion in 2022 and is expected to reach USD 904.25 billion by 2023 [1]. The massive size of the market means that effective strategies are important for brands and companies in the beauty market. Digital social media and e-commerce platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook that offer personalized content, direct consumer engagement, and real-time feedback are more appealing to today's consumers than the traditional model, especially Gen Z, who are the new generation of beauty market consumers, and they are more reliant on digital platforms to discover and purchase products. In addition, the shift in the digitalization of the marketing model challenges the monolithic and normative nature of the

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traditional marketing model, promoting diversity and inclusivity, expanding the market reach, and responding to the changing values of society. The study of the change from traditional marketing models to digital platforms is critical to understanding the need for traditional marketing to exist in this new era and how it can be coordinated with digital marketing to take advantage of new opportunities and address challenges.

1.2 Literature review

Digital marketing is the mainstream direction of global beauty nowadays. Wenhui Liang analyzed China's digital beauty market as being of great vitality based on the national policy to promote the development of the digital economy. At the same time, the rise of convenient digital social media and shopping platforms and the change in behavioral patterns of the new generation of consumers have allowed brands and companies to see the huge potential of China's online development and virtual market [2]. In terms of how Generation Z views brands, social media, and digital choices, Tsai& Tang found that the demand of Generation Z for beauty is mainly about showing themselves and that they value their image in virtual social situations, with many saying that they can go without make-up if they do not need to be photographed. This proved that the social image management of Generation Z has gradually shifted from the offline to the digital realm. Moreover, Gen Z people are more adept at using online channels to get information, and social media platforms help them filter effective information; they are highly attracted to social media platforms because they can get real reviews from the platforms as well, and the platforms give them a great deal of space to discuss brands and products feely. Additionally, Gen Z's brand loyalty is on the decline. The growth in online channels allows them to access a huge amount of information in a short period of time. Because of the rapid change of information, their choice of products is also rapidly changing. In fact, they are more concerned with a particularly popular product than recognizing a brand, and they build up an awareness of the brand through the product. Therefore, they are more loyal to a certain product instead of its brand [3].

Social media platforms have not only attracted brands and companies but also become a space for social media influencers to thrive; they share their beauty tips, recommend and review products, and act as a medium to connect brands with consumers. Hassan et al. proposed that these social media "beauty experts" have greatly influenced millennial consumers' choice of beauty products because these beauty experts are able to help consumers make decisions when they are unable to; they are more likely to be recognized than traditional advertisements. Overall, influencers are easier to be trusted by consumers if they have the knowledge, approachability, confidence, and ability to express themselves [4].

In the past, most scholars and literature have focused on the advantages of digital social media today, but few scholars have paid attention to whether there are challenges to digital platforms and whether traditional media should be completely replaced.

1.3 Research framework

This research will explore the current situation of traditional media and digital platforms first, then study the similarities and differences between traditional media models and social media platforms through comparative analyses, and then explore the necessity of maintaining the traditional media and the challenges that exist under the many advantages of digital social media. Finally, the author will give some suggestions and outlook on the development of beauty marketing.

2 Description of traditional media and digital platforms

Traditional media have been experiencing profound changes and challenges in recent years. Traditional media, including newspapers, print, magazines, TV, and radio, were once the main channels of information dissemination, but today they are facing unprecedented pressures to survive. The influence of TV and newspapers is decreasing amongst the new generation. In the UK, for example, according to Ofcom (2023), 70 % of adults still use TV and radio as sources of information, whereas newspapers are used by a much smaller group of older consumers, resulting in a usage rate of only around 25%. However, for the 15-25-year-old consumer group, 83% of them choose to get their message on digital platforms, compared to only 47% who use TV and radio [5]. This means that traditional media is not necessary for the new generation of young people. Similarly, many traditional media practitioners have expressed concerns about the prospects of the industry, not only the transition from physical to digital but also the emergence of artificial intelligence, which is disruptive for all traditional media. In Habib's manuscript, it is mentioned that according to Newsman's research, whether the emergence of AI for paper media will create reputational risks and loss of credibility is the most feared issue. The search capabilities of AI will replace some of the tasks in the traditional media industry. To cope with the impact of digital platforms and AI, traditional media must look for new ways to survive. Habib (2023) also stated that to contribute to the maintenance of traditional media, traditional media organizations try to use new subscription models to reduce unsubscription rates [6].

Digital social media platforms have been seen as prosperous in recent years, with the number of users exploding. According to statistics of Kemp, the number of social media users worldwide has surpassed 5.04 billion, an increase of 266 million compared to last year, and this growth is not only reflected in the increase in the number of users but also in the diversification of the platforms that users choose to use. The typical social media user uses around 6.7 different platforms per month and spends an average of two hours and 23 minutes per day on them. Among the many platforms, Facebook maintains its leadership position with more than 3 billion monthly active users. The newcomer TikTok also reaches 1.56 billion users per month through advertisements. Because of the emergence of the pattern, users spend far more time using it than other platforms. In terms of usage, users' motives for using social media include social interaction, information collection, and entertainment consumption. In the overall statistics, young users prefer to use Instagram and TikTok, while Facebook is popular among older users. In addition, spending on digital advertising continues to grow, reaching \$720 billion in 2023, and spending on social advertising is also growing by 9.3% [7].

Nowadays, the development of traditional media is not optimistic; the impact of digitalization and AI makes it difficult for traditional media to maintain, and it is foreseeable that traditional media may continue to seek new opportunities for survival and make changes for it. Digital platforms, as the mainstream today, create new opportunities for users, brands, and companies.

3 Comparative traditional media and Digital platforms

3.1 Similarities identified between Traditional media and digital platforms

3.1.1 Traditional media and digital platforms share common goals in content creation and dissemination

For brands and companies, both traditional media and digital media platforms share the same goal of content creation and distribution to engage consumers and increase brand awareness. Whether it is through TV commercials, magazine advertisements, or social media posts, articles, and advertisements, brands aim to capture the attention of consumers through high-quality content that conveys the tonality of the brand and demonstrates the features and benefits of the product. The study by Zhao et al. showed that both traditional and social media advertising can predict brand awareness well. At the same time, the model also showed a positive correlation between advertising and brand loyalty, so increased advertising can effectively increase consumer brand loyalty [8]. Therefore, traditional and digital media play the same role for brands, both from the perspective of content creation and communication with consumers.

3.1.2 Traditional media or digital social media platforms have impacts on consumer behavior

Both traditional media and digital platforms can significantly influence consumer behavior, including purchase decisions. Traditional media could enhance consumer brand awareness through various mediums such as TV advertisements, magazines, and newspapers. Similarly, digital platforms can influence decision-making through influencers' recommendations and user-generated content. Sama studies whether various types of advertisements can affect consumer behavior, and the report demonstrated that TV advertisements, newspaper advertisements, and magazine advertisements all have a significant impact on a variety of behaviors, such as consumer awareness and purchasing [9]. Moreover, in terms of social media platforms, the study by Weiyang Ren et al. also confirms that people, especially those in Gen Z, will buy the same product from influencers because of their recommendation and use [10]. Thus, whether it is traditional media or social media, as long as the information of products is clearly communicated to the consumers, and the consumers can create positive awareness, interest, and trust, it will affect the consumers' behavior and consumption decision to a different degree.

3.2 Differences identified between Traditional media and digital platforms

3.2.1 Traditional media and digital platforms' advantages in marketing

Digital social media platforms have led to the birth of influencer marketing; unlike traditional media with single picture and text, influencer marketing combines commercial information with an influencer's life postings, using the personal characteristics and charms of influencers to attract fans, increase fan trust, and enhance brand awareness and product purchases. Weiyang Ren et al. compared traditional media with digital social media in terms of marketing effectiveness. They pointed out that traditional media and influencer marketing have their own advantages. Traditional advertisements usually have good ideas and use the characteristic of content repetition to deepen consumers' memory. They also have wider

coverage and more diversified channels, which are not easily restricted by the internet and can penetrate every corner of people's daily lives. However, influencer marketing is characterized by more precise reach, higher ROI, and more persuasiveness [10].

3.2.2 Different between traditional media and social media in promoting user participation

Traditional media mainly adopts a unidirectional communication pattern, which represents the information that presents a one-way flow from media to users. Due to the limitation of channels, it is very difficult to ensure the timeliness and effectiveness of user feedback. However, social media is different; social media platforms have good two-way interactivity, and they use comments, clicks, real-time feedback, and other interactive features to cultivate a more dynamic and interactive user experience; these data are from a certain degree of intuitive reflection of user participation. Taking the news industry as an example, these years, the news industry has gradually sought a new integration of new media models with offline traditional models. Nelson stated in the article that in the process of journalism's transformation to digitalization, news publishers have accepted the online standard of audience engagement, using data such as clicks as an indicator to measure audience participants, which is still not negligible for publishers despite its limitations [11]. Therefore, social media is more diverse and visual in the ways that users engage, and it is easier for users to engage with.

3.3 Problems

3.3.1 Digital media platforms are prone to generating and spreading fake information

Social media platforms can quickly provide users with a large amount of information. There are no strict regulations on the identity of information creators, giving users great freedom, but this also means that compared with traditional media, it does not have a perfect monitoring mechanism. Hence, the impersonation of others on social media and the dissemination of fake information occurs frequently. This problem will reduce the trust of users in the platforms and even affect the stability of society. Mohammed et al. stated in their article that there are cases of impersonation on many platforms; they use fake personal and account information and post fake content, and they also make their accounts look very real. In fact, such impersonation is difficult for other users to identify [12]. This makes it difficult for users to avoid being influenced by fake information, and when users believe such information, it may lead to the further spreading of fake information and affect the positive development of the whole online environment. Moreover, most people trust traditional media more than social media information. Fotopoulos analyzed the level of trust people in EU countries have in different news sources. The data showed that 49% of EU respondents considered publicly owned TV and radio stations to be the most trustworthy. In comparison, 39% of respondents considered the written media to be trustworthy, and 27% of respondents trust private TV and radio stations the most, while social media channels remain at around 20% [13]. This means that both publicly and privately owned TV and radio stations prove that people in the EU trust traditional information channels much more than social media channels. In general, traditional media is indeed more trustworthy than digital media platforms.

3.3.2 Social media platforms fragment and polarize audiences

The diverse and decentralized nature of digital platforms leads to audience fragmentation and polarization; unlike mass communication in traditional media, personalized recommendations on digital platforms segment audiences by labeling, exposing individuals to only homogenous views, which can lead to less exposure to diverse views. Cinelli et al. argued that social media platforms' streaming algorithms regulate content promotion based on user preferences and attitudes, which changes the construction of social ideas and narrative frameworks and can affect some polarization. Online users are more inclined to like what fits their worldview, ignore opposing opinions, and form polarized groups around their shared views, and the danger is that when polarization is high, misinformation and disinformation spread rapidly [14].

4 Suggestions

4.1 Establishment of an effective online censorship system

The impersonation of users and dissemination of false information have always been serious problems on social media platforms. In modern networks, 'AI face-swapping' is frequently used, a technology that allows one person's face to be seamlessly swapped for another's. Pham pointed out in the article that AI face-swapping can lead to deep counterfeiting and disinformation because it can create completely fake videos to show things that never happened, which makes it very easy to defraud viewers and spread lies. In addition, if an unscrupulous person steals another person's photo, they can use the photo to impersonate another person to access the account to steal money or even commit crimes in their name [15]. For such a problem, platforms should set up an effective network review system. For example, the development and application of smarter artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms to automatically identify and filter false information, as well as impostor content, such as when there are signs of AI generation need to be warned. However, as machine algorithms may have some uncertainties that lead to errors in judgment, they should be complemented by manual review. In the case of high heat and large area dissemination of information, the manual audit is to make appropriate judgments to improve the accuracy of the audit. At the same time, the social media platform should also be applicable to formulate some platform regulations that require platform users to comply with or can be appropriate to carry out the user's internal real-name system, especially with influencers. In addition, the use of mutual supervision of users is also an effective way, and the platform can set up a user reporting feedback mechanism so that users can quickly report false information and impostor behavior. The platform should also ensure that it can be processed in a timely manner and with timely feedback.

4.2 Creating new mechanisms and reducing tags

The problem of polarisation has become a major challenge for social media, with many factors, including algorithms, social echo chamber effects, tagging, and other tendencies, exacerbating the phenomenon. To maintain the stability of the online society and avoid confrontation, social media platforms should make appropriate solutions. Firstly, platforms should introduce diversified viewpoints into their algorithms rather than just reinforcing users' existing positions, and they should reduce the promotion of emotionally charged content. Although emotionally charged content is more likely to attract users to watch and discuss it, it also tends to lead to extreme emotions and polarised views, so platforms should moderately

reduce the promotion of this type of content. Moreover, although the platform's tags help to reach target users more accurately, tagging can put people in an information cocoon that makes it difficult for them to access other types of information. For example, the platform will segment tags according to customer behavior and interests, and then the platform may only push relevant content according to the user's characteristics. Therefore, to avoid such problems as much as possible, platforms can create activities or design mechanisms to encourage users with different backgrounds and perspectives to communicate with each other rather than categorizing users into narrow groups. Platforms can also ameliorate the problem by reducing and optimizing automated tagging, which can effectively avoid ambiguity in the tags themselves and over-tagging of user content. For polarised issues, platforms can also set up discussion guiding mechanisms, introduce neutral guiding tools or mediators in the issues, and delete extreme comments appropriately to help users find a consensus in the discussion rather than extreme confrontation.

5 Conclusion

In this study, it is found that digital platforms have become the mainstream media for a new generation of young people and the main venue for the development of many brands and companies, with traditional media no longer as important as it once was. However, while it is true that digital media platforms are faster, more convenient, and offer more freedom, it is still difficult to avoid and cannot be ignored that they are prone to generating and spreading false information, can be easily exploited by lawless elements to form cyber riots, are highly likely to disclose personal information of users and cause polarization. Although traditional media is not as fast as digital social media platforms in terms of speed of dissemination and freedom of use, it has better penetration and coverage, and even in areas with no internet access and backward development, information can still be effectively conveyed, and their degree of trust is much higher than digital platforms. This proves that traditional media is irreplaceable and that it still has value in the modern marketplace. For the beauty market, there is a need to retain the presence of both traditional media and digital social media, each with its own strengths. Social media helps beauty brands and companies attract younger users and bring customers close to the brand. Traditional media can solidify older customers and use the advantage of the high credibility of traditional media to strengthen the customers' awareness and trust in the brand. Thus, there is a need to retain traditional media for the beauty market, and combining digital social media platforms with traditional media can help brands reach a wider audience, which will also boost brand promotion and sales.

It is worth mentioning that there are still limitations in this study, such as the lack of primary data sources, as this paper mainly uses secondary data. In the future, the author will obtain the primary data through surveys and interviews.

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